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Organización
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للتربية والعلم والثقافة

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REPORT OF THE NATURAL SCIENCES COMMISSION

CONTENTS

Introduction

Statement on behalf of the Chairpersons of the six intergovernmental and international scientific programmes (IBSP, IGCP, IHP, IOC, MAB, MOST)

Reports by the intergovernmental and international scientific programmes: IOC, MAB, IGCP, IHP, IBSP

Evaluation of the first phase of the International Basic Sciences Programme (IBSP)

Debate 1

Item 3.1 Consideration and adoption of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4)

Debate 2

Item 4.2 Consideration and adoption of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009. Major Programme II – Natural sciences

- Resolutions proposed in Volume 1 of document 34 C/5, 2nd version, and 34 /5, 2nd version, Corrigendum
- Recommendations of the Commission concerning other draft resolutions not retained for adoption *in extenso*
- Draft resolutions not retained
- Total budgetary provision for Major Programme II

Debate 3

Item 3.2 Preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 (35 C/5)

Debate 4

Item 5.10 Renewal of the Operational Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Netherlands on the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education

Noting of report of the Governing Board of the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education on the activities of the Institute

Debate 5

Item 5.6 Establishment of category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO

Part I: Proposed establishment of the Regional Centre for Shared Aquifer Resources Management in Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

Part II: Proposal to grant to the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC) in Utrecht, Netherlands, the status of a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

(ii)

Part VI: Establishment of the international centre of water for food security at Charles Sturt University in Australia, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

Part VIII: Establishment of a regional centre for water management research in arid zones in Pakistan, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

Part III: Establishment of an international centre for South-South cooperation in science, technology and innovation in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

Part XII: Establishment of an international centre on hydroinformatics for integrated water resources management at Itaipú Binacional, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

Part IV: Proposed establishment of a sustainable energy development centre in Moscow, Russian Federation, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

Part VII: Establishment of an international research centre on karst in Guilin, China, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

Part X: Establishment of an institute on a partnership for environmental development (IPED) in Trieste, Italy, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

Noting of report on Strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related centres adopted by the International Hydrological Programme

Debate 6

Item 5.8 Preparation of a Central Asian Renewable Energy (CARE) Programme and organization of the International Donors' Forum for the development of sources of renewable energy in the region

Debate 7

Item 3.3 Overall Review of Major Programmes II and III [in the joint meeting with the SHS Commission]

INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Board, at its 177th session, recommended to the General Conference the nomination of Mr Eriabu LUGUJJO (Uganda) for the office of Chairperson of the SC Commission. At the second plenary meeting, on 16 October 2007, Mr Lugujo was elected Chairperson of the SC Commission.

2. At its first meeting, on 23 October 2007, the Commission approved the proposals submitted by the Nominations Committee for the offices of Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteur. The following were elected by acclamation:

Vice-Chairpersons: Mr Alexander BOKSENBERG (United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Ms Helena ILLNEROVA (Czech Republic)
Mr Ivan Avila BELOSO (Venezuela)
Mr T. RAMASAMI (India)

Rapporteur: Mr S.E.M. Abdulsalam EL-QALLALI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

3. The Commission then adopted the timetable of work submitted in document 34 C/COM.SC/1 Prov.

4. The Commission devoted five meetings, between 23 and 25 October 2007, to the examination of the items on its agenda.

5. The Commission adopted its report at its sixth meeting on 31 October 2007.

Statement on behalf of the Chairpersons of the six intergovernmental and international scientific programmes (IBSP, IGCP, IHP, IOC, MAB, MOST)

6. Mr Sospeter M. Muhongo, Chairperson of the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP), gave a statement on behalf of the Chairpersons of the six intergovernmental and international scientific programmes (IOC, IBSP, IGCP, IHP, MAB and MOST). The joint statement of the Chairpersons of the six scientific programmes to the Director-General and the 34th session of the General Conference is attached as an annex to this report.

Reports by the intergovernmental and international scientific programmes: IOC, MAB, IGCP, IHP, IBSP

7. The Commission took note of reports of the intergovernmental and international scientific programmes: IOC (34 C/REP/8), MAB (34 C/REP/9), IGCP (34 C/REP/10 and Corr.), IHP (34 C/REP/11), IBSP (34 C/REP/22). The Commission took note of the evaluation of the first phase of the International Basic Sciences Programme (IBSP) in document 34 C/INF.11.

DEBATE 1

Item 3.1 Consideration and adoption of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4)

8. At its first meeting on 23 October 2007, the Commission examined item 3.1 – Consideration and adoption of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 (34 C/4). Thirty-seven Member States and one observer took the floor on this item.

9. The item was introduced by the representative of the Director-General, ADG/BSP, who also recalled the earlier informal discussions at the interdisciplinary meeting, the conclusions of which are summarized in document 34 C/INF.18. He explained that the Executive Board discussed draft

document 34 C/4 in its 176th session and made a number of recommendations contained in document 34 C/11. The Director-General had endorsed these recommendations, and hence, it was suggested to use document 34 C/11 as the basis for discussion.

10. ADG/BSP referred the Commission to paragraph 3 of document 34 C/11 which spells out the new mission statement for UNESCO, where science is one of the main pillars. Africa and gender equality have been designated as the only global priorities for UNESCO. He drew attention to the five overarching objectives for the entire Organization and the related 14 strategic programme objectives, all of which were cast in an intersectoral perspective. ADG/BSP explained that in order to ensure a seamless transition between the Strategy and the biennial Programme and Budget for 2008-2009, the strategic programme objectives were translated into a few biennial sectoral priorities under each Major Programme, with a limited number of main lines of action and related expected results and performance indicators. He also highlighted the inclusion of a new section on “Managing for Impact”, which focuses on results-based programming and management and deals with a number of financial and administrative considerations aiming at improving the quality of programme delivery, efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency.

11. Delegates commended the Secretariat and the Executive Board for their tireless efforts on the drafting of the Medium-Term Strategy (C/4 and C/11 documents) that will guide UNESCO’s activities and interventions for the next six years. They acknowledged the efforts to respond to the directions given by the last General Conference, and welcomed the clear statement of overarching and strategic programme objectives, the designation of Africa and gender equality as the only global priorities throughout the period of the Medium-Term Strategy, the specific and targeted interventions envisaged for youth, LDCs and SIDS, as well as the attention to results-based management and the culture of evaluation. One delegate was of the view that, despite improvements, a yet tighter focus on measurable expected outcomes appears desirable and emphasized the need for descriptive indicators to facilitate the assessment of achievements.

12. Appreciation was also expressed for the focus on key issues such as sustainable development, climate change, access to fresh water and disaster preparedness. Many speakers felt that the Draft Medium-Term Strategy has evolved into a better direction through its thematic approach and suggested that future C/5 documents should further refine this thematic programme approach. There was equally unanimous endorsement of the emphasis placed on the role of UNESCO in supporting countries in their efforts to build national capacities for science, technology and innovation and to strengthen national research systems. Overall, the Commission considered that the Draft Medium-Term Strategy for 2008-2013 represents a distinct improvement from past strategies and provides a solid basis and a satisfactory framework for UNESCO’s work over the next six years, as actions contemplated in draft document 34 C/4 have the potential to contribute to peace, poverty alleviation, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue.

13. Two speakers expressed the view that the envisaged programme rather repeated the fragmented, unfocused structure of the previous C/4 document, thus reducing the impact of the Organization, that UNESCO was still trying to do too much with its limited resources and that the Organization would need to confront some difficult choices to make room for new initiatives with strong impact, if it were to regain credibility as a leading science organization within the United Nations family. Others also indicated that they would have liked to see more focus on the observations of the experts’ panel that reviewed MP II and MP III, and pointed to the critical importance for the science portfolio to be rigorously examined on a continuous and regular basis to determine which activities are marginal or duplicative of other international organizations’ endeavours. In this respect, the Secretariat was invited to develop further the mapping of the scientific activities of the United Nations system so as to enable Member States to make an informed judgement regarding the core competencies and the specific role of UNESCO in the field of science. Additionally, some Member States called for an expert and independent assessment of the natural sciences programmes as a standard professional practice in leading scientific institutions, with the aim of strengthening particularly effective programmes.

14. While praising the quality, consistency and scope of the planned actions which are based on UNESCO's mandate and comparative advantages as well as on emerging challenges, several delegates agreed that the resulting expectations are not matched by the very limited resources at UNESCO's disposal, both human and financial. Additional resources and partnerships were seen as necessary to bring science-based solutions to critical economic and social needs, and to enhance the role of science in promoting sustainable development. Accordingly, a greater integration of efforts with a wide range of actors and stakeholders was recommended, and UNESCO was encouraged to forge, strengthen or broaden partnerships with other organizations, including other United Nations institutions, international NGOs and professional organizations, as one effective means of catalysing larger efforts than it can alone oversee. The hope was also expressed that the programme laid out in the Medium-Term Strategy would be managed effectively and efficiently by prioritizing interventions and concentrating resources in implementing the programme to achieve each strategic objective.

15. There was a unanimous call for greater focus on institutional capacity-building, generating and sharing new knowledge and promoting free access to knowledge, providing assistance to Member States to develop appropriate science, technology and innovation policies, and dissemination of best practices. In this respect, support was expressed for UNESCO's endeavours to promote the production, dissemination and use of scientific data and information concerning the Global Earth system and the sustainable use of natural resources in order to support evidence-based policies and decision-making. It was recalled that the outcome of research work made available to Member States for programmes such as IOC, IHP and MAB provided very important data and contributed significantly to the knowledge base in their respective fields. Several delegates emphasized that, in balancing between normative and operational activities, UNESCO should focus on policy advice and capacity-building and that special efforts must be made to sustain scientific capacity both at the individual and institutional levels. They considered that in order for UNESCO science programmes to make a significant difference, the Organization should act as a facilitator of global, regional- and country-level science policy development by improving the base of relevant scientific research knowledge and communicating that knowledge, by promoting policy work and participating in formulating policy advice, as well as by building country capacity in policy making and scientific monitoring and benchmarking.

16. Many delegates very strongly supported the targeting of UNESCO's initiatives, notably with respect to fresh water, environmental protection, climate change, natural resources management, disaster mitigation, basic sciences, etc. The work of IOC was highly commended, particularly in moving forward the tsunami early warning systems, as well as IHP for its leading contribution towards the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) and for its research work on watersheds and aquifers, although a clearer view of UNESCO's approach to the challenge of increasing the number of people with access to safe drinking water was called for by one Member State.

17. While acknowledging that water availability and water quality were primary factors in all ecological processes and that problems raised in relation to drinking water were of immense importance, many speakers emphasized that sustainable development needed to be considered as a whole, particularly with regard to the management of energy, climate change and biodiversity. In this connection, UNESCO's endeavours to support developing countries in dealing with issues pertaining to environmental sustainability, including the formulation and implementation of policies for environmental management and the use of applied research for environmental and sustainable development to address issues of poverty reduction, were welcomed.

18. On the issue of climate change, UNESCO was urged to use the extensive knowledge gained from its longstanding environmental programmes (MAB, IHP, IOC and IGCP) and its unique mandate in the United Nations system with regard to the social and human sciences to assist developing countries, particularly in Africa, to formulate policies and strategies for adaptation to climate change. The view was expressed that there was enormous but unrealized potential for UNESCO to make substantial progress in environmental sustainability and issues of climate

change, as it had access to a large external array of natural, material and intellectual assets within its four major environmental programmes, notably through their national committees, the UNESCO/IHE Institute for Water Education, the relevant category 2 centres and UNESCO Chairs and networks, which collectively represent an enormous resource for the Organization. If strategically reoriented and coordinated, at national and regional levels, these programmes could produce targeted research and monitoring that would achieve new understanding and enable critical policy recommendations to optimize action.

19. In the area of disaster preparedness and mitigation, some delegates considered that UNESCO still needed to determine its specific role in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, more especially in the cross-cutting areas of knowledge management, education and information for disaster preparedness.

20. It was observed that human impact on global environment had not only seriously affected fundamental ecological processes but also ecological services for societies and, in consequence, peaceful coexistence. In several interventions, desertification was highlighted as the main environmental problem in dry lands and a major threat to sustainable development, as it had a very adverse impact on economic development and food security, caused poverty and triggered conflict over use of natural resources. Consequently, UNESCO was invited to strengthen programmes aimed at assisting Member States to address this important issue, if it is to reach its strategic objectives as set out in the proposed Medium-Term Strategy.

21. The fundamental role of science education in capacity-building in science and technology was also emphasized. However, while recognizing that improving curricula and content of science education was needed most, several speakers stressed that training of good quality science teachers would also be critical and that lifelong education of teachers was a key issue in enhancing the quality of science and technology education. Likewise, building human and institutional capacities in the basic sciences, energy and engineering was deemed of critical importance for sustainable development. Renewable energy was considered as a key issue for sustainable development and climate change, especially in the case of Africa where the majority of the population was living without access to modern energy services. Pointing to the need for basic research on future energy sources as well as on sustainable use and sound management at present, some delegates indicated that this could not be carried out without solid knowledge and experience of the basic and engineering sciences. They noted that the basic sciences and the engineering sciences were building blocks for the emergence of core capacities for sustainable development. Hence, IBSP had an important role to play in this regard and, as set out in its new strategy, should focus on promoting science education and institutional capacity-building rather than supporting isolated projects.

22. Throughout the debate, there was a strong emphasis on interdisciplinarity. Delegates welcomed the integration of the ongoing and planned activities in a comprehensive and substantively appropriate manner through promotion of an intersectoral and interdisciplinary approach in addressing complex global challenges that goes beyond the current framework of programmes and sectors of UNESCO. They indicated, however, that in the implementation of the Medium-Term Strategy, it would be necessary to achieve a further integration of efforts in order to ensure coherence of the Organization's action where it involved several programme sectors. Sustainable development was mentioned as an area in which all sectors ought to cooperate, especially the two science sectors. Concrete and tangible manifestations of such cooperation should allow tackling important intersectoral issues, such as the cultural dimensions of the transition to sustainable development.

23. As to the global priorities of document C/4, all speakers expressed the hope that the priority placed on Africa, gender equality and women's empowerment will lead to concrete and convincing results during the forthcoming years. Several speakers called for increased participation of women in science, technology and research through provision of scholarships, grants and awards and, more generally, for greater emphasis on women and youth in science, considering that they

constitute the building blocks that would enable the transformation of developing economies into knowledge-based economies. Addressing the needs of Africa, all delegations commended UNESCO's continued commitment to support the initiative of the African Union on science, technology and innovation for the sustainable development of the continent, and took note that UNESCO was recognized as a strategic partner for the implementation of the NEPAD Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action, in particular for establishing regional network centres of excellence.

24. Member States finally noted that the Medium-Term Strategy was conceived as a rolling strategy to enable the General Conference to make midstream adjustments every two years, if required by external and other circumstances and developments. It was deemed that the possibility to reconsider the 34 C/4 document in 2009 would certainly contribute to increasing the effectiveness of UNESCO's working methods. This should also offer an opportunity to take stock of the sciences review implementation plan.

25. In his response to the debate, ADG/BSP expressed his appreciation for the many supportive comments given to the document and reassured delegates of the firm commitment of the Organization towards interdisciplinarity as well as towards the two global priorities, Africa and gender equality. ADG/SC indicated that efforts for concentrating the programme will be sustained and intensified, starting with the forthcoming preparation of the work plans for the first biennial period of the Medium-Term Strategy. He also informed the Commission that the Sector is currently looking into more quantifiable approaches to capacity-building that transcend all the sciences programmes, so that impact can be more precisely measured.

DEBATE 2

Item 4.2 Consideration and adoption of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009

26. At its first, second and third meetings on 24 and 25 October 2007, the Commission examined item 4.2 – Consideration and adoption of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2008-2009, Major Programme II – Natural Sciences. The item was introduced by the representatives of the Director-General, ADG/BSP and ADG/SC. The representatives of 59 Member States, one non-governmental organization and one observer took the floor.

Draft resolutions proposed in document 34 C/5 (Volume 1)

27. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution proposed in paragraph 02000 of Volume 1 of document 34 C/5 2nd version, and 34 C/5 2nd version Corrigendum and concerning Major Programme II – Natural Sciences as amended by:

- (i) the amendments recommended by the Executive Board contained in paragraph 02000 of documents 34 C/6, 34 C/6 Add. and 34 C/6 Add.2;
- (ii) the following draft resolutions:
 - 34 C/DR.41 (Japan) for subparagraph (iii);
 - 34 C/DR.6 (Islamic Republic of Iran) (as already amended by the Executive Board in 34 C/6 Add. for subparagraph (i));
 - 34 C/DR.58 (Botswana, co-sponsored by Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Swaziland) as amended by the Commission for subparagraph (i);
 - 34 C/DR.5 (Islamic Republic of Iran) as amended by the Commission for subparagraph (ii);

- 34 C/DR.52 (Egypt, co-sponsored by Lebanon and Jordan) as amended by the Commission for subparagraph (ii);
- 34 C/DR.56 (Egypt, co-sponsored by Lebanon and Jordan) as amended by the Commission for subparagraph (ii);
- 34 C/DR.4 (Islamic Republic of Iran) for subparagraph (ii);
- 34 C/DR.38 (Cuba, co-sponsored by Guatemala) as amended by the Commission for main line of action 4, 4th bullet point;
- 34 C/DR.55 (Egypt) as amended by the Commission for subparagraph (iii).

The resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference

1. *Authorizes* the Director-General:

- (a) to implement the following plan of action for Major Programme II, structured around the following two biennial sectoral priorities and four main lines of action, with special emphasis on the needs of Africa, gender equality, youth, LDCs, SIDS and the most vulnerable segments of society, including indigenous peoples, focused on the contributions of science and technology to poverty eradication, peace and sustainable development, and reflecting actions to be undertaken under the relevant intersectoral platforms, in order to:

Biennial sectoral priority 1: Promoting research and technical capacity-building for the sound management of natural resources and for disaster preparedness and mitigation

- (i) with focus on the work of IHP in its seventh phase, and strongly enhanced coordination with the HELP and FRIEND sites, the G-WADI network, the IHP National Committees, the category 1 institute UNESCO-IHE, the water-related category 2 centres and UNESCO Chairs, strengthen scientific approaches for improved water management policies and governance, technical capacity-building and education at all levels and provide avenues for adapting to the impacts of global changes on river basins and aquifers and actively contribute to and strengthen global monitoring, reporting and assessment through WWAP with particular attention to sub-Saharan Africa;
- (ii) strengthen the activities and improve the performance and impact of the MAB Programme, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves including the development of biosphere reserves as learning platforms for sustainable development, including ecotourism, and for environmental management and monitoring, by leveraging resources, improving coordination and promoting cross-cutting and intersectoral activities through a variety of partnerships; reinforce UNESCO's unique role in developing research and capacity-building in geosciences including geobiochemistry through the IGCP Programme; and support the Organization's role in earth observation systems and partnerships with space agencies for monitoring changes in land, water and oceans;
- (iii) strengthen the activities of IOC, as the established intergovernmental body on oceans and coastal zones within the United Nations system, reinforcing its role in improving governance and fostering intergovernmental cooperation through ocean sciences and services in order to improve

understanding of climate change and its impacts, including sea-level rise, ecosystem functioning and biodiversity; continue to observe and monitor the open ocean and coastal seas, to prepare policy recommendations for discussion by Member States and to foster the development of institutional capacity for coastal and marine management and for marine scientific research with a view to contributing to sustainable development, in particular in developing countries, LDCs and SIDS, and to achieving the MDGs; and increase efforts to allocate resources for the benefit of Africa and LDCs, particularly with regard to the consequences of climate change;

- (iv) foster a culture of disaster preparedness for natural and human-induced disasters, including those of a technological nature, at national and regional levels, with a focus on policy advice, mastering and disseminating knowledge, and education for disaster mitigation and response, as well as on the promotion of systems and networks concerned with the assessment and mitigation of hazards, including early warning systems;
- (v) provide sufficient resources to IOC in order to facilitate the implementation of a Global Tsunami Warning System within its efforts to contribute to the development of national and regional capacities for disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation with a special emphasis on women, through a multi-hazard approach, and to assist in the establishment and development of tsunami early warning systems in the Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean and connected seas, and the Caribbean and adjacent seas;

Biennial sectoral priority 2: Strengthening national and regional research and innovation systems, capacity-building, the use of technologies, and scientific networking, and encouraging the development and implementation of science, technology and innovation policies for sustainable development and poverty eradication

- (vi) foster human and institutional capacity-building in science, technology and innovation with a special emphasis on the basic sciences, engineering and energy through efforts at all educational levels, from the most basic to tertiary, and contribute to developing a culture of science education, in close cooperation with IBE, and in collaboration with scientific networks, centres of excellence and non-governmental organizations, encouraging South-South and triangular North-South-South cooperation;
 - (vii) use the tools of science and technology to leverage their contribution towards poverty eradication, sustainable development and the promotion of inclusive education, especially for the girl child, as well as for the building of peace, also through strengthened cooperation between Major Programmes II and III;
 - (viii) promote access to scientific and technical knowledge and basic services through cutting-edge technologies, especially in developing countries, and support and assist Member States in the formulation and implementation of science, technology, innovation and – also within the United Nations energy coordinating structures – energy policies for sustainable development while recognizing the contribution of local and indigenous knowledge;
- (b) to allocate for this purpose an amount of \$20,857,600 for activity costs and \$35,416,700 for staff costs;

2. *Requests the Director-General:*

- (a) to implement the various activities authorized by the present resolution to the maximum extent possible through intersectoral platforms;
- (b) to report in the statutory reports on the achievement of the following expected results, including information on the cost-efficient use of human and financial resources, particularly in the areas of travel, publications and contractual services, for each of the results reported, following the principles of transparency, efficiency and rationalization.

Main line of action 1: Fostering policies, technical capacity-building, research, networking, education and international cooperation in the fields of water, ecological and earth sciences for enhancing societal responses

- Knowledge base relating to the impacts of global change (including climate change) on river basins and aquifer systems improved – particularly in arid and semi-arid regions – via development of adaptation strategies and sharing of strategies with national authorities and other decision-makers.
- Knowledge base relating to sustainable water governance improved, by means of policy-relevant cultural, social and scientific responses, with a special focus on urban water management.
- Freshwater education programme developed within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.
- State of the world's freshwater resources monitored, assessed and reported for improved water management policies and governance.
- Institutional capacities in ecosystem management and applied geosciences strengthened to foster policies, research and learning for reducing biodiversity loss, for mitigating and adapting to global change, and for enhancing earth system understanding and monitoring, including the fight against desertification.
- Sustainable development promoted via establishment of interdisciplinary learning laboratories using sites of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves for research on biodiversity and sustainability.
- Ecological, biodiversity and biological resources management knowledge improved, and capacities enhanced for socio-ecological research including eco-hydrology, to attain the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals.

Main line of action 2: Oceans and coastal zones: improving governance and fostering intergovernmental cooperation through ocean sciences and services

- Management of ocean resources and coastal areas improved via development of policy-relevant information on impacts of climate change and variability on marine ecosystems and coastal zones.
- Healthier ocean ecosystems and sustainable coastal and ocean environments achieved by means of development and diffusion of scientific research, better information and procedures on which policies can be based.
- IOC Biennial Strategy 2008-2009 implemented and results achieved reported to UNESCO governing bodies.

Main line of action 3: Promoting science, knowledge and education for disaster preparedness and mitigation, and enhancing national and regional coping capacities, including through support for the development of risk reduction networks and monitoring and assessment measures, such as tsunami early warning systems

- Risks from tsunamis and other ocean-related hazards reduced through early warning systems and preparedness and mitigation measures.
- Risks from hydrological extremes (floods, droughts, etc.), earthquakes, landslides, volcanoes as well as risks from man-made disasters mitigated through integrated approaches focusing on policy advice, strengthened networks and capacities for monitoring and assessment, knowledge dissemination and education.

Main line of action 4: Supporting science, technology and innovation policies for sustainable development and poverty eradication, and developing capacities in basic sciences, energy and engineering

- Evidence-based national science, technology and innovation policies, integrating the principles of sustainable development and, as appropriate, the contribution of local knowledge, formulated and adopted.
- Policies and practices for sustainable development of SIDS, including in light of climate change, shared within and across SIDS regions.
- National and regional capacities for research, training and education in the basic sciences strengthened to foster applications for societal needs and to encourage careers in science, taking into account gender equity and equality.
- National capacities and knowledge base for the rational and balanced use of alternative sources of energy enhanced, and energy policies, management and conservation for sustainable development promoted with a view to translating them into national development plans that ensure food security and climate change mitigation.
- Human and institutional capacities in engineering, technology and innovation strengthened, with a focus on knowledge management in engineering, engineering policies and a culture of maintenance.

Addressing the needs of Africa

- UNESCO Action Plan developed and implemented in response to the AU action platform for science and technology.
- S&T policies and planning capacities of African Member States strengthened.
- Knowledge transfer and sustainable human and institutional capacity-building improved in order to develop a national culture of maintenance.
- Knowledge base and capacities for local, national and regional water management strengthened.
- Knowledge base and capacities in formulating national energy policies and conducting pilot projects strengthened.
- Initiatives in the fight against desertification encouraged and supported.

- Policy advice delivered to establish national and regional research systems, especially through support to identified centres of excellence.

28. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution proposed in paragraph 02100 of Volume 1 of document 34 C/5 2nd version and 34 C/5 2nd version Corrigendum concerning UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education (UNESCO-IHE) amended by:

- (i) the amendments recommended by the Executive Board contained in paragraph 02100, subparagraphs 1(a), 3 and 4 of document 34 C/6 Add.

The resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Noting the results of the formal evaluation of the 2003-2007 period of the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education as mandated in the Institute's Statutes, and the recommendations of the Executive Board thereon,

Recognizing the vital importance of water education and capacity-building in promoting research and capacity-building for the sound management of natural resources, and the role of UNESCO-IHE therein,

Underlining the valuable contribution being made by UNESCO-IHE in the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and in the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

Conscious that UNESCO-IHE is entirely extrabudgetary and as such represents a unique model among UNESCO's category 1 institutes, requiring innovative and entrepreneurial approaches to management and programme delivery,

Noting the resolution of the seventeenth session of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) that calls on Member States to provide fellowships to students applying for a course at UNESCO-IHE and to provide financial support to research undertaken by UNESCO-IHE,

Noting the resolution of the seventeenth session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP regarding the establishment of a working group to advise and guide UNESCO's work on water education and research,

Noting the resolution of the seventeenth session of the Intergovernmental Council of IHP concerning the development of a strategy for UNESCO's water-related category 1 and category 2 institutes and centres,

1. *Requests* the Governing Board of UNESCO-IHE to continue and intensify its efforts to:
 - (a) further strengthen cooperation with IHP in implementing UNESCO's overall water and sustainable development programme, with special emphasis on the needs of Africa, gender equality, youth, LDCs, SIDS and the most vulnerable segments of society, including indigenous peoples;
 - (b) contribute actively to assisting Member States to attain the necessary expertise and capacities to attain MDG 7;
 - (c) support and help implement activities of the United Nations system, in particular the World Water Assessment Programme;

- (d) ensure the highest degree of excellence in the academic programmes offered by UNESCO-IHE;
 - (e) work in partnership with institutions from the South and North to generate knowledge for development, and further increase the accessibility of this knowledge to Member States;
 - (f) innovate with new ways of delivering education and capacity-building services within developing countries themselves, in particular through distance learning methods;
 - (g) ensure that UNESCO-IHE strengthens linkages with water-related category 2 centres and participates in formulating a strategy for all UNESCO water centres;
2. *Expresses its gratitude* to the Government of the Netherlands as host country to UNESCO-IHE for providing core support that ensures the operation of the Institute, and to the other Member States and institutions that provide support for UNESCO-IHE projects and fellowships;
 3. *Appeals* to Member States to make voluntary contributions to UNESCO-IHE, thus demonstrating commitment to water education and capacity-building;
 4. *Requests* the Director-General to report in the statutory reports on the achievement of the following expected results, including information on the cost-efficient use of human and financial resources, particularly in the areas of travel, publications and contractual services, for each of the results reported, following the principles of transparency, efficiency and rationalization:
 - Impact of water education and training for sustainable development increased, primarily aimed at developing countries.
 - Research capacity in the water sector increased, focusing on MDG-related topics and primarily aimed at solving problems in developing countries.
 - Capacity-building increased through numerous long- and short-term international cooperation programmes to strengthen indigenous capacities of local water-related organizations.
 - Partnerships reinforced to share and develop knowledge and information, and to conduct joint activities in education, research and capacity-building.

29. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt the resolution proposed in paragraph 02200 of Volume 1 of document 34 C/5 2nd version and 34 C/5 2nd version Corrigendum concerning the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) (Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics) amended by:

- (i) the amendments recommended by the Executive Board contained in paragraph 02200, subparagraphs 1 (a) and (d), 4 and 5 of document 34 C/6 Add.

The resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Acknowledging the report of the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) for the 2006-2007 biennium,

Recognizing the important role of ICTP, as a category 1 UNESCO centre, in fostering capacities and knowledge in theoretical and applied physics, pure and applied mathematics, and interdisciplinary areas, with special focus on developing countries, under Major Programme II,

1. *Requests* the ICTP Steering Committee and Scientific Council, in accordance with ICTP Statutes, host country agreements, and the present resolution, when approving the Centre's budget for 2008-2009:
 - (a) to continue to ensure that ICTP goals and activities are in consonance with UNESCO's strategic programme objectives and priorities in the natural sciences, with special emphasis on the needs of Africa, gender equality, youth, LDCs, SIDS and the most vulnerable segments of society, including indigenous peoples;
 - (b) to reinforce ICTP capacity for advanced research, training and networking in the physical and mathematical sciences, as well as interdisciplinary areas, for the benefit of scientists from developing countries, ensuring that staff scientists remain at the forefront of their fields;
 - (c) to support the Centre's efforts in the use of theoretical physics and mathematics to advance scientific understanding of global environmental changes and sustainable development;
 - (d) to strengthen scientific cooperation in areas of common interest with Italian Government research institutions and other interested institutions of Member States of UNESCO, especially from developing countries, within the core mandate of UNESCO, with the International Atomic Energy Agency and with other concerned entities in the United Nations system;
2. *Authorizes* the Director-General to support ICTP by providing a financial allocation of \$1,015,000 under Major Programme II;
3. *Expresses its gratitude* to the International Atomic Energy Agency, to the Italian Government which gives a substantial financial contribution and provides premises for the Centre free of charge, and to the Member States and foundations that have supported the Centre through voluntary contributions, and *invites* them to continue their support in 2008-2009 and beyond;
4. *Appeals* to Member States, international organizations, donor agencies, foundations and the private sector to provide or renew support to enable ICTP to implement and expand the activities envisaged for the 2008-2009 biennium;
5. *Requests* the Director-General to report in the statutory reports on the achievement of the following expected results, including information on the cost-efficient use of human and financial resources, particularly in the areas of travel, publications and contractual services, for each of the results reported, following the principles of transparency, efficiency and rationalization:
 - Advanced research training of scientists, especially women and young scientists, and university teaching staff in physics and mathematics enhanced.
 - South-South and North-South-South cooperation and activities in Africa strengthened.
 - Synergies with other organizational units contributing to Major Programme II enhanced.

Recommendations of the Commission concerning other draft resolutions not retained for adoption *in extenso*

30. The Commission informs the General Conference that the draft resolutions listed below for paragraph 02000 were not retained for inclusion *in extenso* in the records of the General Conference.

31. 34 C/DR.6 (Islamic Republic of Iran) – The draft resolution proposes adding “and category 2 water-related institutes and centres” at the end of subparagraph (i). The financial implications of the request are \$110,000 from the regular budget, MLA 2 specifically. Having examined this draft resolution, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that the draft resolution is retained, but without the financial implications as its scope is already foreseen in the freshwater programme, that is, the “Strategy for UNESCO category 1 and category 2 water-related centres” has as one of its main objectives networking and the coordinated operation of the water-related centres. A reference to “the category 1 institute UNESCO-IHE and the water-related category 2 centres” was already introduced in 34 C/6 Add. and approved by the Commission. The necessity of extrabudgetary resources for a project proposed in the draft resolution was noted by the Commission and the Islamic Republic of Iran agreed to assist the Secretariat in raising extrabudgetary funds.

32. 34 C/DR.58 (Botswana, co-sponsored by Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland) – The draft resolution proposed adding the words “extend support to regional projects such as SIMDAS” to subparagraph (a)(i). The budgetary implication in the amount of \$200,000 was requested to be financed from regular budget and extrabudgetary resources for this programme. Having examined this draft resolution, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that the draft resolution is retained as amended by the Commission, adding the words “with particular attention to sub-Saharan Africa” to subparagraph (a)(i) without the financial implications to the regular programme as extrabudgetary resources would be required.

33. 34 C/DR.5 (Islamic Republic of Iran) – The draft resolution proposes to insert in subparagraph (a)(ii), after the words “the World Network of Biosphere Reserves”, additional wording “and their management; ...”, and to provide \$110,000 from the regular budget, MLA 2 specifically, for this purpose in order to develop a pilot project. Having examined this draft resolution, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that the draft resolution is retained without the financial implications, with wording as amended by the Commission, to address the requested amendment in this draft resolution as well as wording changes requested in draft resolutions 52 and 56. It was recommended that funding be sought from extrabudgetary sources.

34. 34 C/DR.52 (Egypt, co-sponsored by Lebanon, Jordan) and 34 C/DR.56 (Egypt, co-sponsored by Lebanon, Jordan) – The draft resolutions propose additional wording to paragraph 02000, subparagraph 1(a)(ii) to emphasize management, environmental evaluation, environmental monitoring and conservation in the context of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The financial implications are \$64,000 and \$72,000, respectively, both proposed from the regular budget. Having examined these draft resolutions, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that these draft resolutions are retained without the financial implications, noting that, as stated in 34 C/8/SC, the Director-General considers it possible to accommodate these activities within the existing programme and budget. The Commission agreed to amendments to paragraph 1 (a)(ii) to reflect the requested wording changes of these two draft resolutions as suggested by the Director-General contained in document 34 C/8/SC.

35. 34 C/DR.4 (Islamic Republic of Iran) – The draft resolution proposes to amend the wording by adding after “... and capacity-building in geosciences ...” in subparagraph 1(a)(ii), the words “including geobiochemistry”. The budgetary implication amounts to \$110,000 from the regular budget for a regional research pilot project. Having examined this draft resolution, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that this draft resolution is retained without the financial

implications. The Commission recommends the amended wording proposed by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Commission encourages the Islamic Republic of Iran to submit a detailed internationally supported project proposal on geobiochemistry to the IGCP Scientific Board for evaluation. If the proposal is successful, seed money – not exceeding \$10,000 – could be provided from IGCP, with the understanding that extrabudgetary resources would need to be sought.

36. 34 C/DR.38 (Cuba, co-sponsored by Guatemala) – The draft resolution proposes to insert a reference in paragraph (a)(ii) to study the need for a social, economic and scientific-technological approach which will enable the rational and balanced use of renewable energies and which will contribute to climate change mitigation, food security and sustainable human development. According to the sponsor, there are no financial implications. Having examined this draft resolution, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that this draft resolution is retained but not adopted *in extenso*. The Commission agreed on an amendment so that the idea expressed in the draft resolution would be accommodated in main line of action 4, fourth bullet point rather than paragraph (a)(ii). The draft resolution was amended accordingly.

37. 34 C/DR.55 (Egypt) – The draft resolution proposes to place special emphasis on environmental hazards at coasts due to sea-level rise in the Arab region in the development of institutional capacity for coastal and marine management, and requested an amendment to paragraph (a)(iii). The draft resolution has a budgetary implication of \$50,000 for the regular budget. Having examined this draft resolution, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that this draft resolution is retained but without the financial implications. The Commission, however, agreed on adding a general reference to sea-level rise as a consequence of climate change, without specifying any geographical emphasis. The priority to the Arab region proposed in the draft resolution can be taken into account when the Secretariat prepares the work plans.

38. 34 C/DR.19 (Finland, co-sponsored by Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden) – The draft resolution proposes a number of amendments, including modifying resolution 02000 by changing:

- biennial sectoral priority 2 by deleting the reference to a special emphasis on the basic sciences;
- the order of biennial sectoral priorities 1 and 2, and the order of the subparagraphs under (the existing) biennial sectoral priority 2.

The Commission noted that the requested amendment to the wording of biennial sectoral priority 2 was no longer applicable, as the Executive Board had recommended changes in 34 C/6 Add. that were congruent with this request. The decision on the ordering of biennial sectoral priorities in paragraph 02000 of the draft resolution for the natural sciences, together with the decision on other proposals within draft resolution 19, were postponed to the joint meeting of the SC and SHS Commissions.

39. 34 C/DR.43 (Kenya, co-sponsored by Benin, Chile, Denmark, Poland, Russian Federation) – seeks to reinforce UNESCO's action for capacity-building in the basic sciences referred to in subparagraph (vi) [34 C/6 Add.] of paragraph 02000 through a new major action for promoting science education in the least developed countries, and strengthening national capacities of African countries in the use of biological sciences for development. The draft resolution indicates budgetary implications in the amount of \$700,000 (including \$400,000 through redistribution, on a pro rata basis, of budgetary resources within Major Programme II; and \$300,000 from extrabudgetary resources). Having examined this draft resolution, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that this draft resolution is retained but without the financial implications. The Commission recommends that funding be sought from extrabudgetary resources.

40. 34 C/DR.54 (Egypt) – The draft resolution calls for particular attention to women in the context of disaster preparedness and developing national and regional capacities for disaster

preparedness and mitigation. The financial implication amounts to \$70,000 from the regular programme. Having examined this draft resolution, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that this draft resolution is retained but without the financial implications. There would not be financial implications as the current programme implementation will give due attention to women.

Draft resolution referred to the Joint Meeting of all Commissions

41. 34 C/DR.39 (Brazil, co-sponsored by Guatemala, Peru, Portugal, Saint Lucia) – The draft resolution proposes to amend the draft resolution in paragraph 02000 by adding a new subparagraph after (b) to read as follows: “(c) to allocate an amount of \$4,364,300 for the implementation of the IOC Programme and Budget for 2008-2009”.

This proposal is based on the Programme and Budget Resolution IOC XXIV-15 adopted by the IOC Assembly last June, requesting a net increase to the IOC budget of \$1,045,000, for:

- (i) additional investment in the area of climate change and impacts and adaptation strategies for coastal regions, specifically for the benefit of Africa, small island developing States and least developed countries: \$420,000;
- (ii) additional support for the response to the risks posed by tsunamis, and specifically within actions associated with the development of tsunami early warning systems: \$250,000;
- (iii) new support to provide additional actions in the prevention and mitigation of natural hazards and, in particular, to extend the level of activity, across all lines of IOC: \$175,000; and
- (iv) the global reporting process for assessment of the marine environment: \$200,000.

Having examined this draft resolution, the Commission recommends to the General Conference that this draft resolution is retained, hence expressing its support to increasing the budget of IOC from parts of the budget, other than Part II, for which a budgetary decision is to be made at the joint meeting of all Commissions. The Commission further decided to make a strong statement objecting to the general reduction in the budget of Major Programme II and the Commission calls for more resources for natural sciences, including the other ISPs besides IOC.

Draft resolutions not retained

42. The Commission examined 34 C/DR.19 (submitted by Finland and co-sponsored by Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) in a joint meeting with the SHS Commission. The two Commissions decided to examine 34 C/DR.19 paragraph by paragraph. The Commission informs the General Conference that paragraphs 1 and 2 were not retained and paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were withdrawn by the authors.

The Commission also informs the General Conference that the draft resolution below was not retained:

- 34 C/DR 36 (Cuba, co-sponsored by Guatemala).

Budget

43. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it approve the budget provision of \$20,857,600 for activity costs and \$35,416,700 for staff costs in paragraph 02000 for Major Programme II – Natural sciences, it being understood that this amount is subject to adjustment in the light of the decision taken by the General Conference on the budget ceiling and by the joint meeting of the Programme Commissions and the Administrative Commission.

DEBATE 3

Item 3.2 Preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 (35 C/5)

44. At its fourth meeting on 25 October 2007, the Commission examined item 3.2 – Preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011 (35 C/5). The representatives of 23 Member States took the floor on this item.

45. In introducing this item, the representative of the Director-General (from BSP) recalled that the purpose of the discussions under this agenda item was to initiate the debate on the structure and content of document 35 C/5, focusing on a range of relevant issues outlined in document 34 C/7. He indicated that the 2010-2011 Programme and Budget (35 C/5) would constitute the second biennium of the new Medium-Term Strategy (34 C/4), and would therefore need to be prepared within the overall strategic framework provided by that document. Accordingly, the overarching and strategic programme objectives of document 34 C/4 shall continue to be implemented during this second biennial programme and budget cycle. Delegates were invited to provide their views about desirable future programme orientations and biennial sectoral priorities as well as on other aspects of the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2010-2011, in particular the issues identified in paragraphs 3(a) through 3(l) of document 34 C/7. The representative of the Director-General observed that the list of issues was not exhaustive and was not presented in any order of priority. Finally, he drew the attention of the Commission to available information on recent programme performance as set in paragraph 1 of document 34 C/7.

46. Several delegates expressed the view that the availability of information on programme performance (progress or extent of achievement of the expected outcomes of document 34 C/4 and expected results of document 34 C/5) would be key in enabling Member States to decide on strategic changes to be made in the programme. Likewise, a needs assessment to inform any decision with respect to document 35 C/5 was deemed critical. Support for the continued application and refinement of the results-based programming approach was also expressed. Additionally, the point was made that future C/5 documents should better reflect the thematic programme approach applied for document 34 C/5.

47. One Member State invited UNESCO, in preparing the next C/5 document, to analyse and articulate its comparative advantages, especially with respect to its successful environmental science programmes, such as IOC, IHP and MAB. The suggestion was also made to improve the visibility of UNESCO through partnering with other organizations with a leading role in science and technology.

48. The need to concentrate resources on a limited number of key activities was emphasized by many Member States. Some Member States called for the development and application of sunset clauses to determine when an activity or project should be phased out. Some delegates remarked that the seven MLAs proposed in draft document 34 C/5 were too numerous and should not be renewed “as is”. They strongly pleaded for a narrowing down of the focus of the programme from the current seven MLAs to a possible range of three to five MLAs.

49. One Member State called for a new type of programming and for a new way to identify and formulate results. He explained that a solid needs assessment, notably at the country level, complemented by the setting of priorities within available resources, would be a prerequisite for the programme to stay relevant and to make a tangible impact. This would be in consonance with the ongoing United Nations reform efforts, including the “Delivering as One” pilots that equally required needs assessment and priority-setting. This should also allow a stronger focus on fewer programmes and an alignment of UNESCO’s programmatic and capacity-development work with critical national development needs. In this respect, the proposed creation of an independent advisory body of eminent scientists stemming from the recommendations of the Overall Review Committee of MP II and MP III was supported by a number of Member States. Other delegates argued to the contrary on the grounds that Member States needed to retain responsibility for the

definition of the strategic orientations and priorities of the Organization. Additionally, they felt that there was no need for another programme layer that would induce significant additional costs, particularly in the context of current budgetary constraints.

50. In consonance with the conclusions of the interdisciplinary meeting held during the present session of the General Conference, there was a general agreement that the main focus of the forthcoming Programme and Budget should be on Africa and gender equality as global priorities and on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the most marginalized groups, the regions of the world experiencing the greatest challenges, in particular Africa and SIDS. Developing countries should be the main beneficiaries of the science programmes, which should be targeted in particular on contributing to meeting Africa's priorities as reflected in Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action and on furthering gender equality and women's empowerment. More work should be done in assisting countries to develop science and technology policies and to promote the role of women in science and technology, notably in the context of the ongoing country programming processes, including the "Delivering as One" United Nations pilots. In this connection, several Member States called for a better reflection and integration of the Organization's science programmes at the country level in United Nations reform and common country programming processes.

51. With respect to intersectorality, one speaker felt that UNESCO should aim at abolishing the notion of sectoral priorities and recommended that for document 35 C/5 there be a common set of priorities for both the sciences programmes, preferably not exceeding three. Failing that, the demonstration should be made that appropriate links were established between the exact and natural sciences and the social and human sciences. More generally, a significant strengthening of intersectorality was called for by many delegates, especially between the two sciences programmes and the Education Sector in order to strengthen the links between science and education that should be mutually supportive, as observed by one delegate. One Member State stated that interdisciplinarity should also be implemented at the country level and that the various bodies associated with UNESCO at the country level (National Commissions, National Committees of the Intergovernmental Science Programmes (ISP), and other local authorities) would need to learn to perform better as a team, also in order to raise the profile of the Organization, within the general context of United Nations reform.

52. The view was expressed that UNESCO must focus on fostering policies that promote science and awareness-raising on the role of science and scientists in human development. Emphasis was placed by several delegates on the promotion of a culture of science, including at the grassroots level, which should be given a prominent profile in document 35 C/5 through education for science. Such development will assist Member States in getting young people into science and encouraging them to embark upon scientific careers. The discussion also revealed that the challenge of increasing the number of people with access to safe drinking water would need to be addressed more vigorously in the next C/5 document, targeting primarily countries experiencing water scarcity problems. One speaker stated that the solutions to these problems were among the preconditions to eradicating poverty and, hence, would justify that priority be given to freshwater.

53. Beyond the general purpose of furthering the contribution of science, technology and innovation to reaching the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs and the EFA goals, other substantive or topical issues mentioned as deserving particular attention in preparing document 35 C/5 include:

- support for the formulation and implementation of policies and strengthening of capacities in science and technology, taking into account the needs of the socio-economic environment;
- evaluation of the effectiveness of science systems;

- science education with emphasis on partnerships and sharing of best practices;
- mathematics teaching, especially in Africa and other developing countries;
- application of remote sensing data from earth-observing satellites for integrated management of ecosystems and water resources.

54. In anticipation of the next biennial budget, virtually all members of the Commission pronounced that UNESCO should stop funding its other programmes and activities at the expense of Major Programme II, and that there should be no further cuts in the science programmes which would rather require budgetary strengthening. On another tone, the Secretariat was urged to ensure that the assessed regular budget and the voluntary extrabudgetary resources are optimally linked and that such linkage is clearly established in the next C/5 document. A better balance between staff and programme costs was also called for. Finally, one speaker referred to the current situation of the regional office in Nairobi and requested the allocation of sufficient resources so that it can carry out effectively its regional functions in science and technology for the continent.

55. With regard to the suggestion to align in a more holistic manner the regular programme resources with extrabudgetary funds, the representative of the Director-General informed the Commission that such an alignment was being vigorously pursued in the context of the new action plan for extrabudgetary resources. He pointed out however that, given their voluntary nature, it would be difficult to include extrabudgetary resources in appropriation resolutions by the General Conference. Concerning the “Delivering as One” United Nations initiative, he indicated that UNESCO was already actively contributing to the common United Nations country programming processes and to other national planning exercises through its field offices, backed up by Headquarters. He recognized that further efforts were still required to bring the science component more visibly into the UNDAF frameworks and result matrices, and indicated that steps were currently being taken by the Science Sector for a more active and systematic involvement in country programming processes. Concerning the ratio of staff to programme costs, the representative of the Director-General explained that the perception might be misleading as staff members service both the regular programme and extrabudgetary projects.

56. At the end of the discussion, the representative of the Director-General indicated that the views expressed during the debate would be faithfully reflected in the Commission’s report, which will constitute one of the reference documents that will be considered during the forthcoming Director-General’s consultations for the preparation of document 35 C/5.

DEBATE 4

Item 5.10 Renewal of the Operational Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Netherlands on the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education

57. At its fourth meeting on 25 October 2007, the Commission examined item 5.1 – Renewal of the Operational Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Netherlands on the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education. The item was introduced by the representative of the Director-General, ADG/SC and Mr R. Meganck, the Director of UNESCO-IHE. The representatives of 13 Member States took the floor on this item.

58. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it take note of document 34 C/REP/21, “Report of the Governing Board of the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education on the activities of the Institute (2006-2007)”.

59. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 30 of document 34 C/47. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling its decision to create the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education (31 C/Resolution 16),

Reiterating the importance of freshwater within UNESCO's programme and within the MDGs, and the role and responsibility of the Organization in providing the requisite education, training and capacity-building services needed by Member States,

Having considered document 34 C/47,

1. *Welcomes* and *endorses* the positive assessments of work undertaken by the Institute since it became part of UNESCO in 2003;
2. *Underscores* the importance of ensuring the long-term financial viability of the Institute, in order to ensure continuity of education and capacity-building services deemed of strategic importance to Member States;
3. *Expresses* once again its sincere appreciation to the authorities of the Government of the Netherlands for its valuable financial support to the Institute, and *also thanks* other donors for their support;
4. *Recalls* that UNESCO-IHE operates entirely on extrabudgetary support;
5. *Recognizes* that this is a unique model within UNESCO which implies particular challenges;
6. *Strongly encourages* all parties to give serious consideration to all of the recommendations of the external evaluation of UNESCO-IHE;
7. *Joins* the 17th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme (resolution XVII-1) in strongly encouraging other Member States, international institutions and donors to increase their support for UNESCO-IHE, and in advocating continued strengthening of linkages between UNESCO-IHP and UNESCO-IHE, as also recommended in the external evaluation;
8. *Hereby authorizes* the Director-General to renew the Operational Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Netherlands for a period of five years (2008-2012), provided that no cost or financial risk is incurred by the Organization, and before the expiry date of the current agreement (1 May 2008).

DEBATE 5

Item 5.6 Establishment of category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO

60. At its fourth meeting on 25 October 2007, the Commission examined item 5.6 – Establishment of category 2 centres under the auspices of UNESCO. The item was introduced by the representative of the Director-General, ADG/SC. Interventions on this item in the ensuing debate were made by the representatives of 32 Member States.

61. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it take note of document 177 EX/INF.9, Strategy for UNESCO's category 1 and category 2 water-related centres adopted by the International Hydrological Programme.

Part I: Proposed establishment of the Regional Centre for Shared Aquifer Resources Management in Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

62. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 2 in Part I of document 34 C/40. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 33 C/Resolution 90 and 176 EX/Decision 14,

Further recalling resolution XV-10 adopted at the 15th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme in June 2002,

Having examined document 34 C/40 Part I,

1. *Welcomes* the proposal of the Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to establish the Regional Centre for Shared Aquifer Resources Management under the auspices of UNESCO which is in conformity with 33 C/Resolution 90, relating to the principles and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (category 1 and 2);
2. *Approves* the establishment of the Regional Centre for Shared Aquifer Resources Management in Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, under the auspices of UNESCO, as recommended by the Executive Board at its 176th session (176 EX/Decision 14);
3. *Invites* the Director-General to sign the corresponding Agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya contained in Annex II to document 176 EX/14.

Part II: Proposal to grant to the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC) in Utrecht, Netherlands, the status of a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

63. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 2 in Part II of document 34 C/40. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 33 C/Resolution 90 and 176 EX/Decision 15,

Further recalling resolution XV-11 adopted at the 14th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme in June 2000,

Having examined document 34 C/40 Part II,

1. *Welcomes* the proposal of the Government of the Netherlands to place the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC) under the auspices of UNESCO, which is in conformity with 33 C/Resolution 90, relating to the principles and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (category 1 and 2);
2. *Approves* the granting to the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC), in Utrecht, Netherlands, of the status of category 2 centre under the auspices

of UNESCO, as recommended by the Executive Board at its 176th session (176 EX/Decision 15);

3. *Authorizes* the Director-General to sign the corresponding Agreement contained in Annex II to document 176 EX/15.

Part VI: Establishment of the international centre of water for food security at Charles Sturt University in Australia, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

64. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 2 in Part VI of document 34 C/40 as amended orally by Australia. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 33 C/Resolution 90 and 177 EX/Decision 11,

Further recalling IHP-IC Resolution XVII-3 adopted at the 17th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) in July 2006,

Having examined document 34 C/40 Part VI,

1. *Welcomes* the proposal of the Government of Australia to place the IHP international centre of water for food security (IC-WATER), under the auspices of UNESCO, which is in conformity with 33 C/Resolution 90, relating to the principles and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (category 1 and 2);
2. *Approves* the granting, in principle, to the IHP international centre of water for food security (IC-WATER) in Australia, of the status of category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO, as recommended by the Executive Board at its 177th session (177 EX/Decision 11);
3. *Delegates* to the Executive Board the final decision to authorize the Director-General to conclude and, after the Executive Board has approved the terms, sign an agreement between UNESCO and the Government of Australia.

Part VIII: Establishment of a regional centre for water management research in arid zones in Pakistan, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

65. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 2 in Part VIII of document 34 C/40. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 33 C/Resolution 90 and 177 EX/Decision 15,

Further recalling IHP-IC Resolution XVII-2 adopted at the 17th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) in July 2006,

Having examined document 34 C/40 Part VIII,

1. *Welcomes* the proposal of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to establish a regional centre for water management research in arid zones under the auspices of UNESCO, and *requests* that the Government of Pakistan ensures that it is in line with the guiding principles for UNESCO's strategy for water centres as

delineated by the IHP Intergovernmental Council (IHP/IC-XVII/8, July 2006), that forms the basis for the strategy for UNESCO water centres currently under consideration by the Intergovernmental Council of IHP, as well as in conformity with document 33 C/19 relating to the principles and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (categories 1 and 2) as approved by the General Conference in 33 C/Resolution 90;

2. *Approves* the establishment of the regional centre for water management research in arid zones in Pakistan, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO, as recommended by the Executive Board at its 177th session (177 EX/Decision 15);
3. *Authorizes* the Director-General to sign the corresponding Agreement contained in Annex II to document 177 EX/15.

Part III: Establishment of an international centre for South-South cooperation in science, technology and innovation in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

66. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 2 in Part III of document 34 C/40. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 33 C/Resolution 23 (I.5.xi) which authorizes the Director-General to follow up the Doha Plan of Action,

Further recalling 33 C/Resolution 90 and 176 EX/Decision 16,

Having examined document 34 C/40 Part III,

1. *Welcomes* the proposal of the Government of Malaysia to establish the International Centre for South-South Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation in Kuala Lumpur under the auspices of UNESCO, which is in conformity with 33 C/Resolution 90 relating to the principles and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO;
2. *Approves* the establishment of the International Centre for South-South Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, under the auspices of UNESCO, as recommended by the Executive Board at its 176th session (176 EX/Decision 16);
3. *Authorizes* the Director-General to sign the corresponding agreement between UNESCO and the Government of Malaysia, presented in the annex to document 176 EX/16.

Part XII: Establishment of an international centre on hydroinformatics for integrated water resources management at Itaipú Binacional, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

67. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 2 in Part XII of document 34 C/40. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 171 EX/Decision 23 and 177 EX/Decision 66,

Further recalling Resolution XVII-4 adopted at the 17th session of the Intergovernmental Council of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) in July 2006,

Having examined document 34 C/40 Part XII,

1. *Welcomes* the proposal of the Governments of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Republic of Paraguay to establish the international centre on hydroinformatics under the auspices of UNESCO at Itaipú Binacional, which is to be done in conformity with document 33 C/19 relating to the principles and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (categories 1 and 2) as approved by the General Conference in 33 C/Resolution 90;
2. *Approves* the establishment of the international centre on hydroinformatics under the auspices of UNESCO at Itaipú Binacional (Brazil, Paraguay) as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO, as recommended by the Executive Board at its 177th session (177 EX/Decision 66);
3. *Authorizes* the Director-General to sign the Agreement presented in Annex II to document 177 EX/66 concerning the future establishment of the International Centre on Hydroinformatics, as a centre under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2).

Part IV: Proposed establishment of a sustainable energy development centre in Moscow, Russian Federation, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

68. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 2 in Part IV of document 34 C/40, as amended orally by Egypt. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 33 C/Resolution 90 and 176 EX Decision 17,

Having examined document 34 C/40 Part IV,

1. *Welcomes* the proposal of the Government of the Russian Federation to establish the International Sustainable Energy Development Centre under the auspices of UNESCO, which is in line with the principles and guidelines for institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2) as adopted by the General Conference in 33 C/Resolution 90;
2. *Approves* the establishment of the International Sustainable Energy Development Centre in Moscow, Russian Federation, under the auspices of UNESCO, as recommended by the Executive Board at its 176th session (176 EX/Decision 17);
3. *Authorizes* the Director-General to sign the corresponding agreement between UNESCO and the Government of the Russian Federation presented in the Annex to document 176 EX/17.

Part VII: Establishment of an international research centre on karst in Guilin, China, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

69. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 2 in Part VII of document 34 C/40. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 33 C/Resolution 90 and 177 EX/Decision 13,

Further recalling Resolution IGCP 35/1 adopted at the 35th session of the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP) Scientific Board in February 2007 (Annex I of document 177 EX/13),

Having examined document 34 C/40 Part VII,

1. *Welcomes* the proposal of the Government of the People's Republic of China to establish an international research centre on karst in Guilin, China, under the auspices of UNESCO, which is in conformity with 33 C/Resolution 90 relating to the principles and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (categories 1 and 2);
2. *Approves* the granting to the international research centre on karst of the status of category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO, in accordance with the recommendation made by the Executive Board at its 177th session (177 EX/Decision 13);
3. *Authorizes* the Director-General to sign the corresponding agreement contained in Annex II of document 177 EX/13, as amended by 177 EX/Decision 13.

Part X: Establishment of an institute on a partnership for environmental development (IPED) in Trieste, Italy, as a category 2 centre under the auspices of UNESCO

70. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution proposed in paragraph 2 in Part X of document 34 C/40, as amended orally by Egypt. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 33 C/Resolution 90 and 177 EX/Decision 10,

Having examined document 34 C/40 Part X,

1. *Welcomes* the proposal submitted by the Government of Italy for the establishment in Trieste of an international institute on a partnership for environmental development (IPED) under the auspices of UNESCO (category 2) which is to be in conformity with document 33 C/19 relating to the principles and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of institutes and centres under the auspices of UNESCO (categories 1 and 2) as approved by the General Conference in 33 C/Resolution 90;
2. *Approves* the establishment in Trieste of an international institute on a partnership for environmental development (IPED), as a category 2 institute under the auspices of UNESCO, as recommended by the Executive Board at its 177th session (177 EX/Decision 10);
3. *Authorizes* the Director-General to sign the corresponding Agreement contained in Annex II to document 177 EX/10 at such time as he has received from the Italian Government the relevant documentation confirming that it has established the institute in accordance with the terms of the feasibility study and of the agreement annexed to the aforementioned document (177 EX/10).

DEBATE 6**Item 5.8 Preparation of a Central Asian Renewable Energy (CARE) Programme and organization of the International Donors' Forum for the development of sources of renewable energy in the region**

71. At its fifth meeting on 25 October 2007, the Commission examined item 5.8 – Preparation of a Central Asian Renewable Energy (CARE) Programme and organization of the International Donors' Forum for the development of sources of renewable energy in the region. The item was introduced by the distinguished delegate of Kazakhstan. Interventions on this item in the ensuing debate were made by the representatives of 20 Member States and one observer.

72. The Commission recommends to the General Conference that it adopt, for the Records of the General Conference, the resolution in Annex II of document 34 C/44 as amended by the Commission. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Having examined document 34 C/44,

Taking into consideration 171 EX/Decision 61 of the Executive Board on the organization of a UNESCO regional ministerial conference on the strategic role of renewable energies in sustainable development in Central Asia in Almaty (Kazakhstan), which was held from 17 to 19 May 2006 (hereinafter referred to as the Almaty Conference), and bearing in mind document 34 C/5,

Referring to the decisions of the Almaty Conference Declaration and considering the particular importance of the use of renewable energy sources for remote and rural areas in arid and semi-arid zones, particularly in Central Asia,

1. *Takes note* with satisfaction of the decisions of the Almaty Conference aimed at developing and implementing a Central Asian Renewable Energy (CARE) Programme;
2. *Requests* the Director-General to report to the Executive Board at its 179th session on the consultations he has undertaken with other organizations concerned on the means of achieving coordinated use of resources in implementing the Almaty Declaration.

DEBATE 7**Item 3.3 Overall review of Major Programmes II and III [in the joint meeting with the SHS Commission]**

73. The SC Commission examined item 3.3 – Overall review of Major Programmes II and III, jointly with the SHS Commission.

74. The representatives of 42 Member States, of one non-Member State and two non-governmental organizations took the floor.

75. The SC and SHS Commissions recommend to the General Conference that it adopt, for the records of the General Conference, the resolution contained in paragraph 16 of document 34 C/13, as amended orally by the Commission. The text of the resolution reads as follows:

The General Conference,

Recalling 33 C/Resolution 2 concerning the review of Major Programmes II (Natural sciences) and III (Social and human sciences),

Having examined document 34 C/13 and 34 C/INF.13,

Having also examined the Implementation Plan, building on the recommendations of the Review Committee and the Director-General's comments,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* of the work of the Overall Review Committee as a valuable and timely contribution to further the relevance and effectiveness of UNESCO's activities in the natural and social and human sciences;
2. *Takes note* of the strengths as well as the weaknesses identified by the Overall Review Committee and *notes* the decision of the Executive Board at its 176th session (176 EX/Decision 7), which calls for the Committee's recommendations along with the Director-General's comments to be taken into account in documents 34 C/4 and 34 C/5;
3. *Notes also* the Director-General's consultations on the implementation of the Review Committee's recommendations as appropriate, also called for in 176 EX/Decision 7;
4. *Further notes* the creation by the Director-General of an Internal Task Force on Major Programmes II and III;
5. *Acknowledges* the overview of scientific programmes and initiatives in the United Nations system, and *welcomes* the Director-General's commitment to further develop the overview with an analysis of its implications for UNESCO;
6. *Encourages* the Director-General, in carrying out the Implementation Plan, to conduct wide-ranging consultations with the scientific community, including the external members of the former Science Review Panel (Overall Review Committee for Major Programmes II and III);
7. *Requests* that the Director-General present a report on the progress that has been made on the Implementation Plan to the Executive Board at its 181st session;
8. *Invites* the Director-General to take into account the above-mentioned overview as well as the agreed recommendations of the Overall Science Review when preparing document 35 C/5, and to present a comprehensive report on this topic to the 35th session of the General Conference.

ANNEX

Joint statement of the Chairpersons of the six intergovernmental and international scientific programmes to the Director-General and the 34th session of the General Conference

**Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)
International Basic Sciences Programme (IBSP)
International Geoscience Programme (IGCP)
International Hydrological Programme (IHP)
Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)
Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST)**

Meeting of the Chairpersons
(Paris, 22-23 October 2007)

Fully conscious that our meeting takes place at a key juncture for strengthening science in UNESCO, given the will of the Organization's Member States to strengthen its action in these fields and to enable UNESCO to make significant contributions to United Nations-wide initiatives in various critical domains,

I

1. We have taken full cognizance of the recommendations of the Review Committee on Major Programmes II (Natural sciences) and III (Social and human sciences), of the comments of UNESCO's Director-General and of the decision of the Executive Board thereon (176 EX/7), and the views of each programme on the Review Committee's recommendations as expressed to the Director-General.
2. We have taken note of the follow-up ensured to date to those recommendations as reflected in draft documents 34 C/4 and 34 C/5 and, in particular, in the implementation plan submitted by the Director-General to the 34th session of the General Conference in document 34 C/13, on the basis of the work of the internal Task Force he established in 2007.
3. We have taken into consideration the nature, scope and modalities of UNESCO's contribution to the implementation of the Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology in Africa as approved by UNESCO's Executive Board at its 177th session.
4. We have also taken note that UNESCO is currently engaged in the development of an intersectoral and integrated strategy on UNESCO's contribution to dealing with major challenges relating to global climate change, an issue of major concern to all the intergovernmental and international scientific programmes (ISPs).
5. In that context, we wish to underline the need to take fully into account for future action the important achievements of UNESCO's ISPs in the fields of the oceans, basic sciences, geosciences, fresh water, ecology and biodiversity and social transformations, for the advancement of scientific research, science-policy linkages, the strengthening of capacities, sustainable development, and the achievement of the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals.
6. We emphasize that while the achievement of the objectives set out in the major programming documents referred to above could certainly place UNESCO in a much better position in the field of the natural and the social and human sciences, it also requires a higher and sustainable level of staffing and funding over the period covered by the Draft Medium-Term Strategy.

II

In the light of the above considerations, we the Chairpersons of the ISPs have decided:

7. To strengthen and enhance our shared role as a scientific advisory body to UNESCO as a whole, given the intrinsic intersectoral nature of the strategic objectives of the Draft Medium-Term Strategy and the Review Committee's recommendations, in close cooperation with the internal Task Force established by the Director-General and the relevant international organizations with which UNESCO has a long-standing and fruitful cooperation;
8. To contribute to meeting the objectives of the implementation plan of the Review Committee's recommendations as submitted by the Director-General in document 34 C/13, ensuring close interaction among the different scientific programmes in order to establish the appropriate specific synergies, ensure their sustainability and enhance their impact, in particular on issues relating to:
 - climate change and its consequences,
 - natural and human-induced hazards and disasters,
 - human well-being,
 - environmental sustainability (MDG 7),
 - management and sustainable use of natural resources;
9. To strengthen the leading contribution of the ISPs to United Nations-wide initiatives, such as UN-Oceans, UN-Water and UN-Energy, the follow-up of the Copenhagen Summit on Social Development, the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development, the production of the World Water Development reports, and the development of tsunami early warning systems;
10. To contribute to the strengthening of science education, and education for sustainable development, human and institutional capacities, the knowledge society and the linkages between science and policy and the decision-making process;
11. To contribute to establishing integrated science policies through close coordination and synergies at the international level and in particular at the national level, at this critical time when countries are giving high priority to developing science-based decision-making, and in that framework strengthen the response to the needs of Africa as expressed in the Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology in Africa;
12. To strengthen the delivery of ISP's services and products at the regional and national levels, through close interaction and cooperation with the National Commissions for UNESCO, the ISP's National Committees, category 1 and 2 centres and UNESCO Chairs;
13. To hold periodic consultations throughout the 2008-2009 biennium on progress achieved towards the fulfilment of those major commitments, and also with a view to responding to future challenges to UNESCO's action in the field of science.

Chairpersons:

Savithri Narayanan (IOC)
Jens Jorgen Gaardhoje (IBSP)
Sospeter M. Muhongo (IGCP)
Benedito Braga (IHP)
Zerihun Woldu (MAB)
Zola Skweyiya (MOST)