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**United Nations System
Chief Executives Board (CEB)**

Co-ordinated UN System Action on Climate Change

I. Introduction

Increasing evidence of climate change and its related economic, social and environmental implications, and its potentially irreversible nature confronts the international community with one of its most complex and serious challenges. Climate change will impact all, but most severely the poor and vulnerable. The response to climate change has therefore to be rooted in sustainable development and equity, recognizing the vulnerability and resilience of poor people, the need for economic growth and poverty alleviation, and a comprehensive approach to sustainable development with its economic, social and environmental pillars.

Under the leadership of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the UN Chief Executives Board (CEB) has initiated a process of aligning its strengths into a coordinated approach to climate change. The objective is to support the process for an international agreement within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), as well as support in a coordinated way the efforts of member states at national, regional and global levels in tackling the multifaceted challenge presented by climate change. As an integral part of the international community's response, the UN system must bring to bear the collective strengths of all its entities in a way perhaps never achieved before.

The High-Level Event on Climate Change, convened by the Secretary-General on 24 September 2007, to galvanize political consensus, saw the unequivocal commitment of world leaders to concerted action. They agreed that the United Nations provides the appropriate multilateral framework for action and that the only forum in which international action can be agreed is the UNFCCC. The Fourth Assessment Report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirmed that anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions are having significant and negative impacts on climate change, emphasized the dangers of rising global mean temperatures, and provided an assessment of the means and costs for combating climate change. Action to mitigate and adapt to climate change must begin immediately.

This CEB document represents a first stage in defining key areas of action and an effective coordination structure for the UN system. It highlights its critical role in the area of science, assessment, monitoring and early warning as a basis for informed action. It articulates its contribution in supporting global, regional and national action within the four key areas of ongoing negotiation within the UNFCCC: mitigation, adaptation, technology and finance. The document also addresses key sectors for UN system action.

It finally outlines the UN system's process of establishing climate-neutrality in its own work.

The document is still "work in progress" which will evolve in light of international deliberations, particularly in the UNFCCC but also in other inter-governmental bodies. Further discussions within the CEB will determine a coordination structure with key clusters of activity and specific lead agencies. An illustrative matrix is attached. This too will evolve to take account of emerging issues which will require inter-institutional cooperation.

II. Science, Assessment, Monitoring and Early Warning: Foundations of the UN's Work on Climate Change

The response to climate change must be based on comprehensive analysis and assessment of reliable scientific data, and be continuously informed by monitoring of data, trends and new insights. Greater understanding of the scientific foundations of emerging issues and threats, and their social and economic impacts, will require increased investment of effort.

Creating, maintaining and refining the knowledge base on climate change has been a central role of key UN entities, which provide sound and unbiased scientific and technical information to enable evidence-based policy making. In the area of climate change this has been the path-breaking work in particular of the IPCC. Global weather and climate prediction systems are a unique resource, which require continuous involvement by member states.

The capacity of countries to monitor climate change and utilize climate predictions is crucial in assessing effective mitigation and adaptation strategies, as well as in developing early warning systems on extreme climate events and hazards. Increased investment in scientific research to improve climate prediction, to respond to emerging issues, narrow uncertainties and have more precise quantitative information at regional and local levels, is required. Early warning systems help identify the occurrence and reduce the impact of disasters.

In order to strengthen and operationalize the knowledge base on climate change, *the UN system could contribute in the following ways:*

- Develop global and regional networks of scientific data and information providers, with a central platform, to strengthen capacities, improve synergies, and support collaboration;
- Support the periodic assessment by IPCC of scientific, technical and socio-economic information, and its presentation to the international community;
- Develop tools to assess climate change vulnerability and impact, including impacts of extreme events;

- Strengthen national capacities to monitor, predict and evaluate climate impacts, and to better utilize information for response planning and disaster risk reduction, including analysis of population dynamics and rapid urbanization
- Strengthen the links between science and policy by improving the accessibility of information, i.e. improve the national relevance of information and hold consultations between scientists and policy makers; and
- Support the framework agreement to ensure that satellites and terrestrial radars can perform data gathering and monitoring with respect to climate.

III. Supporting Global, Regional and National Action on Climate Change

The current inter-governmental negotiations, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), evolve around four key areas: Adaptation, Mitigation, Technology and Finance, where adaptation and mitigation are goals and financing and technology means for achieving those goals. The UNFCCC is governed by member states, and served by a Secretariat, which also channels inputs from the rest of the UN system to respond to the inter-governmental negotiations.

To deliver on the growing expectations of the international community, the UN system must draw on its strengths: providing a neutral forum for brokering negotiations; establishing trust and galvanizing high-level political support; and securing participation, engagement and ownership of a broad constituency of stakeholders. Each UN entity has a role in reinforcing this collective effort, in supporting member states, and in building momentum for future agreement within the UNFCCC.

At the national level, the UN system possesses analytical and operational capacities to support countries as they determine their national priorities, their strategies and policies for mitigation and adaptation, as well as their sector policy options to integrated sustainable development. Coordination of the UN system at the national level will become all the more important to ensure effective and coherent support. Current efforts at strengthening the UN system's ability to deliver as one are therefore critical also in the facing the challenge of climate change.

A. Adaptation

Observable trends related to climate change are already indicating negative impacts on countries across the world. In particular the Least Developed Countries and the Small Island Developing States, are bearing the brunt of increased climate variability and unpredictable and severe weather events. While the political focus continues to be on achieving international agreement on mitigation measures, the adaptation agenda has become critical.

The importance of adaptation was emphasized by world leaders at the High-Level Event, and a sense of solidarity was expressed with those who are most vulnerable to climate change. The negative impacts on progress in meeting national priorities,

particularly those relating to the Millennium Development Goals, were recognized. There was also a clear recognition that development and adaptation efforts must be complementary, allowing countries to pursue strategies for sustainable economic growth and the enhancement of living standards.

The High-Level Event called for better national and international planning for sustainable development supported by capacity building and additional funding. National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) were highlighted as potentially important in addressing long-term adaptation needs in addition to immediate ones. Leaders also called for additional funding to be made available through mechanisms such as the Adaptation Fund.

The links among disaster risk reduction, climate change and development opportunities were underscored. Leaders highlighted the need to reduce disaster risk and increase the resilience of communities to extreme weather phenomena, including through systematic planning and capacity building.

The challenge of climate change is unlikely to be gender-neutral, as it increases the risk to the most vulnerable and less empowered social groups. In the formulation of global and national approaches, as well as in the strategic responses to specific sectors, gender awareness, substantive analysis and inclusive engagement will be necessary.

The UN system has the capacity to support developing countries to mainstream adaptation to climate change within integrated national policies, sector specific strategies and investment plans, both for the short and longer terms. The design of appropriate macro-economic policy frameworks and fiscal instruments will need to address climate change objectives. A long-term strategy will also entail adjusting to new patterns of production, consumption and employment.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Promote and support the development of broad-based national strategies on adaptation to address both short and long-term needs, including legislation, policy decisions and operational programmes in sectors;
- Assist countries in socio-economic cost-benefit analysis, the climate-proofing of investments, and spatial planning;
- Strengthen national capacities to improve integrated policy making and effective early warning systems, based on improved vulnerability analysis with respect to both natural disasters and other climate risks;
- Collect, systematize, analyze and disseminate good practices and knowledge, based on experience and lessons learnt, including from National Adaptation Plans of Action and pilot implementation projects;
- Build resilience at the local level by promoting autonomous adaptation capacity and mainstreaming community based adaptation;
- Enhance regional cooperation on adaptation;

- Develop policies to ease transitions in labour markets and to seize opportunities for generating new and sustainable sources of employment, and to build capacity of enterprises, trade unions and governments to anticipate changes in employment and adopt an efficient and equitable process of adaptation;
- Support countries to deal with specifically vulnerable sectors, such as tourism, recognizing that a holistic approach is critical to poverty alleviation, conservation and gender equality in many countries; and,
- Build capacity to protect and sustainably manage the biodiversity and ecosystem services that are required for maintaining resilience to climate change and extreme weather events, and the maintenance of critical genetic resources; and
- Build capacity among decision makers to better utilize demographic data and information in sustainable development planning.

B. Mitigation

Many leaders attending the High-Level Event referred to specific goals for mitigation, in particular the need to halve emissions by 2050 and to limit global mean temperature increase to 2° Celsius. Several leaders of industrialized countries expressed their willingness to undertake deeper emissions reductions and several leaders of developing countries also acknowledged the need to take enhanced action to control emissions in a new legal framework that was equitable and consistent with the principle of common but differentiated responsibility.

The challenge of mitigation can be met by a portfolio of technologies, some of which are available and others which need to be developed. A wide variety of national policies and instruments are available to governments, including market based instruments. At the international level, instruments like emissions trading and the Clean Development Mechanism, are already providing incentives for investments in mitigation. The main challenge is to substantially reduce emissions in industrialized countries and to address the rapid growth of emissions in emerging economies by stimulating cleaner development choices while promoting sustainable development and poverty eradication. While many developing economies are already developing and implementing national mitigation strategies, such efforts can be significantly expanded if appropriate incentives are provided.

The UN system has the capacity to support developing countries to mainstream integrated policies and plans on mitigation, that are in line with their development goals and do not compromise economic growth.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Assist developing countries in the identification and implementation of national mitigation strategies that limit the growth of, or reduce, greenhouse gas emissions, while promoting local sustainable development and cleaner economic growth;

- Support the integration of such mitigation policies in national development strategies, focusing on energy, construction, agriculture, transportation, industry, forestry and land management;
- Assess, illustrate and disseminate collateral benefits of mitigation activities;
- Support developing countries in the assessment of their mitigation potential and in measuring their efforts to reduce greenhouse gases (including the compilation and reporting of national greenhouse gas inventories);
- Promote an enabling regulatory environment for mitigation programmes, and
- Scale up the delivery of carbon finance through strategic choices that help catalyze a change in the way greenhouse gas mitigation is achieved in developing countries and integrated into development plans and transformed investment patterns.

C. Technology

Leaders at the High-Level Event emphasized the essential role of clean technologies and appropriate adaptation technologies in the context of sustainable development. It was agreed that while technological solutions exist, effective policy frameworks and cooperation instruments are needed to accelerate the deployment and diffusion of these solutions, and that current mechanisms for technology transfer and cooperation will need to be scaled up.

In particular, international cooperation on energy is needed to assist developing countries to meet their objectives while moving in the direction of low carbon, renewable energy and cleaner fossil fuel technologies. Here, the UN has a role to play both in strengthening research, innovation, and skills development, and in diffusion, dissemination and adoption of low-carbon technologies.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Develop effective policy frameworks to accelerate the transfer, deployment and dissemination of existing and new technological solutions;
- Promote the creation of bilateral, multilateral and private-public partnerships on technology research and development;
- Promote sustained and joint efforts between government and the private sector, including the financial sector, to promote the market for new technologies;
- Provide technical support to developing countries in conducting and improving their technology needs assessments and in transforming them into bankable technology transfer projects that meet the standards of potential financiers; and
- Develop international energy management standards to increase the efficient use of existing and future technologies in industry and other sectors.

D. Finance

Global investments in the magnitude of 15 to 20 trillion US dollars may be required over the next 20 to 25 years to place the world on a markedly different and

sustainable energy trajectory. If investment choices are based on solid economic rationale and sound scientific evidence, valuing true costs, they can unlock huge change potential. The High-Level Event stressed the need to provide developing countries with additional resources for investment and capacity-building. While the bulk of investment will come from government and the private sector, the UN system can support countries to make choices based on sound scientific and technical criteria. It will become essential to coordinate access and utilize available resources, as the proliferation of funding mechanisms can lead to fragmentation and loss of coherence and effectiveness.

Related to finance and investment choices, trade is one of the enabling factors that come into play in the complex process of tackling climate change. The creation of an open global market in environmental technologies is essential to efforts to deal with climate vulnerability and adaptation. Trade liberalization may help adaptation to climate change. In particular, the successful conclusion of the environmental goods and services negotiations in the current Doha round can increase access to adaptation and mitigation technologies and increase countries' ability to invest in such technologies. In addition, existing WTO rules on Trade in Financial Services are relevant to the operationalization of any market-based system for trading emissions credits or licenses.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Support national governments in the formulation of policies to increase investment and financial flows in mitigation and adaptation;
- Support the development of national capacities to access and utilize resources to implement an appropriate mix of policy instrument to achieve sustainable growth;
- Support efforts to reinforce international financial mechanisms, including the GEF;
- Strengthen actions aimed at targeting public funding more effectively, encouraging more effective engagement of the private sector and strengthening work to address investment flows and financing initiatives;
- Support efforts to enhance the tools of the carbon market, including the broadened application of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and to enhance action under the Nairobi Framework to support developing country participation in the CDM;
- Support the operationalization of the Adaptation Fund;
- Support commitments to trade liberalization and investment in goods, services and technologies that contribute to mitigation efforts; and
- Increase efforts to ensure that energy efficiency measures have better access to finance, including carbon finance.

IV. Coordinating the UN System's Work in Key Sectors

This section provides an initial outline for how the UN system can coordinate its substantive work in different sectors and some cross-cutting areas, seeking to effectively respond as one to the challenges of climate change. The sector engagements need to be

linked to the key areas addressed in the negotiations, i.e., adaptation, mitigation, technology and finance, and in relation to the continued work on science, assessment and monitoring. This can be conceptualized in the form of the attached indicative matrix with the identified sectors being relevant to key areas to differing degrees.

UN system coordination at the sector or thematic level can build on already established groupings, such as UN-Energy, UN-Water, UN-Oceans, the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the UN Communications Group. In some areas, there is clear leadership accountability following the institutional mandate of a UN entity or entities, while in others, accountability is more diffuse. The magnitude of the challenge of climate change will require enhanced collaboration within and among sectors, and an effectively coordinated structure to guide action. The UN system will continue to develop its response to these needs as the inter-governmental discussions and negotiations evolve.

Energy

Energy is at the heart of the climate mitigation agenda. In the developed world, energy consumption patterns exacerbate the challenge. In the developing world, countries face the challenge of providing two billion people with access to modern energy and meeting their overall development objectives. Deeper emission cuts are required by industrialized countries while greater efforts are required in developing countries to address energy access in a sustainable manner. The UN undertakes a range of activities related to both policy and implementation which need to be better aligned to support climate change mitigation as well as access to energy.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Improve national capacities to integrate climate change in developing countries' sustainable energy strategies in order to meet their growing energy needs, particularly through renewable energy, energy efficiency, low-carbon technologies and cleaner fossil fuel technologies;
- Utilize the immense potential of cooperation with the private sector, particularly in energy financing and technology;
- Improve understanding of transportation systems, taking into account cleaner transportation options (e.g. the use of shipping);
- Improve energy management in industry, by developing standards, product labeling, and certification procedures for both domestic appliances and industrial equipment;
- Provide authoritative technical and economic analyses of climate relevant technologies, including e.g. the experience gained in the phase-out of ozone depleting substances;
- Improve access to clean energy for households, schools and health facilities and raise awareness to the linkages between clean energy and child health; and
- Better utilize the potential of UN-Energy to improve coherence in the UN system's work on energy.

Agriculture and fisheries

Agriculture is both a source and sink for greenhouse gases, as well as both a source and a user of energy. Agriculture is thus a cause, victim and a potential mitigation mechanism of climate change. Climatic fluctuations and extreme weather events are predicted to have increasingly negative impacts on agriculture, particularly in developing countries where there are fewer options to adapt. Uncertainties throughout the food chain, from yields to trade dynamics will be heightened. Water, land, biodiversity and terrestrial ecosystem services will become stressed. This will impact food security and the ability to feed a population approaching nine billion by 2050.

Also, climate change impact on marine, coastal, estuarine and freshwater ecosystems is likely to affect many of the 200 million people directly or indirectly dependent on fisheries for their livelihoods, through changes in nature, distribution and productivity of aquatic resources. The result is heightened vulnerability of communities with increasing prevalence of natural disasters, such as flooding and cyclones.

If not properly managed, the switch in use of productive land from food to bio-fuels production risks increasing prices of food crops, aggravating food insecurity, and exacerbating rural poverty and gender inequality.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Strengthen national capacities to determine adaptation and mitigation responses in their agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors, including in sustainable land and water management;
- Increase technical support to farmers in developing and implementing alternative agricultural systems;
- Improve data and information provision on the impacts of climate change on agricultural systems, fisheries, rural population and food security, including efforts to improve short-term weather forecasting and medium-term weather projections;
- Deepen the understanding of the links between bio-fuels and food security, land and water use, and biodiversity;
- Promote research on drought resistant and saline tolerant crops;
- Promote research on “second generation” bio-fuels generated from cellulose, waste and other materials that minimize competition with land and water use for food production;
- Support increased carbon sequestration through restoration of degraded land and through improved agricultural land management; and
- Develop financial instruments to compensate poor farmers for the environmental services they provide by adopting land use and forestry practices that reduce carbon emissions.

Water

Climate change will have significant impacts on the hydrological cycle, affecting both the availability of fresh water and the frequency of floods and droughts. The consequences are far-reaching and are likely to be felt the hardest by the most vulnerable. Changes in water availability and extreme events could undermine development, affect human security and livelihoods, significantly impact agriculture and industry, and act as a push factor in population movements and migration. Water scarcity can also trigger conflict. Adaptation to climate change needs to build on conventional hard and soft interventions and may also require a major shift in planning and designing water investments.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Increase the understanding of the impacts of climate variability and change on water systems;
- Identify the hotspots where climate change and other driving forces are expected to exacerbate water scarcity and extreme events, and help monitor social impacts, facilitate population movement and prevent conflict;
- Strengthen integrated water resource management by promoting methodologies for incorporating hydrologic variability and climate change in the design of project, programme and sector-wide investments;
- Raise awareness, build capacity and increase resilience of local communities to cope with water stress, increased hydrological variability, and extreme events; and
- Increase resilience of industry to reduced availability of water resources by promoting the deployment of water-efficient technologies.

Oceans

Ocean climate coupling regulates and mitigates the exchange of heat, carbon and water within the earth's systems. The recent IPCC Report forecasts rising sea levels and increased storminess, ocean acidity and precipitation which will have significant impacts on coastal flooding, marine food chains, and the water cycle.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Improve the understanding of the impacts of climate change on the ocean heat pump, marine ecology and marine risk forecasting;
- Strengthen an integrated network of ocean-climate observations;
- Build capacity for local communities to forecast and cope with coastal risk; and
- Encourage assessments of schemes for ocean carbon sequestration.

Forestry

Climate change impacts on forests, including forest dieback and forest fires, will exacerbate impacts on dependent food systems, with consequences for the over 400 million people directly depending on forests for food and livelihoods. Deforestation and forest degradation contributes around 20% of global emissions. Reducing deforestation

and encouraging afforestation and reforestation therefore offer significant cost-effective solutions to mitigating climate change. They also offer adaptation benefits by increasing the resilience and adaptive capacity of forest ecosystems, as well as significant carbon sequestration potential.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Promote the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on all types of forests which has developed a comprehensive approach to sustainable forest management, combining national action and international support, and offering environmental, social and economic benefits;
- Build the capacity of countries to shape policies and plans aimed at realizing the benefits of halting deforestation and forest degradation and promoting sustainable forest management;
- Strengthen incentives to developing countries to stimulate improved sustainable forest management;
- Promote forest expansion as an adaptation measure for watershed protection, prevent soil degradation and rehabilitate degraded land;
- Promote the protection of existing forest, which could become eligible for carbon financing under the new climate regime;
- Support community-based reforestation projects and promote awareness among children and young people to impact reforestation efforts at community level;
- Help local communities to benefit from new international instruments to compensate forest holders for global ecosystem services provided;
- Promote efforts to simplify CDM rules for broader integration of community based afforestation and reforestation projects;
- Promote synergies among the Rio Conventions to promote biodiversity, prevent land degradation and promote land rehabilitation;
- Explore mechanisms of compensation from the international community to take account of the opportunity costs of alternative land use and the administrative costs of forest protection; and
- Improve scientific understanding and adoption of standards and methods of assessing carbon change in forests and carbon storage.

Health

Climate change brings major new challenges to health security and will increase the costs and difficulties of disease control. It is therefore essential to empower and equip health institutions and to protect population health from current and projected risks of climate variability and change.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Generate knowledge and evidence for action (e.g. definition of an applied research agenda that is targeted specifically at health, climate and impact on mortality and population);

- Increase research, knowledge and awareness of health consequences of climate change at all levels, including schools and community outreach activities (through the development of a consistent set of messages);
- Strengthen public health planning capacities including through improved monitoring and evaluation of climate and health impacts;
- Strengthen health systems to provide protection from climate-related risks (e.g. promotion of a more forward looking preventative approach to health protection); and
- Integrate health considerations into decisions on climate change in other key sectors (e.g. improved participation of health professionals in key national and international processes).

Transport

Transport consumes a quarter of the world's energy, and accounts for some 25% of total CO₂ emissions, 80% of which can be attributed to road transport. Moreover, local and regional air pollution, congestion in urban areas, land use for transport infrastructure building and health effects are key problems. With growing demand for mobility in developed and developing countries, these problems will become more and more pressing.

Maritime transport carries over 90% of the world trade in volume, which is vital for the world economy, and remains the most environmentally-friendly and energy-efficient mode of transport in specific terms. Therefore, although maritime transport may be a small contributor to climate change, it can also be part of the solution to the problem. In view of the international nature of maritime transport, legislation and mitigation measures should be taken at the global level.

Aviation is a critically important transport mode moving more than 2.2 billion passengers and 40% international exports by value. Air traffic demand is growing at a rate of 5 to 6% per year as a global average with the fastest growth rates in developing countries and regions resulting in increasing aggregate amounts of CO₂ emissions. This could cause the aviation share to grow above its current emission levels, estimated at 2% of the global total. Significant improvements in fuel efficiency can be achieved if congestion is removed and aircraft fly more direct routes. Work on the development of alternative fuels for aviation shows promise and is continuing apace. New technology in airframes and engines continue to demonstrate significant fuel efficiency.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Support the use of cleaner marine fuel and more efficient marine engines;
- Support the use of operational and technical measures, which may include optimal routing design and speed management as well as optimization of the ship's hull, appendices and propeller design and interaction;
- Introduce market-based measures, which may include emissions trading;

- Strengthen technical co-operation to support developing countries to meet their trade needs through access to clean transport;
- Further develop aviation emissions impact assessment tools and facilitate data access and dissemination;
- Further explore possible alternative fuels for aviation and assess their environmental impacts;
- Continue to develop and update aircraft engine emissions standards, and medium and long-term goals;
- Promote the use of operational measures that reduce fuel consumption and emissions;
- Foster the modernization and optimization of air traffic management systems;
- Continue to explore the use of global market-based measures to reduce aviation emissions;
- Promote further research on the impact of aviation on the atmosphere; and
- Facilitate the sharing of information on best practices and voluntary measures to address aviation emissions.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Climate change is predicted to increase the frequency and intensity of severe weather events (e.g. droughts, cyclones, and heat waves). These trends may lead to significant negative impacts on public safety, productive systems and livelihoods and in some cases, national stability. Disasters disproportionately affect the poor and most vulnerable and can lead to significant movements of population as well as being a driver for migration and may also become potential drivers of conflict and instability due to increased scarcity of natural resources.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Better articulate the relations and synergies between the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and climate change and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;
- Mainstream and strengthen disaster risk reduction in the UN system, both at policy and programme levels;
- Strengthen national capacities in disaster preparedness, with an emphasis on early warning, vulnerability analysis and mapping and logistics;
- Implement the Tampere Convention relating to emergency telecommunications for disaster reduction and relief;
- Develop a comprehensive approach aimed at reducing vulnerabilities to climate risks by identifying the most critical issues and likely areas of concern (i.e. hot-spotting); and
- Improve and make accessible existing disaster reduction tools and methods and information on best practices at the national and local levels.

Population and Human Settlements

The impacts of climate change, the mitigation opportunities and the necessity for adaptation are relevant to all sectors of human settlements. The need to better plan cities and settlements to cope with climate change has to be recognized in order to prevent loss and destruction of lives and properties and reduce vulnerability, particularly in light of rapid urban growth especially in densely populated countries. Opportunities for energy saving and emissions reduction in urban areas need to be identified. The multifaceted nature of the relationship between climate and human settlements (i.e. ranging from infrastructure, economic stability and natural resource usage to large population movements, migration, gender equality and human security) and the complementary needs to increase resilience and reduce emissions requires an integrated approach.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Construct a comprehensive programme of support aimed at reducing urban poverty, building national and local capacity in integrated urban planning, based on scenarios of future climate change impacts on population movements;
- Support local authorities to assess risks and vulnerabilities to climate change and develop a strategic plan accordingly, particularly those in secondary cities in developing countries, which are at the most risk from climate change; and
- Develop and disseminate technologies, standards and codes to support resilient and sustainable infrastructure and construction.

Education

For mitigation and adaptation, the role of education in general and education for sustainable development, in particular, is pivotal. The objective is to lay the foundations for an educated population aware of the challenges of sustainable development and climate change. The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), 2005-2014 envisages the mobilization of all strata of society and expertise through both formal and non-formal education to further principles, values and behavior linked to sustainable development and to induce necessary behavioral and attitudinal changes so as to minimize negative climate impacts. In this area, the UN system can contribute by promoting basic education, reorienting and revising education programmes, developing public understanding and awareness and providing practical training.

The UN system could contribute in the following ways:

- Integrate environmental sustainability, including climate change, into national curricula and into lifelong learning as well as mainstreaming in teaching and teacher training;
- Develop prototype materials and awareness-raising tools for benefit of educators, teachers and students worldwide;
- Adapt the work of institutions of higher education towards ESD objectives and national science, technology, engineering and innovations systems to respond to

- the exigencies of the climate change agenda increasing local, national, and regional capacities for informed decisions about climate change; and
- Raise awareness in developing countries that education is a very effective strategy to support long term sustainable and climate resilient growth.

Public Awareness Raising

Clear expression of public sentiment is a key driver of political will. Informed action by individuals is fundamental to tackling climate change. Both are dependant on citizens having a good level of understanding and awareness of the causes and effects of climate change as well as of the required response. Engagement with civil society organizations across the world is essential. Consistent with Article 6 of the UNFCCC, *the UN system could contribute in the following ways:*

- Provide a venue for engagement with civil society organizations across the world;
- Enhance the role of the media in raising public awareness;
- Improve the use of information and communication technologies to facilitate improved access to data and information to support timely responses to climate change risks; and
- Create incentives to encourage the public to undertake climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

V. Moving Toward A Climate-Neutral UN

The UN system recognizes the need to explore ways of making the UN more climate-friendly and environmentally sustainable, and to develop a climate-neutral approach to its premises and operations. The Secretary-General earlier this year tasked the Environmental Management Group (EMG), under the leadership of the Executive Director of UNEP, to develop ways on how best to make the UN climate neutral. While the principle of this approach is widely shared, and while a number of positive signals have been given for financial support from member states, there is a need for greater precision in defining the practical aspects of its implementation. However, there is agreement that the initiative is both symbolically important and administratively possible, and appropriate steps can make economic sense.

In response an EMG report proposed a framework to the CEB to guide the work, a strategic approach on how to achieve a climate-neutral UN and a commitment from all agencies to implement the initiative. The objective by the end of 2009 was for CEB members to assess emissions, start to reduce and manage these emissions, and assess the cost and budgetary implications of offsetting emissions from activities that remain. Once the initial assessments have been undertaken, a strategy should be presented to the CEB recommending a date by which the whole of the UN should become climate-neutral. A small unit in UNEP would be set up as a clearing house to provide organizations support in managing these processes of moving towards climate neutrality.

The UN system through the CEB decided to commit to a process that would ensure that the UN system moves decisively toward establishing climate neutrality in its operations world-wide.

The UN system further agreed to undertake the following steps:

- Reduce energy consumption at the UN headquarters compound in New York by at least 40 percent, through an accelerated strategy for the UN HQ ‘Capital Master Plan, and inviting the private sector to donate its best technology;
- Conduct an environmental audit of UN Headquarters in New York, covering procurement and renovations, assisted by UNEP;
- Calculate emissions from air travel, with the help of approved methodologies; and
- Lead by example in individual institutions, including supporting staff association efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emission, recycle and lower paper consumption, and make other changes in offices as far as possible.

VI. The Way Forward

The international community acknowledges the United Nations as the multilateral framework for establishing a post-2012 climate regime, and a source of multi-sectoral and sectoral support. In fulfilling this expectation, the UN will need to draw on its strengths to deliver as one, providing a neutral negotiating forum, establishing trust and galvanizing high-level political support. Each UN entity has a role in supporting the UNFCCC process based on an agreed approach, and in supporting countries over the short and long term in responding to the challenges of climate change. It will be essential for each body to illustrate the impacts of climate change, in its specific policy area, the relevance of its work to addressing climate change, and the type of support services it can make available.

As a global problem, climate change demands a collective international response. The UN commands the ability to support such a response on the basis of a strategic vision, setting out common goals and objectives, assigned roles for UN entities and strengthened mechanisms for collaboration. Such a strategy, that should be developed within the CEB, would also ensure that future climate programmes of individual agencies in their area of comparative advantage are developed in collaboration within a broader framework and in support of the UNFCCC.

International attention is focused on preparations for the Bali Conference in December that is expected to launch broad negotiations on the post-2012 regime. The Conference provides an opportunity to highlight the contributions that the UN system can make to global action on climate change through a coordinated UN system approach and to indicate its capacity to support countries facing the challenges of climate change and eventually the implementation of a new negotiated climate regime.
