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Policy issues:

Emerging policy issues

**Coordination and cooperation within and outside
the United Nations, including non-governmental organizations**

The role of civil society

**POLICY RESPONSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME TO
TACKLE EMERGING ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS**

Report of the Executive Director

Addendum

**LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME**

Summary

The present document contains a long-term strategy for sport and the environment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) aimed at integrating environmental ethics and values at all levels of sport, including recreational sport. The document has been revised to reflect the discussions of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and has been prepared and submitted to the Governing Council for its consideration.

* UNEP/GC.22/1.

I. OBJECTIVES AND VISION

1. Under an overall concept entitled Michezoⁱ, the present report provides information on UNEP's work on sport and the environment and seeks support from the Governing Council for the use of sport in promoting sustainable development. It also provides information on how sport affects and is affected by virtually all aspects of the environment.
2. The core objectives of the Michezo programme are to promote the integration of environmental considerations in sports; to use the popularity of sports to promote environmental awareness and respect for the environment amongst the public, especially young people,ⁱⁱ and to promote the development of environmentally friendly sports facilities and manufacturing of environmentally friendly sporting goods.
3. As sport is closely linked to and can become an important educational tool for mobilizing young people for environmental actions, this strategy complements the long-term strategy for the engagement and involvement of children and youth, entitled "Tunza".

II. THE SPORT AND ENVIRONMENT CONNECTION

4. Sport is intimately connected to nature. A healthy environment is necessary for healthy sport, and for many athletes, it is this intimacy with nature that motivates and inspires them. On the other hand, an unhealthy environment hinders the motivation of individuals to pursue sport and can jeopardize the viability of a sports location or event.
5. Sports facilities, events or activities also have an impact on the environment. Standard facilities and events contribute regularly to energy consumption, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and waste disposals (both toxic and non-toxic) as well as ozone depletion, habitat and biodiversity loss, soil erosion and water and air pollution. Indeed, manufacturers of sports goods and megasports events such as the Olympic Games, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup and the Tour de France employ thousands of people, purchase and consume resources extensively, produce millions of consumer products, use energy and water, generate solid waste, develop land and operate large fleets of vehicles. Even though sporting organizations are rarely major corporate polluters, their ecological footprint is often extensive.
6. On the other hand, sport is one of the most popular of pastimes. Billions of people are passionate about one form of sport or another. Due to the number of people taking part in sports at all levels, UNEP has a wide audience in sports activities for its environmental messages.
7. Millions of people look up to successful sportsmen and women as their role models. These role models who are admired for such values as fair play, hard work, teamwork and cooperation, discipline, dedication, self respect and respect for others can play a major role in influencing and shaping the attitudes of society towards the environment. Prominent sports figures are already taking a lead in helping communities to cope with various critical issues affecting the planet.
8. An important role in the environment arena for which the sport community is admirably suited is that of goodwill ambassador and promoter. By virtue of its prominence and influence, sport can become a powerful agent for change, leading society at large. Sports facilities and events that have incorporated more sustainable products, systems and technologies have an opportunity to contribute to local economic growth and the growth of environmental industry by showcasing these features. Sports organizations can act as catalysts to protect the environment. They can work with both government and industry to encourage them to bolster their attempts to improve environmental conditions. In Sydney for example, the Homebush Bay, which was for decades an environmental liability as a toxic waste dump, was converted into a safe recreational site because it was chosen as the main site of the Olympic Games.

III. BACKGROUND

9. UNEP started its work on sport and the environment in 1994 when it signed a cooperative agreement with the International Olympic Committee. That same year, in recognition of the importance of the protection of the environment and sustainable development, the environment became the third dimension of Olympic philosophy, alongside sport and culture. The Olympic Committee established a Sport and Environment Commission to advise its Executive Board on the integration of environment issues in the preparations and staging of Olympic Games. Today, the environment has become one of the key criteria in the selection of venues for the Olympic Games.

10. UNEP and the International Olympic Committee in collaboration with other sport federations and associations, have developed an Agenda 21 for Sport and the Environmentⁱⁱⁱ which sets out basic information on promoting sustainable development in sport. UNEP has collaborated with the Olympic Committee in organizing biennial world conferences and regional and subregional seminars on sport and the environment. UNEP continues to receive requests from organizers of big sport events and owners of sport facilities for advice on the incorporation of environmental issues in their event preparations and facilities.

11. UNEP has also developed partnerships with other organizations interested or involved in sport-related activities and has worked with sporting goods manufacturers to promote the development of environmentally friendly products. UNEP has also worked with the Japan-based Global Sports Alliance to organize the Global Forum for Sport and Environment^{iv}, support the Nature and Sport Training Camp (a leadership training programme for children in underprivileged communities) and promote the EcoFlag^v project (a campaign to recognize achievements on sport and the environment). UNEP has also participated in the production of publications for sport and the environment including *Greening Our Games* and *Sustainable Sports Management: Running an Environmentally, Socially and Economically Responsible Organization*.

12. UNEP is currently participating in the United Nations Secretary-General's Task Force on Sports for Development and Peace. The Task Force is an interagency initiative by the Secretary-General to review activities of various United Nations entities with sport organizations with a view to promoting the implementation of the United Nations millennium development goals.

13. A Special Representative for Sport and Environment was appointed in June 2002 by the Executive Director to assist in linking UNEP to the sport community and ensuring that UNEP is prominently visible in sport events and initiatives.

IV. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

14. The main challenge for the UNEP Michezo programme is the integration of environmental ethics and values at all levels of sport, including recreational sport. Commercial interests are the driving force of mega sport events. Even though sport is becoming more and more competitive, profit and prestige have become major preoccupations for athletes, coaches, governing bodies, professional franchises, facilities owners and host communities. Another challenge for UNEP is getting the sporting goods industry to become more aware and sensitive to the effects their goods have on the environment.

15. Sport presents broad opportunities for UNEP to promote environmental awareness and actions. UNEP can reach out with environmental messages to billions of people across the world, especially young people. Sportsmen and women are role models in society. Their growing popularity can be an important channel for UNEP to promote awareness among communities on environmental issues.

V. STRATEGIC DIRECTION

16. The strategy outlined in the present report seeks to consolidate all UNEP efforts on sport and the environment into a unified programme entitled “Michezo”. The Michezo programme will attempt to strengthen current UNEP sport and environment activities and introduce new ones to enable UNEP to take full advantage of the extensive opportunities available in the world of sport. There are close links between Michezo and the Tunza^{vi} strategy for children and youth.

17. The Michezo programme will focus on the following:

(a) Participation in the Secretary-General’s initiative on sport. The programme will fully participate in the Secretary-General’s Task Force to review the work of various United Nations entities with sport organizations and identify existing practices and frameworks;

(b) Promotion of environmental awareness and capacity-building. The Michezo programme will use recreational sport, including football, to promote environmental awareness. It will also use sport to build the capacity of young people to cope with environmental and social challenges;

(c) Strengthening of UNEP’s work with sports organizations. Through the Michezo programme, UNEP will forge and strengthen relationships with the International Olympic Committee and the General Association of International Sports Federations, and establish partnerships directly with individual sports federations and associations;

(d) Organization of events and publications on topical issues. Through the Michezo programme, UNEP will continue to organize and participate in sport and the environment conferences. UNEP will also publish information materials on sport and the environment for the public.

VI. PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

A. Participation in the Secretary-General’s initiative on sport

18. UNEP will continue to make relevant inputs to the work of the Secretary-General’s Task Force on Sports for Development and Peace and will work closely with other partners to implement the recommendations of the Task Force geared towards the implementation of the United Nations millennium development goals. Through the Task Force, UNEP will forge new partnerships with other United Nations organizations to promote sport and environment issues and jointly implement the United Nations millennium development goals. UNEP will also strengthen collaboration with the Office of the Secretary-General’s Special Advisor on Sports for Development and Peace. The Adviser will provide important support to UNEP’s efforts to engage and link up with international sport federations and associations.

B. Promotion of environmental awareness and capacity-building

1. Initiating environmental activities through recreational sports

19. UNEP will increase its focus on recreational sports and the relevant associations as a means of promoting awareness of the links between sport and the environment. The recreational sports will include sport activities which millions of people undertake on a daily basis, such as jogging, walking, environmental runs, mountaineering, hiking, skiing, swimming and cycling.

2. Focusing on popular sport events

20. The Michezo programme will use popular sports such as football, golf, tennis, rugby, cricket, hockey and motor sports to promote environmental awareness. Closer collaboration will be forged with international and regional governing bodies of these sports to promote environmental awareness and actions through their events. The programme will also ensure collaboration with organizers of such multisport events as the Asian Games, the All Africa Games, the Commonwealth Games and the Jeux de la Francophonie to promote environmental awareness.

3. Designating a goodwill ambassador and a special representative

21. UNEP will seek to appoint a renowned sports figure to serve as goodwill ambassador for UNEP's work at the global level and more specifically on environmental issues that relate to sport and the environment. This ambassador will work closely with UNEP in communicating targeted environmental messages to the public and will participate in various UNEP events, particularly those involving young people.

22. UNEP's Special Representative for Sport and Environment, appointed in June 2002, will, on a voluntary basis, continue to work on forging better links between UNEP and international sport federations and associations, work closely with the Secretary General's Adviser on Sports for Development and Peace and represent UNEP in the Sport and Environment Commission of the International Olympic Committee.

4. Supporting nature and sport camps

23. UNEP has established a Nature and Sport Training Camp for children from a slum area in Nairobi, Kenya. The Camp provides leadership training to more than 300 children on sport and the environment and is supported by the Global Sports Alliance and UNEP. Through the Michezo programme, UNEP intends to create similar camps in other developing countries. UNEP will also continue to support the Mathare Youth Sports Association, a winner of UNEP's Global 500 award in 1992, which is another programme for slum children in Nairobi.

C. Strengthening UNEP's work with international sports organizations

1. Enhancing cooperation with the International Olympic Committee

24. UNEP will seek to strengthen its collaboration with the International Olympic Committee and through the Committee, establish cooperation with sport federations and associations affiliated to the Olympic Movement. Specifically, UNEP's role in the Sport and Environment Commission of the Committee and the implementation of Agenda 21 for Sport and the Environment will be enhanced. UNEP will also endeavour to play a more active and direct role in the preparations and staging of future world conferences and annual regional and subregional seminars on sport and the environment.

2. Cooperating with Olympic cities

25. UNEP will continue to strengthen its work with Organizing Committees of the Olympic Games, including in Athens (2004), Turin, Italy, (2006) and Beijing (2008) to assist them in their preparations for the Games. UNEP already has an environmental awareness programme with Athens and is developing a cooperation agreement on cleaner technologies with Turin. UNEP is also exploring ways of working closely with the organizers of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games in their efforts to organize "green" Olympics.

3. Forging links with the General Association of International Sports Federations

26. UNEP will seek to establish links with the General Association of International Sports Federation and through the Association, work with the various international sports federations to promote environment issues through their respective events.

4. Developing links with individual sports federations, associations and councils

27. The Michezo programme will strengthen and forge links with individual international and regional sports federations, associations and councils and will use their global and regional events to promote environmental awareness.

D. Organization of events and publications on topical issues

1. Co-organizing the biennial Global Forum

28. UNEP will continue to co-organize the biennial Global Forum for Sport and Environment (to be renamed the “Michezo Forum for Sport and Environment”) in cooperation with the Global Sports Alliance. The Forum, which is also available online⁴, seeks to generate grassroots awareness on the links between sport and the environment and provides a platform for sporting and environment discussions for and by all stakeholders (including athletes, sport fans, sporting goods manufacturers, sport federations, environmental organizations, etc). It will be used to recognize environmental achievements by key stakeholders. Through the Michezo programme, this Forum will focus on key issues such as the links between recreational sports and the environment and on topical environmental issues such as eco-tourism, energy, ozone depletion and sustainable production and consumption. The next Forum will be held in Tokyo in October 2003 and will focus on jogging and the environment.

2. Organizing other sport events

29. UNEP, the Japan-based Foundation for Global Peace and Environment and the Global Sports Alliance, have organized annually since 1998 an international tennis forum in Japan for amateur tennis players. The event incorporates environmental messages. UNEP and the above partners will expand this initiative to include soccer and recreational sport as appropriate.

3. Strengthening work with the sporting goods industry

30. UNEP will strengthen its work with the sporting goods industry. Through UNEP’s Division of Technology, Industry and Economics and other divisions, UNEP will continue its close cooperation with the sporting goods industry in the development and exchange of guidelines and environmental management systems related to the industry.

4. Publishing information materials

31. UNEP will continue to publish information materials on sport and the environment with relevant partners, especially with the International Olympic Committee. UNEP will also enhance its web site for sport and the environment⁷ providing useful information for the public and sport organizations on sport and the environment. UNEP will also publish a Tunza illustrated booklet for children on sport and the environment.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION

32. The Michezo programme will be coordinated and implemented by the Division of Communications and Public Information, in close collaboration with regional offices and other divisions. Regional offices will coordinate and implement regional aspects of the programme and will work with the Division of Communications and Public Information or other relevant divisions to ensure regional representation in global activities.

33. Implementing the programme would require additional resources, both financial and human. The programme will require an additional professional staff member (P-2) and a Junior Professional Officer in the Division of Communications and Public Information to assist with implementation.

VII. SUGGESTED ACTION BY THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

34. The Governing Council may wish to consider the adoption of a decision along the lines suggested below:

The Governing Council,

Recognizing the fact that sport is both affected by and affects the environment, and that it has the ability to mobilize millions of people to support and participate in sustainable development issues,

Noting the United Nations Secretary-General's initiative to promote the use of sport for the implementation of the United Nations millennium development goals,

Noting UNEP's work on sport and the environment which includes extensive cooperation with the International Olympic Committee, UNEP's biennial Global Forum for Sport and the Environment, UNEP publications, and the Nature and Sport Training Camps for young people in underprivileged communities,

Appreciating the strategy provided by the Executive Director, outlining the future direction of UNEP's sport and the environment programme,

Further appreciating the fact that in addition to the ongoing work of the United Nations Environment Programme in this field, there will also be a focus on recreational sports activities such as jogging, walking, hiking, skiing, swimming, cycling and mountaineering to promote environmental awareness, as well as on popular sports events such football, tennis, golf, rugby, cricket, hockey and motor sports to further promote environmental actions,

Noting the links between the Tunza programme and the Michezo programme and the fact that the Executive Director has consolidated the two programmes into one functional Unit,

1. Endorses the activities contained in the strategy for UNEP's sport and environment programme;

2. Requests the Executive Director to explore ways of expanding UNEP's efforts in this important field and to explore increasing resources from the Environment Fund to the programme and to seek extrabudgetary resources to further support the programme;

3. Encourages Governments to provide extrabudgetary support to UNEP's work on sport and the environment, particularly for community and leadership training programmes on sport and the environment for young people in developing countries and for supporting organizers of major sport events such as the Olympic Games to fully integrate environmental issues in their preparations and staging of the events;

4. Requests Governments to inform UNEP of any sport and environment activities being undertaken in their countries so that UNEP can share the information with the public and other countries through its sport and environment web site.

i “Michezo” means “sports” and “play” in Kiswahili, a subregional language in Eastern Africa with links to many other languages.

ii Information on UNEP’s work with young people can be found at www.unep.org/children_youth

iii The web site for Agenda 21 for Sport and Environment is: www.unep.org/cpi/sport_env (This is meant to be used for all kinds of sport activities)

iv Information on the Global Forum for Sport and Environment is available on www.g-forse.com

v Information on the EcoFlag project is available on www.ecoflag.com

vi The Tunza programme is the long-term strategy for UNEP’s work with children and youth from 2003 to 2008 (see UNEP/GC.22/3/Add.1/Rev.1).
