



Administrative Committee on Coordination

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English only

Report of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development at its fifteenth meeting

New York, 24 and 25 January 2000

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I. Introduction

1. The Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD) held its fifteenth meeting at New York on 24 and 25 January 2000. The agenda for the session, as adopted by the Committee, is contained in annex I, the list of participants in annex II, the list of documents in annex III and the provisional agenda for the sixteenth meeting in annex IV.

II. Matters for consideration by the Administrative Committee on Coordination

A. Successor arrangements for IDNDR

2. The Committee welcomed the process of consultation by which the report of the Secretary-General on the successor arrangements for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) had been finalized (A/54/497). The Committee was informed that on the basis of that report, the General Assembly had decided, in its resolution that the successor arrangements would take the form of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. As stated in paragraph 22 of the above-mentioned report, the Strategy includes the establishment of an Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, to be composed of eight representatives of United Nations system organizations and entities to be designated by ACC, eight representatives of civil society and non-governmental organizations, to be designated initially by the Scientific and Technical Committee of IDNDR before it comes to its conclusion at the end of 1999, and six representatives of regional entities to be designated by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, in consultation with regional groupings and Governments.

3. The Committee was further informed that the first meeting of the Task Force is expected to be convened in February 2000. Members of ACC have been requested to indicate their interest in participating in the Strategy and 10 have so far indicated their willingness to do so. Arrangements are also to be set in place by which all organizations will be kept informed of the agenda, discussion and outcome of these meetings.

4. The Committee noted that although IACSD has no immediate direct involvement in the Strategy, it is important that the work which is being undertaken by IACSD task managers in critical areas of disaster prevention and sustainable development be taken into account by the Task Force in dealing with prevention issues, which is now a major part of the mandate of the Strategy. The Committee also noted that given the importance of the subject matter and the fact that the Task Force is not formally a part of the ACC machinery, those members serving on it should be entrusted with reporting to IACSD issues of relevance to the Committee. It was also agreed that this issue might need to be revisited if experience proves that the new exercise is resulting in duplication of efforts.

B. Matters related to the Environmental Management Group

5. The Committee considered the terms of reference of the Environmental Management Group prepared by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as a result of a consultative process which took place after its fourteenth session, as well as consultations with the UNEP High-Level Committee of Ministers and Officials and Committee of Permanent Representatives. With a number of amendments, the Committee endorsed the draft terms of reference of the Group (see annex V), bearing in mind the fact that information on the terms of reference of the Group needs to be included in the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the General Assembly at its resumed fifty-fourth session.

C. Preparations for the 10-year review of UNCED

6. The Committee was briefed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the current state of discussions taking place among Governments and several non-governmental groups on the forthcoming 10-year review of progress achieved since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) which will take place in 2002; and its initial plans for a range of activities which are intended to contribute to this important endeavour (see ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.5).

7. The Committee underscored the significance of the 2002 review, and stressed the need for active involvement of the United Nations system in ensuring high-quality preparations for this event and its successful outcome.

8. While realizing that the final decisions regarding the scope and organizational modalities of the preparatory process will be taken by Governments at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Committee agreed that the United Nations system should provide strong leadership in formulating relevant policy proposals and stimulating interest at both political and general public levels. The Committee particularly stressed the importance of early and timely contributions from the United Nations system to the preparatory process. Specific elements of such a proactive approach could include:

(a) Not limiting the reports of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the high-level segment of the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session to process-related issues, but highlighting in these documents the main policy issues together with the main challenges which face the international community in the field of sustainable development;

(b) Expediting the preparations of the second critical trends report and related modelling work so that their results are made public at an early stage of the preparatory process with a view to raising awareness of the consequences of current unsustainable tendencies in the world development;

(c) Preparing the second ACC statement on sustainable development, which would need to be submitted at an early stage of the preparatory process. Such a statement should build on the conclusions of the ACC statement to the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly, which carried out the five-year review of progress achieved since UNCED, and discuss whether real progress was made since 1997 in ensuring that sustainable development truly became an overarching framework for United Nations work in the economic, social and environmental fields, as recommended in the 1997 ACC statement. It could also show the specific role and competitive advantages of the United Nations and organizations of its system in achieving the goals of sustainable development vis-à-vis other international institutions. The outline and

initial draft of such a statement could be discussed at the sixteenth session of IACSD in fall 2000;

(d) Strengthening United Nations system outreach to the general public, which may include joint preparation of an information brochure on the main threats of unsustainable development and the role of the United Nations system in addressing them.

9. It was agreed that in preparing proposals for the 2002 review, there was a need to draw lessons from the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly and its preparatory process. While the 1997 review managed to achieve a number of positive results, such as furthering international consensus on such issues as energy, transport and natural disasters (which were not directly addressed in Agenda 21), agreeing on a more focused and action-oriented programme of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and on the inclusion in it of poverty and changing consumption and production patterns as overriding themes, too much effort was expended in the 1997 process on renegotiating concepts already agreed in Agenda 21.

10. The Committee stressed that the goals of the 2002 review need to be clearly established. The Committee felt that, while Agenda 21 will remain to be a vital and the most comprehensive international programme in the field of sustainable development, the 2002 review should not be seen as limited to the review of the state of implementation of its specific provisions. It would be essential to ensure that preparations also critically assess the impact of the new developments taking place in the world and the new challenges faced by the international community and the ways of addressing such challenges. The latter include such developments as globalization which brings freer flows of investments and trade and the ongoing communications and information revolution; trends towards the decentralization of governance; growing magnitude of the impact of natural disasters; and greater risks and opportunities related to technological advances, including those connected to public health. Such an approach will help to raise the political importance of the preparations for 2002 for national policymakers, and at the same time will raise its relevance in the eyes of the general public. Another critical challenge would be to identify priorities for immediate action, as well as possible gaps in the current international work in the field of sustainable development.

11. The Committee also agreed that a number of ongoing processes will make an important contribution to 2002 process, including the outcomes of the Commission's Intergovernmental Forum on Forests; the outcomes of the ninth session of the Commission, on the issue of energy and sustainable development; the results of the ongoing work on indicators of sustainable development; UNEP's GEO-III; the third assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; and the outcomes of the financing for development process.

12. It was also agreed that in addition to intergovernmental bodies referred to by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/218, it would be important to involve in the preparation for the 2002 review the governing bodies of United Nations agencies which have major mandates and programmes in the field of sustainable development.

13. Finally the Committee stressed that the 2002 review, building on the experience gained in the Commission, should actively involve NGOs, the private sector and other major groups, and ensure that its outcomes will further define the role of these constituencies in further sustainable development work.

D. Dates, venue and provisional agenda for the sixteenth meeting of IACSD

14. The Committee will hold its next meeting at Geneva on 21 and 22 September 2000. The provisional agenda for the meeting is contained in annex IV.

III. Work of IACSD

A. Follow-up to the outcome of ACC meetings

Coordination of United Nations system activities in Africa

15. The Committee was informed of the discussions held at the second regular session of ACC in 1999 based on the results of the first inter-agency meeting for the Africa region, which was held at Nairobi in March 1999. That meeting had reviewed existing inter-agency mechanisms and had sought to devise arrangements that would enhance the coherence of

United Nations system activities without creating additional structures for coordination. It had been agreed that since many United Nations system activities in Africa fell within the framework of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, it would provisionally constitute the most appropriate mechanism for the coordination of these activities. Following the Nairobi meeting, a set of recommendations aimed at harmonizing and simplifying existing arrangements had been formulated.

16. Special attention was drawn to the importance of monitoring progress and of keeping Member States systematically informed about the scope and impact of United Nations initiatives in support of African development. The importance was also stressed of ensuring that the Special Initiative and existing country-level coordination tools (the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), country cooperation frameworks) are made mutually reinforcing and non-duplicative.

17. The Committee agreed that IACSD members should continue to pay particular attention to issues related to sustainable development in Africa.

B. Matters related to the General Assembly

1. Twenty-second special session of the General Assembly

Inter-agency arrangements in support of further work in the area of small island developing States in the light of the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly

18. The Committee took note of the positive outcome both of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly, held in New York in September 1999, and the donors/Small Island Developing States meeting, held in New York from 24 to 26 February 1999.

19. The need for improved and effective coordination within the United Nations system has been brought to the attentions of participants, especially in regard to the strengthening of the Small Island Developing States Information Network (SIDSNet), including activities of

the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and to the follow-up of the Small Island Developing States/donors conference. As far as the Small Island Developing States/donors meeting conference is concerned, concrete actions undertaken by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs have been mentioned (including the establishment of a trust fund that allows the strengthening of the Small Island Developing States Unit). Nevertheless, it has been underlined how further actions have to be taken to mobilize resources to implement the 311 sustainable projects presented by Small Island Developing States to the meeting. New ways and means of assisting Small Island Developing States should be considered and the input and coordination of United Nations agencies is essential to reduce costs and improve effectiveness and efficiency.

20. The Committee noted that the Global Environment Facility (GEF) had approved a project for the benefit of Caribbean countries, entitled "Integrating management of watersheds and coastal areas in small island developing States in the Caribbean". Its Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel will also organize a brainstorming meeting for Small Island Developing States on the theme "Sustainable development of Small Island Developing States: opportunities for GEF intervention" (17 and 18 February 2000).

21. It was also noted that the General Assembly at its twenty-second special session had reconfirmed the political significance of Small Island Developing States, which have become an important voice for sustainable development issues. Their organized involvement is also seen in many other processes dealing with environment and sustainable development and needs to be fully taken into account in the work of IACSD members on relevant issues.

22. The Committee reaffirmed the list of task managers for the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, which is contained in annex VI.

Arrangements for the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session

23. The Committee agreed on the following outline for agency inputs to the report of the Secretary-General:

Brief description of the Agency's activities, programmes and responsibilities with respect to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Overall progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Constraints encountered during the implementation process.

Emerging problems in the agency's programme areas.

Priorities of Small Island Developing States for future years contained in the agency's programme of work.

Recommendations and policy needs.

24. The Committee agreed that the initial draft report will be prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the basis of information already submitted by United Nations agencies and circulated for comments/updates by 30 May 2000. It was agreed, however, that organizations which have started new activities in follow-up to the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly will submit relevant information to the Department by 1 May 2000. Furthermore, the Committee invited organizations which have proposals for possible future actions or are facing particular constraints in the implementation of the Programme of Action and have suggestions regarding possible ways and means to address such constraints to also submit their inputs by 15 May 2000.

Arrangements for the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session

25. The Committee noted that matters related to the preparation of this report had already been discussed

by the Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas. IACSD agreed that the report should take into account relevant activities already under way in the United Nations system, such as the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, work on the United Nations Atlas of Oceans, and work on the Cartagena Convention on the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region. The Committee agreed that members of the Subcommittee should be actively involved in the preparation of the draft report. It was understood, however, that since the scope of the report is wider than matters related to oceans and coastal areas, other interested organizations will be consulted in the course of its preparations.

26. The Committee agreed that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs will consult with all relevant agencies regarding the scope and contents of the report of the Secretary-General, and will prepare its initial draft by 15 May 2000, which will be circulated for further comments and inputs, as appropriate.

2. Fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly

Second report on measures taken in the United Nations system to accelerate progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2000 and the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session

27. The Committee reiterated the view that, as was the case in 1999, this report will not attempt to provide a comprehensive annual assessment of United Nations system-wide activities in the field of sustainable development (since such assessments are made for the Commission on Sustainable Development in relation to specific themes on the Commission's agenda and also in the context of "five-year reviews"), but should instead summarize the efforts undertaken in the United Nations system to implement Agenda 21 and the outcome of the nineteenth session of the General Assembly, and should highlight the main conclusions reached by IACSD and ACC which need to be brought to the attention of member States of the Council and the General Assembly. Consequently, the report will not describe activities carried out by United Nations organizations but rather will focus on strategic matters related to collaboration within the United Nations

system in the field of sustainable development, analyse the main challenges and constraints in this area, and provide a brief update of actions required in follow-up to the work of the Commission and other intergovernmental bodies.

28. The Committee agreed on the following outline of the report:

- I. Work under way in the United Nations system to accelerate the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 adopted by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session
 - A. Brief background
 - B. Recent developments in IACSD
 - C. Recent developments in the ACC Subcommittee on Freshwater Resources
 - D. Recent developments in the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas
 - E. Recent developments in other inter-agency processes
 1. Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Energy
 2. Inter-agency work in support of the implementation of the outcome of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and in support of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests
 3. Inter-agency cooperation in the area of El Niño
 4. Work under the global observation systems etc.
- II. United Nations system response to the outcomes of the seventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development
 - A. Sustainable tourism
 - B. Production and consumption patterns
 - C. Oceans and seas

- III. Follow-up to the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly (on Small Island Developing States). This part will be limited to a cross-reference to a separate report of the Secretary-General to be prepared for the fifty-fifth session of the Assembly
- IV. Outcomes of the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development addressed to the United Nations system
 - A. Integrated planning and management of land resources
 - B. Sustainable agriculture
 - C. Finance, trade, investment and economic growth
 - D. Preparations for the 10-year review of progress achieved since UNCED (limited to a cross-reference to a separate report of the Secretary-General to be prepared for the fifty-fifth session of the Assembly)
- V. Constraints faced by the United Nations system in the field of sustainable development and recommendations on how to address those constraints

29. As for the process for the preparation of the report, which has to be finalized by 20 May 2000 so that it can be submitted to the Council in July 2000, the following timetable was agreed:

By the end of March 2000, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs will circulate for comments the first draft of the report covering Sections I-III of the document, as well as including some proposals for Section V.

By 15 April 2000, members of IACSD will send to the Department their comments on the first draft, as well as their suggestions for Section V.

By 10 May 2000, the Department will circulate the second draft, which will incorporate comments received on the first draft, together with the results of the eighth session of the Commission (sect. IV).

Members of IACSD will be invited to send their final comments/clearance of the paper by 15 May

2000 so that the document can be finalized by 20 May 2000.

3. Preparations for the 10-year review of UNCED

4. Other reports on sustainable development issues requested for the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly

Report of the Secretary-General on enhancing complementarities among international instruments related to environment and sustainable development

30. It was agreed that the lead in the preparation of this report, as was the case in 1998-1999, will be taken by UNEP. It was also agreed that UNEP will undertake timely and broader consultations in preparation of the report, which in addition to the secretariats of the UNCED Conventions, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations University (UNU) and UNDP should involve other entities of the United Nations system which are interested in the subject matter and may have a contribution to make.

Report of the Secretary-General on the World Solar Programme

31. It was agreed that the lead in the preparation of the report, as was the case for the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, will be taken by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which will collaborate in its preparation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other entities of the United Nations system. It was also agreed that UNEP as well as the World Health Organization (WHO) will make an active contribution to preparations of the report.

Conservation and sustainable development of Central African forest ecosystems

32. The Committee agreed that pending the outcome of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), the issue will either be addressed in the context of reporting requests emanating from IFF, or if no such report is required, a section on the issue will be included in the report on measures taken in the United Nations system to accelerate progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 referred to above (see paras. 27-29 above). It was also agreed that the

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as the task manager for chapter 11 of Agenda 21, will be actively involved in the preparation of a relevant input.

C. Follow-up to the substantive session of 1999 of the Economic and Social Council

D. Matters relating to the Environmental Management Group

E. Matters related to the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

33. The Committee was briefed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the state of preparations for the eighth session of the Commission. The representative of the Department expressed her appreciation to the task managers, in particular FAO, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and UNEP, for preparation, in close collaboration with other parts of the United Nations system, of reports and other documentation addressing the themes on the agenda of the session. The Committee was also briefed on the work of the Bureau of the Commission and its plans for the programme of work during the meeting.

34. It was agreed that organizations and agencies which are expected to be represented during the eighth session at the executive head level, as well as those who plan to organize side events, will inform the Department so that it may inform the Bureau.

35. FAO informed the Committee regarding its plans for organizing during the eighth session a special panel discussion entitled "Global partnership for sustainable land management". This special event is expected to focus on key challenges, policy options and opportunities for arresting the degradation of land resources and optimizing production on a sustainable basis. The panel will be organized in collaboration with UNEP, the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), NGOs and participants in the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) system. The panel is expected to involve eminent experts from various regions to be identified in consultation with partner

agencies. Specific proposals for the panel will be submitted to the Bureau of the Commission at its next meeting. The representative of FAO invited other interested organizations to contribute to the success of this event.

F. Preparations for the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

36. The Committee recalled that matters related to energy, as well as to energy-related aspects of atmosphere and transport, are to be addressed by the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development, which will hold its first session from 6-10 March 2000 and its second session in early 2001. As agreed earlier, the work of this group is supported by the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Energy, which will consider the reports required for this process during its next meeting, to take place on 13 March 2000.

37. As for the sectoral issues on the agenda of the ninth session of the Commission which are not directly related to energy, namely non-energy related aspects of atmosphere and transport, preparations will be carried out through standard task manager/IACSD arrangements. The Committee noted that there are a number of important linkages between these issues which would have a bearing on the scope and contents of the reports to be prepared for the ninth session of the Commission.

Atmosphere (excluding its energy-related aspects)

38. The Committee felt, in a preliminary way, that reports under this theme could focus on air pollution issues, including transboundary atmospheric pollution, regional air pollution issues, urban air pollution issues and the impact of air pollution on human health; and address related matters, such as progress in the protection of the ozone layer; as well as matters related to climate variability, including extreme climatic events.

39. It was agreed that UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), as the task managers for atmosphere-related issues in Agenda 21, will work closely with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on the outline of the report(s) to be prepared under that item, and that the task managers

will work closely with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), WHO and the regional commissions in preparation of the report(s).

Transport (excluding its energy-related aspects)

40. The Committee noted that the topic of transport and sustainable development might be the theme of the multistakeholder dialogue segment during the ninth session of the Commission.

41. It was agreed that the report(s) on this issue might provide a good opportunity to discuss the role of this economic sector in economic development, social development and environmental protection. The documentation may also provide an opportunity to discuss the respective roles of auto, rail, maritime and air transport in the context of sustainable development.

42. It was agreed that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs will take the lead in preparation of documentation on this agenda item, working closely with UNEP, WHO, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), UNCTAD, Habitat, the regional commissions and other task managers.

Cross-sectoral themes: information for decision-making and participation, and international cooperation for an enabling environment

43. Concerning sub-item B (see ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.7/Add.1), "Task manager functions for chapter 40, information for and participation in decision-making for sustainable development", the Committee took note of the recommendations of the Earth Watch working party on task manager functions for chapter 40 as contained in the above-mentioned document and the supplemental information provided verbally by the representatives of the Division for Sustainable Development and UNEP as joint task managers for chapter 40. The Committee welcomed the steps being taken through the Earth Watch working party to involve all interested agencies in preparations for the review of chapter 40 in 2001. It also welcomed the suggestion to explore the possibility of organizing with an interested host Government a meeting of an intergovernmental group of experts to consider overall progress on the issues outlined in chapter 40.

44. On the issue of participation, it was agreed that the documentation will focus on the role of major

groups and the importance information plays in the fulfilment of this role in sustainable development.

45. Concerning international cooperation for an enabling environment the Committee took note of the report on this dimension of the cross-sectoral theme with documentation focused on section III.A, paragraphs 25-26, of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, which will provide an integrated analysis of chapters 2 and 33-39 of Agenda 21. It was agreed that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs would take the lead in preparing the report on this topic and work closely with other task managers in preparing the outline of the report and soliciting inputs from other organizations.

G. Status of implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities

46. The Coordinator of the Global Programme of Action Coordination Office briefed the Committee on progress made in its implementation through the activities of the Coordination Office (fully staffed in August 1999), including (a) the launch of the central clearing house node and the development of the pollutant source category nodes by partner United Nations agencies; (b) agreement on the roles and responsibilities of the Subcommittees on Water Resources and on Oceans and Coastal Areas in its implementation; (c) the sewage action plan and the assessment of the feasibility to hold a global conference on sewage in 2001, jointly with WMO, Habitat, and other agencies; and (d) the preparations for the first intergovernmental review meeting on the Programme of Action in 2001, including the development of framework of reporting and sharing experiences by partners in its implementation (Governments, United Nations agencies, NGOs, the private sector etc.). The Coordinator also briefed the Committee on the production of two reports with the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) on land-based activities and the state of the marine environment.

47. It was stressed that constraints in implementation were created not only by lack of adequate financial resources but also by low awareness of the importance

of integrated approaches at the national/river basin and coastal zone levels. At the same time, it was pointed out that more work was required regarding the assessment of the impacts of sediments and nutrients from agriculture and that data required to assess such impacts would depend in the long run on the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

H. Reports of subsidiary bodies reporting to IACSD

1. Report of the Subcommittee on Water Resources on its twentieth session

48. The Secretary of the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources introduced the report of the Subcommittee on its twentieth session (Geneva, 28 September-1 October 1999), and drew attention to three major issues: (a) the review of the Subcommittee's method of work, (b) preparation of reports for the eighth session of the Commission and (c) progress in preparation of a world water development report. On the review of the Subcommittee's method of work, he noted that the Subcommittee had agreed that current procedures needed substantial improvement and that new priorities should be explored, including the identification of its core areas of activity, including the implementation of chapter 18 of Agenda 21 and the publication of the world water development report.

49. IACSD noted with satisfaction the important agenda and extensive amount of work of the Subcommittee, and expressed full support for ongoing efforts to improve its methods of work and to strengthen the Subcommittee in the future. IACSD welcomed and strongly supported the water report as an important initiative by the Subcommittee that would not only address the recommendations of the Commission at its sixth session but also provide a very useful and much needed periodic assessment of freshwater resources. IACSD urged the Subcommittee to take organizational decisions regarding the managerial structure of the report — including a decision on the establishment of an independent unit to produce the report on behalf of the Subcommittee — as soon as possible and no later than its special session, in March 2000. Given the complementarity between certain elements of the Global International Water Assessment and the report, IACSD also encouraged close cooperation between the two exercises.

50. IACSD noted the close cooperation between the Subcommittee and the Government of Germany in the organization of a global conference to be held in Germany in January 2002 in preparation for the 10-year review of chapter 18 of Agenda 21, and encouraged the organizations of the United Nations system involved in the field of freshwater to participate effectively in the forthcoming Second World Water Forum and Ministerial Conference, to be held at The Hague in March 2000. IACSD supported the systematic efforts of the Subcommittee to provide an umbrella for major international activities in the field, including through cooperation with main organizations outside the United Nations system, and to project the work of the United Nations system as an integrated and coordinated effort, as well illustrated by the water report initiative.

51. IACSD approved both the date and venue of the twenty-first session of the Subcommittee and the selection of the Chair and Vice-Chairpersons for its twenty-first and twenty-second sessions.

2. Draft report of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas on its eighth session

52. The Chairman of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas introduced the draft report of the Subcommittee on its eighth session and drew attention to the following major initiatives: (a) the United Nations Atlas of the Oceans, (b) progress in implementation of the Global International Water Assessment, (c) cooperation in implementation of the Global Programme of Action, (d) reporting on oceans and coastal areas for the 10-year review of Agenda 21, (e) the role of the United Nations system in the new consultative process on oceans established by the General Assembly and (f) the revised memorandum of understanding for GESAMP. He stressed that the Subcommittee had officially endorsed proposals on its role and responsibilities and those of the Subcommittee on Water Resources in facilitating inter-agency cooperation in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, as put forward by the Global Programme of Action Coordination Office and the Chairmen of both Subcommittees. He also noted that the Subcommittee had expressed its willingness to contribute to a more integrated review process on the oceans at the General Assembly.

53. In the discussions, it was noted that while the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

provided a legal framework for rights and obligations dealing with ocean matters, it did not cover substantive issues in a fully integrated manner. The newly instituted intergovernmental consultative process on oceans in the General Assembly is meant to serve this purpose. It was agreed that the Subcommittee, facilitated by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, had a particular responsibility to ensure inter-agency cooperation in the process, through, *inter alia*, providing an integrated input to the report of the Secretary-General being prepared for the process. IACSD welcomed the Subcommittee's decision to cooperate closely with its freshwater counterpart in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action. IACSD noted the impressive work of the Subcommittee in the development of the United Nations Atlas of the Oceans.

54. IACSD approved the date and venue of the ninth session of the Subcommittee, to be held at IMO headquarters in London in July 2000.

I. Other matters

1. Follow-up to issues dealt with at previous IACSD meetings

Expansion of the task manager approach

55. The Committee was briefed on the results of discussion by the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) of the report of the joint meeting of IACSD/CCPOQ/the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE) on the task managers approach. The Committee noted that while CCPOQ generally supported proposals of IACSD aimed at ensuring that there are no duplicative mechanisms for global level coordination in given thematic areas, the nature of work of CCPOQ, in particular its focus on more operational issues, makes the Committee to rely mainly on ad hoc arrangements rather than established task managers.

56. It was agreed that, if necessary, IACSD may revert to this issue once the results of the review of the functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery become available.

Common core data sets

57. The Committee took note of an oral report from UNEP focused on specific needs in this area, including (a) the need to agree on institutional responsibilities, (b) developing and maintaining better links between data producers and data users, (c) improving links between traditional statistics and geo-referenced data sets, (d) building enhanced capacity in developing countries for use of non-traditional data sets, (e) Internet sharing of data to ensure better quality control, (f) building support to fund and maintain data collection, and (g) improving rapid delivery of real-time data for better decision-making support.

58. While the coordination of data and information was felt to be extremely important for the entire United Nations system, the Committee wanted to be clear about the role it could best play in this regard, particularly in relation to the functions already being performed by the ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities. The Committee therefore requested UNEP to prepare a report in matrix form on the scope of the common core data sets problem and where the system stands with respect to the global observing systems, standards and norm setting and information dissemination. The Committee would return to this issue upon receipt of the requested report.

2. Briefings

Outcome of first meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Tourism

59. The representative of the World Tourism Organization briefed the Committee on the outcome of the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Tourism (San José, 20 and 21 January 2000), convened pursuant to a decision on tourism and sustainable development taken by the Commission at its seventh session. He noted that, as established by the Commission, the proposed members of the working group, namely Governments and representatives of the four major groups (private sector, local authorities, NGOs and trade unions) and international organizations, had been invited to the meeting. It was noted that this was the first economic sector in which such a working group had been established.

60. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) representative further informed the Committee that the first meeting had dealt with the logistical and operational issues regarding the functioning of the

working group and the tasks entrusted to it. A number of decisions had been taken regarding, *inter alia*, the rotation of secretariat responsibilities and of the Chair, the proposed programme of activities with the designated lead agencies (see annex VII below) and the methods of work. A major constraint facing the working group was that of resources, and it was noted that all members had committed themselves to searching for additional sources of staffing and financing for the secretariat and the various programmes of the working group. The Committee was informed that the complete report of the meeting would be distributed to IACSD members shortly.

61. IACSD expressed its appreciation for the efforts undertaken by WTO in organizing this Working Group meeting and for its consistent support for sustainable tourism. The Committee noted the importance of further developing and supporting the Working Group in order to provide continuity to the work programme on tourism. The Committee looked forward to receiving further reports on developments in this regard.

Vulnerability index

62. Representatives of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs briefed the Committee on the latest developments in the intergovernmental bodies, the Secretariat and the Committee for Development Policy on the development of the vulnerability index and on further work planned in the United Nations in this area. In particular, in February 2000 an expert group meeting of the Committee for Development Policy, involving representatives from relevant international organizations, will address this issue. The results of that meeting will be submitted to the next session of the Committee and also taken into account in the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. In the discussion, the distinction between economic and ecological vulnerability was emphasized.

Indicators for sustainable development

63. The Division for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Statistics Division briefed the Committee on the state of general indicator development and coordination within the United Nations as well as the Commission's work programme on indicators of sustainable development. The Committee noted with satisfaction progress being made

on the Commission's indicators programme and the overall efforts by the Statistics Division to ensure better coordination of different indicators development programmes. The Committee encouraged agencies of the United Nations system to continue their collaboration with and support for these efforts.

National sustainable development strategies

64. The Committee was briefed on the current status of national sustainable development strategies.

Sustainable development and the mining industry

65. The Committee was briefed by T. Burke, Environmental Policy Adviser of the Rio Tinto Mining Company, on sustainable development and the mining industry initiative.

Follow-up to the World Conference on Science

66. UNESCO informed the Committee that the Declaration and Framework of Action which resulted from the World Conference on Science had subsequently been endorsed by the UNESCO General Conference. In follow-up, the Director-General of UNESCO had invited the Secretary-General to bring these documents to the attention of the General Assembly. Other organizations will also be invited to cooperate in the follow-up, and it will be suggested that they consider bringing the documents to the attention of their governing bodies. UNESCO is also considering the establishment of an international group on World Conference on Science follow-up, which will be based on a multistakeholder approach and provide for participation of a number of United Nations system organizations.

Annex I

Agenda

- Item 1. Adoption of the agenda and timetable.
- Item 2. Follow-up to the outcome of meetings of:
 - (a) The Administrative Committee on Coordination;
 - (b) Intergovernmental bodies:
 - (i) General Assembly;
 - (ii) Matters relating to the environmental management group.
- Item 3. Matters related to the eighth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and preparations for ninth session of the Commission.
- Item 4. Status of implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.
- Item 5. Reports of subsidiary bodies reporting to IACSD:
 - (a) Report of the Subcommittee on Water Resources on its twentieth session;
 - (b) Draft report of the Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas on its eighth session.
- Item 6. Other matters:
 - (a) Follow-up to issues dealt with at previous IACSD meetings:
 - (i) Expansion of the task manager approach;
 - (ii) Briefing by the United Nations Environment Programme on common core data sets;
 - (b) Briefings on:
 - (i) Outcome of first meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Tourism;
 - (ii) Vulnerability index;
 - (iii) Indicators for sustainable development;
 - (iv) National sustainable development strategies;
 - (v) Sustainable development and the mining industry.
- Item 7. Adoption of the report.

Annex II

List of participants

Chairman: N. Desai (United Nations)

Secretary: K. Gerlach (United Nations)

United Nations, its entities and programmes

United Nations

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

J. DiSano
M. Dengo
L. Flanders
K. N. Mak
A. Rogers
A. Vasilyev
D. Pilari

Office of Legal Affairs

M. Pal

Regional Commissions New York Office

M. McCaffery

Economic Commission for Africa

P. Makinwa Adebuseye

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements

J. Eigen

United Nations Development Programme

F. Blain

United Nations Environment Programme

A. Amin
I. Schusdzarra
A. Dahl
V. Vanderweerd
M. Jansen

United Nations Children's Fund

C. Mistral Al Kidwa

United Nations Population Fund

V. Ponniah

Specialized agencies and related organizations

International Labour Organization

R. Siddharth

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

A. Dejene

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

G. Glaser

World Health Organization

Y. E. R. Von Schirnding

World Meteorological Organization

M. J. Coughlan
D. D. C. Don Nanjira

International Maritime Organization

O. Khalimonov

International Atomic Energy Agency

M. Opelz

World Tourism Organization

E. Yunis

ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas

P. Bernal

United Nations University

J. Smith
J. Fomerand

Secretariat of the United Nations Framework
Convention on Climate Change

H. Hoffmann

Observers

Global Environment Facility

S. Li

Annex III

List of documents

ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.1	Annotated provisional agenda
ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.2	Timetable
ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.3	Follow-up to the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly
ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.4	Follow-up to the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly: arrangements for the preparation of the second report of the Secretary-General on measures taken in the United Nations system to accelerate progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21
ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.5	Follow-up to the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly: preparations for the 10-year review of progress achieved since UNCED
ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.6	Follow-up to the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly: list of reports on sustainable development issues requested for the fifty-fifth General Assembly preparation of which would require collaboration in the United Nations system
ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.7	Preparations for the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (on issues not related to energy)
ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.7/Add.1	Information for and participation in decision-making for sustainable development
ACC/IACSD/XV/2000/CRP.8	Draft report of the Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas on its eighth session

Annex IV

Provisional agenda for the sixteenth meeting of IACSD

- I. Adoption of the agenda and timetable.
- II. Follow-up to outcomes of meetings:
 - (a) ACC;
 - (b) Intergovernmental bodies: Economic and Social Council.
- III. Matters related to the Commission on Sustainable Development:
 - (a) Follow-up to the eighth session of the Commission;
 - (b) Preparations for the ninth session of the Commission.
- IV. Preparations for the 10-year review of progress achieved since UNCED.
- V. Reports of subsidiary bodies.
- VI. Other matters: briefing on the International Year of Mountains.

Annex V

Terms of reference of the Environmental Management Group

Background

The General Assembly in its resolution 53/242, paragraph 5, supports the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an environmental management group for the purpose of enhancing United Nations system-wide inter-agency coordination related to specific issues in the field of environment and human settlements.

Mandate

Taking into account the views expressed by Member States on the report of the Secretary-General on environment and human settlements (A/53/463), and also taking into account the mandates of the relevant United Nations system organizations and bodies, as well as the views expressed by ACC (see ACC/1999/4) and IACSD at its thirteenth and fourteenth meetings, the Environmental Management Group is entrusted with the following responsibilities:

- To provide an effective, coordinated and flexible United Nations system response to and to facilitate joint action aimed at finding solutions to important and newly emerging specific issues of environmental and human settlements concern, through an issue management approach as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform” (A/51/950);
- To promote inter-linkages, encourage timely and relevant exchange of data and information on specific issues and compatibility of different approaches to finding solutions to those common problems, contribute to the synergy and complementarity among and between activities of its members in the fields of environment and human settlements, and hence act in a complementary manner and add value to the existing United Nations system-wide inter-agency cooperation.

Objectives

In fulfilling its mandate, the Group shall aim at attaining the following objectives:

To identify, address and resolve collectively specific problems, issues and tasks on the environmental and human settlements agenda requiring enhanced inter-agency cooperation in a given time-frame through securing effective and collaborative involvement of the relevant United Nations system agencies, programmes and organs and of other potential partners, as appropriate;

To provide a forum for an early discussion and sharing of information on emerging problems and issues in the field of environment and human settlements geared at finding collectively the most effective coordinated approach to the solution of the new tasks;

To assist UNEP and Habitat in carrying out their functions related to the promotion of coordinated approaches to environmental and human settlements

issues in the United Nations system and to enhance the environmental and human settlement perspectives, in particular their normative and analytic aspects, in the work of other United Nations system organizations;

To facilitate, in this vein, the work of UNEP and Habitat in carrying out their responsibilities as IACSD task managers for a number of environment and human settlements-related chapters of Agenda 21 with a view to enhancing their contributions to the work of IACSD, its subcommittees and the task managers system and other related inter-agency mechanisms, as well as the Commission on Sustainable Development, as appropriate.

Membership

In line with the mandate and objectives of the Group set out above, making it an instrument to enhance further inter-agency cooperation and coordination across the United Nations system on specific issues in the field of environment and human settlements, members of the Group shall be the specialized agencies, programmes and organs of the United Nations system, including the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements.

Modus operandi

The Group will function in a results-driven, flexible and cost-effective manner, using modern telecommunication technologies whenever possible and appropriate. It will take into account work in progress under the aegis of the Ecosystem Conservation Group and utilize that Group, to the extent possible, to facilitate its own work on ecosystem management and conservation.

UNEP will be providing the secretariat for the Environmental Management Group.

The Group will have a two-tiered structure:

- A senior-level decision-making body, entitled the Environmental Management Group, chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP and consisting of senior-level officials from member organizations of the Group;
- Time-bound ad hoc issues-management groups set up by the Group. They will cease to exist after completion of their tasks.

The members of the Group will meet at least once a year on the invitation of its Chairman, after appropriate consultations. They will, in particular:

- Identify the specific issues to be addressed by the Group;
- Establish, as appropriate, an ad hoc issue management group for each specific issue identified;
- Decide on the mandate and time-frame of each ad hoc issue management group;
- Adopt the reports of the ad hoc issue management groups.

In cases where an issue is of an urgent nature and demands prompt action, the Chairman of the Group will immediately inform the members of the necessity to form an ad hoc issue management group and invite members to participate in the task. While all Group members have the right to accept or decline participation in

any given ad hoc issue management group, any such group should benefit as much as possible from the participation of those organizations of the United Nations system which are most concerned with the issue at hand.

Each ad hoc issue management group is responsible to fulfil its mandate within the given time-frame. In case a group is not able to meet the deadline, it will submit a proposal on how and when to accomplish the task to the secretariat of the Group at least six weeks before expiration of the deadline. The Group will decide on the proposal.

UNEP will normally be the lead agency and chair the ad hoc issue management groups, the work of which will be organized and supported by the secretariat of the Group. However, an ad hoc issue management group may nominate by consensus a lead agency other than UNEP if this is found appropriate in light of the specific task. The lead agency will then prepare the documents, organize and chair the meetings, and prepare the report on the results of the group's deliberations.

Participation of non-members

Representatives of relevant sectors of the civil society and of international non-governmental organizations with a potential and specific expertise related to issues being deliberated by the Group may participate upon the request of Group members in meetings of the Group by invitation of the Chairman of the Group, taking due account of respective United Nations rules and procedures. They may also participate in the work of an ad hoc issue management group if required by the specific issue under discussion and so decided by the group. Accordingly, the lead agency of the ad hoc issue management group will invite the respective additional participants.

Reporting

The lead agency of each ad hoc issue management group will submit the report on the results of the group's work to the Chairman of the Group through its secretariat.

The secretariat in turn will submit copies of the report for comments and adoption to the representatives of those organizations-members of the Group who have participated in the respective work. In order to enhance efficiency the deadline for comments should not exceed four weeks. Immediately after the report has been adopted, the secretariat will distribute copies of the report for information to Group members.

When appropriate and in the case of an ad hoc issue management group having been chaired by an organization other than UNEP, after having consulted this lead agency, the Chairman of the Group may bring the report to the attention of the Secretary-General.

In the event that the results of the meetings of the Group and/or its ad hoc group's work have a bearing on United Nations system work in sustainable development, the Chairman of the Group will inform ACC and the secretariat of the Group will communicate the relevant report to the secretariat of IACSD.

Annex VI

Task managers for the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Lead organization</i>
1.	Climate change and sea level rise	UNEP/WMO
2.	Management of wastes	UNEP
3.	Freshwater resources	Natural Resources and Small Island Developing States Branch/Department of Economic and Social Affairs
4.	Land resources	FAO
5.	Biodiversity resources	UNEP
6.	National institutions and administrative capacity	UNDP
7.	Regional institutions and technical cooperation	Small Island Developing States Unit
8.	Science and technology	UNESCO (Science) UNIDO (Technology)
9.	Human resources	Small Island Developing States Unit
10.	Coastal zone management	OAC/PAC, UNEP
11.	Tourism resources	Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNEP, WTO
12.	Sea transport	UNCTAD, IMO
13.	Air transport	ICAO
14.	Telecommunications	ITU
15.	Natural and environmental disasters	Department of Humanitarian Affairs, WMO
16.	Energy resources	Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNDP

Annex VII

Priority issues to be undertaken by the Working Group on Tourism from February 2000 through 2002

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Lead agency</i>	<i>Assisting agencies</i>
Capacity-building activities and multilateral and bilateral financial and technical assistance for the application of appropriate technologies on all aspects of sustainable tourism development (decision 4.b)	UNEP	WTO
Development and application of indicators for sustainable tourism development (decision 4.k)	WTO	WTTC, ICT
Preparations for the International Year of Ecotourism 2002 (decision 4.i)	WTO, UNEP	Ecotourism Society
Encourage more responsible behaviour among tourists (decision 4.c)	NGOs	
Promote the implementation of voluntary initiatives and guidelines for sustainable tourism (decision 4.l)	ICT	WTO, UNEP
Encourage business and industry to take steps to implement eco-efficiency approaches (decision 4.o)	WTTC	UNEP
Compile information on national strategies and master plans for sustainable tourism development (decision 2.a)	Earth Council	WTO
Collect and disseminate information on best practices and techniques for sustainable tourism development (decisions 4.e and 1)	WTO	UNEP, NGOs
Clarify the concepts of sustainable tourism and ecotourism (decision 4.j)	WTO	WTTC, NGOs
Consider and exchange experiences and best practice on sustainable tourism development and biological diversity (decision 7)	CBD	
Assess financial leakage from tourism (decision 9)	WTO	WTTC

WTO: World Tourism Organization

UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme

WTTC: World Travel and Tourism Council

NGOs: Non-governmental organizations (Tourism Caucus)

ICT: Costa Rican Tourism Institute

CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity