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from: General Secretariat  
to: Delegations

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Subject: Outcome of the 12th Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GCSS-XII GMEF) (Nairobi, 20-22 February 2012)  
- Information from the Presidency and the Commission

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Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Presidency and the Commission on the above mentioned subject, which will be dealt with under "other business" at the Environment Council meeting on 9 March 2012.

**Outcome of the 12th Special Session of the  
UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GCSS-XII GMEF)  
(Nairobi, 20-22 February 2012)**

**- Information from the Presidency and the Commission -**

**Introduction**

The UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF) is the United Nations high-level environment policy forum which brings the world's environment ministers together to review and discuss current and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum took place in Nairobi from 20 to 22 February 2012 at a crucial moment in the run-up to the UNCSD 2012 ("Rio+20") Conference.

**Ministerial consultations**

The ministerial consultations during the special session focused on emerging environmental policy issues and included sessions on the global environment situation and emerging issues, the green economy and the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development(IFSD) and concluded in a session on Rio+20. Ministers and representatives from some 139 countries participated in the special session. Of the EU Member States, CZ, DK, ES, FI, PL, PT, SE and UK were represented at the minister/secretary of state level. Both the Danish Minister for the Environment, Ms. Ida Auken, and the Environment Commissioner, Janez Potočnik, took part in the consultations. Also present during the Governing Council were the Commissioner for Climate Action, Connie Hedegaard, and Mercedes Bresso, the President of the Committee of the Regions.

## **President's summary \***

The President's summary of the overall messages from the ministerial consultations lists a number of challenges and opportunities relating to the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication (GESDPE), including the importance for GESDPE of shifting to sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns. With regard to the IFSD, the summary addresses reform of international environmental governance (IEG), which may include an "anchor organisation with universal membership", enhancing synergies among multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), improving the science policy interface and developing a UN system-wide strategy for the environment.

## **40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ministerial Statement**

The special session concluded by adopting a Ministerial Statement. The Statement congratulates UNEP for its achievements since its establishment in 1972, which particularly include the establishment of important MEAs, the development of environmental laws and policies and the dissemination of the findings of scientific studies leading to an increased awareness of environmental issues. The Statement recalls the commitment to strengthening the role of UNEP (cf. the Nairobi Declaration of 1997) and recognises the important scientific information deriving from the Global Environmental Outlook's Summary for Policy Makers. Looking forward, the Statement emphasises the need for strengthened actions to reverse environmental degradation, promote a holistic approach to sustainable development and contribute to the conservation of natural resources and ecosystems. The Ministerial Statement concludes by welcoming Rio+20 as a unique opportunity to address all three dimensions of sustainable development.

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\* The President's summary can be found in: <http://www.unep.org/gc/gcss-xii/>.

## **Governing Council Decisions**

Seven decisions were adopted by the Governing Council at the special session. These concerned IEG, the world environmental situation, SCP, enhancing cooperation and coordination with the chemicals and wastes cluster, accountability and financial and administrative arrangements between UNEP and MEAs that it administers, enhanced coordination across the UN system, including the Environment Management Group (EMG), and the consultative process on financing options for chemicals and wastes.

The Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum is scheduled to reconvene in February 2013 in Nairobi.

Lastly, the Danish Presidency and the Commission expressed their appreciation to the State Secretary at the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment, Federico Ramos de Armas, for the excellent manner in which he conducted the 12th special session of the Governing Council and the Global Ministerial Environment Forum, and also thanked the lead experts and all Member States for their valuable contributions.

### Annex:

Ministerial Statement

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**UNEP 40th Anniversary Ministerial Statement, Kenya, February 2012 \***

1. We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the United Nations Environment Programme Global Ministerial Environment Forum, met in Nairobi, Kenya, from 20 to 22 February 2012, for the twelfth special session of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme in 1972.
2. We congratulate the United Nations Environment Programme on its successes and effective undertakings as well as the progress that has been achieved in the past 40 years, including the establishment of important multilateral environmental agreements, the development of environmental laws and policy, the findings of key scientific assessments and the stronger awareness at all level of the environmental issues.
3. We recall our commitment to strengthening the role of UNEP as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, that promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimensions of sustainable development within the UN system and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment, as set out in the Nairobi Declaration of 1997.
4. We recognize that we depend on natural systems and resources for our existence and are concerned about the continued environmental degradation. Despite the successes of UNEP we are still deeply concerned about the continued environmental degradation which is a threat to the natural systems and resources on which we depend upon.
5. We recognize the Global Environment Outlook's Summary for Policy Makers as an important synthesis of scientific information on environment for policy and decision makers about freshwater, biodiversity, climate change, land, chemicals and wastes, energy and oceans and seas.

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\* The e-version of this text can also be found in:  
[http://www.unep.org/gc/gcss-xii/docs/in\\_L-docs.asp](http://www.unep.org/gc/gcss-xii/docs/in_L-docs.asp).

6. Therefore we will continue to strengthen our actions to reverse the environmental degradation, to promote a holistic approach to sustainable development and to contribute to the conservation of the essential natural resources and ecosystems on which our economies and societies depend.
  
  7. We welcome the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012 (Rio+20) as a unique opportunity to address the economic, social, and environmental challenges in the context of sustainable development and commit to making Rio+20 a success.
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