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**Activities of the United Nations Human Settlements
Programme, including coordination matters**

Activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Addendum

Joint activities in the urban environment

**Joint progress report of the executive directors of the United Nations
Environment Programme and the United Nations Human Settlements
Programme**

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides an overview of the progress made in the biennium 2015–2016 in strengthening cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). It also provides an overview of key activities in the context of which such cooperation has taken place. Cooperation between the two programmes was strengthened during the biennium by the recruitment of a Junior Professional Officer whose work is focused on advancing the joint UNEP and UN-Habitat Greener Cities Partnership, developing and implementing new joint programmes and raising the profile of the collaboration between the two organizations.
2. Through the Partnership and, specifically, a joint workshop held in June 2016, UN-Habitat and UNEP identified a set of redefined synergies and new themes for collaboration. In addition to the three existing pillars of the initial 2014 framework of the Greener Cities Partnership – namely, resilient, resource-efficient cities; sustainable transport and mobility; and waste and wastewater management – the staff of both programmes have identified new areas of collaboration, including monitoring of and reporting on the urban environmental indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/1 entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.
3. The two programmes continue to review progress through the Joint Operation and Coordination Group, maintaining an open dialogue by means of bimonthly teleconferences in order to better coordinate their cooperation. The Group has the mandate of coordinating the Greener Cities Partnership and also constitutes the primary vehicle for overseeing the implementation of joint activities. Other joint activities are being pursued by staff teams at various levels and monitored by the Joint Operation and Coordination Group.

* HSP/GC/26/1.

II. General cooperation between the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme: overview of the joint work programme of the Greener Cities Partnership

4. The objective of the joint Greener Cities Partnership is to strengthen the environmental dimension in urban policymaking and incorporate urban perspectives into environmental policymaking as well as to highlight the local-global linkages of environmental issues. The Partnership came into existence after an in-depth review of the prior Partnership Framework and its associated activities that guided all the joint activities between 2008 and 2013. The Partnership's priorities were selected through a systematic review and consultation process based on their importance for the global agenda and their potential for leveraging the strengths of each of the programmes. Implementation mechanisms include the development of baselines and standards for green cities, the development of a knowledge platform for best practices, and the delivery of joint advisory services to national and local governments.

5. Since 2013, the two organizations have endeavoured to strengthen institutional exchange in the area of environment and sustainability in cities. Progress has been made in several areas of work: cities have received increasing attention in the broader strategy of UNEP and not just under its resource efficiency subprogramme; global and regional priorities have been better integrated into the programmes of work of the two organizations; efforts have been made to better highlight the comparative advantages of each of the programmes in specific areas of work and clearly identify ways in which the Greener Cities Partnership is beneficial to donors and stakeholders in other areas.

6. Over the past two years, the three priority areas and pillars of the Partnership have been resilient, resource-efficient cities, sustainable transport and mobility, and waste and wastewater management.

7. The first of these priority areas and pillars is intended to enhance understanding of how resource flows affect urban resilience. Under this priority area, UNEP and UN-Habitat have developed two main activities: (a) building a harmonized framework to monitor resource use at the city level under the work programme of the UNEP-led Global Initiative for Resource Efficient Cities, and (b) developing a joint proposal on sustainable land use in urban areas in the context of the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns (10YFP), a global programme running between 2012 and 2022. UN-Habitat has taken the lead in developing the proposal, which complements the sustainable buildings and construction programme of the 10YFP. This priority area is drawing resources from a variety of Sustainable Development Goals and indicators: it links to Sustainable Development Goal 11 (make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), 12 (ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) and 13 (take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), which refer to resource efficiency in their targets, in particular targets 11.4 (strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage), 11.b (by 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels), 11.c (support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials), 12.2 (by 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources) and 13.1 (strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries).

8. Under the second priority area, the Partnership is focusing on promoting non-motorized transport and sustainable public transport options, in connection with research and data monitoring of air quality and urban health. UNEP and UN-Habitat are also developing a joint proposal for funding under an existing project entitled "Promoting sustainable transport solutions for East African cities", which is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Target 11.2 (by 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons) of the Sustainable Development Goals links directly to the second priority area of the Greener Cities Partnership, as do target 3.6 (by 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents) and target 11.6 (by 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management).

9. The third priority area is focused primarily on developing monitoring mechanisms for waste water and water quality. Much of this work is on the integrated monitoring of water- and sanitation-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals in the context of the Global Environmental Management Initiative (GEMI). The inter-agency initiative draws on the efforts of a wide multi-stakeholder group and focuses on integrating and expanding existing efforts to monitor progress on the Sustainable Development Goals related to water and sanitation, and on harmonizing the monitoring of the entire water cycle. This initiative, conceived by UN-Habitat, UNEP and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2014, focuses on the development of monitoring methodologies for Sustainable Development Goal 6 (ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all). The project has piloted methodologies in five countries since 2015 and is now in its global roll-out phase. It aims to support Governments in developing unified monitoring approaches. The initiative involves UNEP, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), WHO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and operates under the umbrella of UN-Water. Target 11.6 of the Sustainable Development Goals refers directly to paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management, which remains one of the most pressing urban environmental challenges globally, while target 12.4 refers to achieving the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes.

10. Since early 2016, when the new Junior Professional Officer took up the post, efforts have been made to better manage and coordinate the Greener Cities Partnership and promote further innovation. New elements of cooperation were identified during a joint workshop held in June 2016, with the aim of consolidating new ideas, resolving existing issues and identifying new areas of collaboration in the light of new global priorities and directions, such as the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the adoption of the New Urban Agenda at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito in October 2016. The Partnership plans to implement various new programmes, which are directly linked to the goals and targets of these global frameworks, for monitoring and reporting on relevant urban environmental indicators and assisting national and local governments in their use.

11. One of the weaknesses of the Partnership remains the issue of joint resource mobilization. The Partnership would benefit from a separate funding mechanism, to which the two programmes, as well as donors and other stakeholders, could contribute.

III. Key activities

12. During the reporting period, a number of activities were implemented under the three priority areas of the Greener Cities Partnership as well as in new areas of collaboration, including monitoring and reporting on the urban environmental indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals. These activities are described below.

A. Activities in the three priority areas

13. Work in the three priority areas has resulted in various outputs over the past two years. Under the first priority area, the Partnership focused mainly on sustainable consumption and production patterns in cities. For example, the Global Initiative for Resource Efficient Cities is a UNEP-led initiative to mainstream resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production into policies and tools at the city level and change the consumption habits of citizens and businesses. UN-Habitat has been closely involved in the initiative since its inception.

14. In addition, the Partnership's focus on ecosystem-based adaptation, which used to play a major role in the joint work of the two programmes, remains an integral part of joint activities although it is not formally included in the three priority areas of the Partnership. In that regard, GEF is funding two full-sized regional projects in Asia (in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar) as well as in Latin America and the Caribbean (in El Salvador, Jamaica and Mexico). UN-Habitat helped design the first of these UNEP-led and implemented projects, for which it is listed as an executing partner and is involved in executing selected regional activities.

15. Under the second priority area, the Partnership has focused primarily on non-motorized transport and air quality, and has continued emphasizing the benefits of bus rapid transit systems, primarily in African cities (e.g., Addis Ababa, Kampala and Nairobi). Furthermore, proposals in various mobility-related areas are being developed for submission to the International Climate Initiative and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition. In 2016, the Government of Norway committed itself to supporting efforts by UN-Habitat to step up the monitoring of urban air quality and integrate such monitoring into further activities. Lastly, the project entitled "Promoting sustainable transport

solutions for East African cities”, with UNEP as the lead implementing agency and UN-Habitat as the executing agency, was developed in response to requests from the Governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. After the successful launch of a bus rapid transport project in Dar es Salaam, Government representatives from Addis Ababa, Kampala and Nairobi requested that UN-Habitat and UNEP initiate similar projects in their cities. The goal of the project is to lay a technical and institutional foundation for implementing sustainable metropolitan transport networks and systems and to establish a demonstration corridor for sustainable urban mobility. The Partnership has also supported efforts in Kenya to prioritize investment in non-motorized transport.

16. The third priority area has largely focused on monitoring waste and wastewater data under the umbrella of GEMI. While several existing global initiatives monitor different aspects of the water sector, a coherent framework for such initiatives is lacking. To fill this gap, an integrated monitoring framework for the water and sanitation-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals is being developed by a joint UN-Water, UNEP, WHO and UN-Habitat team, with the purpose of integrating and expanding existing efforts to ensure harmonized monitoring of the entire water cycle. The Greener Cities Partnership therefore plans to work with more stakeholders on the monitoring of water and sanitation-related targets, and also on the issues of air quality and urban health. Given the importance accorded to health in the New Urban Agenda, the Partnership aims to increase its collaboration with WHO.

B. Greener Cities Partnership workshop

17. The secretariat of the Greener Cities Partnership organized a three-day workshop, held from 21 to 23 June 2016, with the objective of advancing the Partnership and its new strategic focus for the period 2017–2019, identifying new areas of cooperation and drafting new funding proposals. In addition, the workshop was convened as a means of alerting the senior management and staff members of both organizations to the work programme of the Greener Cities Partnership. The workshop was attended by approximately 40 participants, who held in-depth discussions resulting in follow-up activities in the three priority areas, as well as new areas of collaboration.

18. Workshop participants gave presentations on different aspects of collaborative work between the two programmes. Such collaboration extends beyond the three priority areas of the Partnership to areas such as energy, housing and building, poverty and environment. Presentations were made by representatives of the Global District Energy in Cities Initiative, the Poverty-Environment Initiative and the Housing Unit of the Housing and Slum Upgrading Branch, among others. The workshop provided an excellent starting point for discussions among staff of both organizations, and it was agreed that several staff members would begin exploring new ideas for proposals in the areas of transport, waste, resource efficiency and climate change, and monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals. As a consequence, four new proposals have been developed and submitted for approval to potential donors, including GEF and the International Climate Initiative.

C. The Greener Cities Partnership 2.0 and its strategy for the period 2017–2019

19. The idea of the “Greener Cities Partnership 2.0” is to expand the three priority areas to include the broader issues of resource efficiency and resource use, climate change, urban basic services, urban planning and design, urban air quality, resilience and environmental sustainability. The new strategy will also have to take into account global events and trends. Given the increasing focus on the vulnerability of cities around the world, this represents a growth opportunity for the Greener Cities Partnership.

20. In moving forward, the two programmes have to decide how to contribute to a two-year strategy in terms of resources. Without clear resources available, it will become increasingly difficult to achieve the envisioned results. Moreover, the Joint Operation and Coordination Group is working on institutionalizing the Partnership in both programmes and for external stakeholders, including by establishing a clearer media and outreach strategy, possibly hiring new staff or consultants to support the process, developing a website and increasing the Partnership’s outputs in the form of publications and blog posts. The Group remains the core decision-making body overseeing the Partnership between the two programmes.

D. Sustainable Development Goals pertaining to the urban environment

21. Monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals pertaining to the urban environment has been at the forefront of the Greener Cities Partnership's new focus. A pilot project was developed in 2016 with the aim of monitoring and reporting on selected indicators through the City Prosperity Initiative framework with the help of low-cost monitoring tools developed by UNEP and local university partners. The pilot project will be implemented in the city of Qazvin, Islamic Republic of Iran, in early 2017, and is intended to shed light on the importance of monitoring the critical environmental challenges that cities face and how best to tackle them through policy and action. A number of Iranian cities and other cities in the region are affected by issues such as air pollution, shortage of potable water, sandstorms, earthquakes and urban heat. Efforts will therefore be made to expand the scope of this project into a regional programme.

E. Global trends and events influencing the joint work of the two programmes

22. The Greener Cities Partnership is aiming to expand the scope of its work to include global conferences, organizing events that focus on urban environmental issues more closely. At the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, for example, the two programmes worked together with other partners, such as Local Governments for Sustainability, to shed light on the urban environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Urban World 2030 side event. Participants in the discussion concluded that mayors play an increasingly crucial role in connecting global socioeconomic, political and environmental issues with good local governance. Both programmes also participated in another side event led by the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction entitled "the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction helps realize the SDGs" held on 26 May 2016. At the third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III, held in Surabaya, Indonesia, in July 2016, a side event was organized that shed light on the work programme of the Greener Cities Partnership. Lastly, Habitat III was a milestone in terms of collaboration between the two organizations. Not only did it see many events organized jointly – such as an event on "Sustainable housing for all: global partners, local solutions" and joint events on resilience – but it also brought to fruition a joint side event with high-level attendance by key stakeholders and donors, academics, and both of the executive directors of UN-Habitat and UNEP. The conclusion drawn by participants at the event was that the Greener Cities Partnership could and should play a key role in assisting local and national governments to leverage the urban environmental dimension in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

23. UNEP was involved in the preparatory process for Habitat III in its own right. For example, UNEP led a special session on resilience, which included a high-level meeting of various development organizations and stakeholders involved in resilience-related work. The topic of sustainable consumption and production was raised in various side events and, through the Greener Cities Partnership, UNEP organized a number of smaller meetings in the margins of Habitat III linked to biodiversity, sustainable lifestyles and resource efficiency.

24. UNEP also held a side event at Habitat III on the theme of "Better cities, better lifestyles", highlighting joint work under the Greener Cities Partnership. The Director of the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Governor of the State of Pará in Brazil both participated as panellists in another side event on sustainable development in Amazonian cities organized by UN-Habitat. The event provided an overview of the rapid urbanization taking place in the Amazon region, the strong presence of and dependence on the extractive economy, as well as the importance of the Amazon as a provider of environmental services at the planetary scale. At the conclusion of the event, the panel highlighted the urgent need for a new model for cities that would enable sustainable development for the Amazon region, including the sustainable use of resources, based on good governance, sustainable production and sound knowledge.

25. The Joint Operation and Coordination Group decided at its sixth meeting, on 14 December 2016, to consider showcasing current and future collaboration on the urban environment at events such as the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat and the ninth session of the World Urban Forum to be held in Kuala Lumpur in 2018.

F. "Greener" can also mean "greening"

26. A new activity agreement under the umbrella of the Greener Cities Partnership was signed in late 2016 with the municipality of Chengdu, China, for implementation in 2017. The activity has two components, one of which touches directly on the mandate of the Partnership, namely, to assist the municipality in developing a green belt around the city. The green belt will be crucial for containing

the urban sprawl, preventing the further loss of biodiversity and improving urban health and air quality.

IV. Other partnerships

27. UNEP and UN-Habitat also work in partnership in the context of multi-stakeholder initiatives that bring together a variety of experts to work on issues such as cities and climate change, sustainable building, resource efficiency, sustainable land use and resilience. In addition, the two programmes collaborate in bilateral and multilateral initiatives, including the following examples which have been particularly significant over recent years:

(a) UN-Habitat plays a role in a number of UNEP-led global initiatives, including the Global Initiative for Resource Efficient Cities, the Climate and Clean Air Coalition and the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction. The Global Alliance was launched at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with the aim of scaling up the huge potential of the building and construction sector to reduce its emissions throughout the life cycle of buildings, while harnessing multiple benefits, including improved air quality and better health. In this regard, the expertise of various stakeholders contributes jointly to the implementation of target 11.c of the Sustainable Development Goals (support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials);

(b) In 2013, in its resolution 24/5 on pursuing sustainable development through national urban policies, the Governing Council of UN-Habitat recognized the adoption of the global 10YFP – a global framework of action to enhance international cooperation to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production in developed and developing countries – and the need for a supportive urban infrastructure for sustainable lifestyles. Under the sustainable buildings and construction programme, which was launched at the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council, UN-Habitat and other partners are currently implementing two projects that receive funds from the 10-YFP Trust Fund, one focusing on the development of a sustainable housing design tool and another on mainstreaming sustainable social housing in India. The components of the latter project build on a joint UN-Habitat and UNEP 2015 publication entitled *Green Building Interventions for Social Housing*. In addition, UN-Habitat and partners have developed a 10YFP sustainable buildings and construction programme flagship proposal on key urban interventions through sustainable social housing. Based on their experience, at a 10YFP Inter-Agency Coordination Group meeting in November 2016 it was resolved that UN-Habitat and UNEP would co-chair the Group for the 2017–2018 cycle. The Greener Cities Partnership submitted another proposal to the 10YFP secretariat in 2016 for a new sustainable land-use programme;

(c) UN-Habitat and UNEP are both involved in the Cities Alliance multi-stakeholder joint work programme on resilient cities, which is focused on building urban resilience beyond climate change adaptation by pooling the resources and expertise of partner organizations in the field of urban resilience. Under the umbrella of the joint work programme on resilient cities, a proposal intended to support the signatories of the Paris Agreement on climate change to implement nationally determined contributions (NDCs) has been submitted for approval. UN-Habitat, in collaboration with the Cities Alliance and UNEP, will build on the potential of integrated sustainable urban development, piloting concerted support to countries to implement the urban adaptation and climate resilience components of their NDCs. According to preliminary research undertaken by UN-Habitat, 110 countries have included urban content in their NDCs, and the most prominent urban content is found in the area of climate change adaptation. In order to ensure policy coherence and to begin implementing the NDCs, the project will develop knowledge products and tools to gain a better understanding of how urban climate change adaptation issues can be better addressed in and integrated into national adaptation planning and plans, with the ultimate aim of providing support for city-level climate action and increased resilience;

(d) UN-Habitat and UNEP will continue working together through the Global Land Tool Network, to improve partners' and governments' capacities to address land and natural resource issues to prevent, mitigate and resolve conflicts at the global scale and, in particular in the Great Lakes Region of Central and East Africa. Negotiations are under way for the broadening of additional collaboration with other key partners such as the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Department of Political Affairs;

(e) UN-Habitat is conducting a research project on environmental reviews in urban development processes to produce new knowledge and empirical evidence on the relationship between environmental and development decision-making in the urban context and to identify the principal

challenges and options to address them efficiently at the country and city levels. UNEP has expressed an interest in the project and has pledged to provide support and contribute as much as possible to the production of the case studies;

(f) In December 2016, UNEP, the secretariat of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Commonwealth Secretariat held consultations on national legal frameworks and support for implementing climate goals. UN-Habitat and other intergovernmental organizations have also discussed options for collaboration on the development of a law and climate change tool. UN-Habitat has indicated its desire to work with other organizations towards the development and adoption of such a tool and to consult further on the way forward.

V. Regional highlights

28. The UN-Habitat Global Land Tool Network and UNEP have collaborated in developing the capacities of senior United Nations officials and development partners to address land, natural resources and conflict issues in the Great Lakes Region of Central and East Africa. The collaboration is also intended to support the implementation of the Nairobi Declaration on the Effective Implementation and Operationalization of the Protocol on Property Rights of Returning Persons in the Great Lakes Region and the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework for the period 2016–2017. The collaboration culminated in a high-level learning event, held in Kigali in November 2016, to improve the understanding of key regional partners of ways in which land and natural resources are linked to conflict and how these links could be addressed to contribute to peace and stability.

29. A clearer picture of priority challenges and opportunities at the country level was also developed, enhancing understanding of how to undertake root cause analysis and planning on land, natural resources and conflict at both the country and regional levels. Over recent years, UNEP and UN-Habitat have been working side by side in the south of Haiti and more particularly in the city of Les Cayes. Several synergies have emerged between UNEP work on the protection of the coastline and solid waste management and the activities of UN-Habitat through the regional offices of both agencies. Both organizations have also played key roles in providing support to local capacity and institutional coordination mechanisms on territorial management. At a more general level, they have both contributed to helping introduce a more territorial approach to United Nations humanitarian and development aid in strategic and planning documents.

30. UN-Habitat and UNEP have developed a number of other activities jointly in the Latin American and Caribbean region. For example, both entities worked closely together in the run-up to Habitat III. UNEP provided support to the Habitat III secretariat during the Latin American and Caribbean regional preparatory meeting, providing joint inputs to the chair's summary, funding the participation of selected Government representatives and experts, organizing several side events on the Global Initiative for Resource Efficient Cities and drafting policy paper 8 on urban ecology and resilience. As mentioned earlier, a number of side events providing the regional perspective and identifying opportunities for joint work in Latin America and the Caribbean were also organized during Habitat III by UN-Habitat and UNEP. As a result of one such event on the cities in the Amazon region, the regional offices of Latin America and the Caribbean of the two programmes are working together on a project entitled "Sustainable cities in the Amazon region" which aims to build synergies and scale up the experience of the current UNEP project entitled "Vision Amazonia", implemented in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the World Wildlife Fund.

31. In follow-up to joint efforts in the Latin American and Caribbean region, UN-Habitat has invited UNEP to participate in an expert group meeting to be held in Belém, Brazil, in March 2017, which is entitled "Towards the sustainability of cities and human settlements in the Amazon region". Experts in various fields will participate in the meeting to discuss significant environmental impacts in the Amazon region, specifically in the cities of the region. It is envisaged that UNEP will provide specific inputs on environmental policy and planning.

32. In the Asia-Pacific region, UN-Habitat and UNEP cooperate at the regional level through the United Nations Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism Thematic Working Group on Resource-Efficient Growth (co-chaired by UNEP, with UN-Habitat as a member), which is coordinating United Nations system support to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) through the preparation of a joint United Nations-ASEAN action plan on environment and climate change for the period 2016–2020. Both programmes also work together in the regional United Nations Task Team on Sustainable Urbanization (chaired by UN-Habitat with UNEP as a member). The Task Team most recently supported a one United Nations approach to engagement at Habitat III.

33. UN-Habitat leads various activities in collaboration with UNEP in the Asia-Pacific region. The two entities have been jointly implementing the European-Union-funded Myanmar Climate Change Alliance (MCCA) since 2014, with the support of the European Union's Global Climate Change Alliance. MCCA works as a platform to bring together an alliance of partners, including the national government, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, development partners, civil society and the private sector to mobilize action on climate change and ensure the country can grow in a climate-resilient and carbon-efficient manner as it enters a period of fast growth and economic development. To date, MCCA has supported the formulation of Myanmar's climate change strategy and action plan and national climate change policy, both of which will serve as a road map to guide the country's strategic responses to and actions on climate-related risks and opportunities in the coming decades and inform action required by other development partners, with the involvement of all line ministries, main cities, the private sector and civil society.

34. The Myanmar Climate Change Alliance also contributed to the preparation of Myanmar's intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) submitted to the secretariat of the Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2015. Among its numerous activities, MCCA will also provide support for field interventions at two sites in Myanmar's Delta Zone and Dry Zone, as well as for numerous capacity-building activities, including South-South knowledge exchange visits, training of government officials on mainstreaming climate change and setting up a dedicated climate change secretariat for the implementation of the climate change strategy and action plan. In its current phase in 2017, MCCA is targeting the two areas of environment and urbanization in a capacity-building exercise, specifically to integrate climate change considerations in town planning and housing design in order to be better equipped to deal with and adapt to the current and future climates.

35. At the local level, with regard to spatial analysis, UN-Habitat and UNEP undertook innovative vulnerability assessments in two townships, with downscaled climate change projections at the city scale, to build climate change scenarios for the settlements. The analysis of existing vulnerabilities in the urban economy, infrastructure, ecosystem services and spatial structures were contrasted with expected changes in temperature, rainfall and sea-level rise. On this basis, adaptive measures, such as mangrove reforestation, cyclone shelter construction, water-harvesting and vocational training, were designed and have been partly implemented. The process is being documented and taught at the National Disaster Management Centre in Myanmar, for replication in all townships of the country.

36. UN-Habitat has recently become a member of the National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme, which is a programme led by UNEP and UNDP, in collaboration with and with support from several United Nations and non-United Nations entities, for least developed countries and other developing countries. UNEP manages the Global Support Programme from its Bangkok office. UN-Habitat is seeking to establish a component for national adaptation plans that focuses specifically on urban climate change adaptation in partnership with UNEP. The Global Support Programme will therefore develop urban national adaptation plan guidelines to complement the technical guidelines for the national adaptation plan process, and is seeking to establish programmes in several countries to facilitate the joint implementation of urban national adaptation plan priorities. One part of this programme was a regional support event for least developed countries on national adaptation plans, held in Sri Lanka in October 2016, in which UN-Habitat also participated, delivering a presentation and taking part in the group discussion.

37. In addition, UN-Habitat is partnering with UNEP on the project entitled "Building Climate Resilience of Urban Systems through Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) in the Asia-Pacific Region", funded by GEF, in four countries: Bhutan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. The project has three components: first, institutional strengthening and capacity-building of city management authorities in pilot cities to plan and implement urban ecosystem-based adaptation; second, demonstrating urban ecosystem-based adaptation interventions in pilot cities; and third, disseminating knowledge and raising public awareness on urban ecosystem-based adaptation in pilot cities.

38. UN-Habitat has continued to play an active role in events organized by UNEP in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly the Asia-Pacific Adaptation Forum, for which UN-Habitat has chaired sessions as well as making presentations at each of the last three sessions.

VI. Future cooperation

39. The UN-Habitat and UNEP Greener Cities Partnership will increasingly focus on the implementation of the urban environmental dimension of the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, discussions have begun with the Government of Colombia to assist in developing a strategy to address the urban environmental concerns of the country, specifically for island and coastal areas that are particularly vulnerable to climate change. This potential new activity would include support to a number of other countries that have similar geographical and environmental conditions, assisting in the development of common guidelines aimed at strengthening their urban environmental policies and action plans.

40. UNEP and UN-Habitat have a history of collaboration in the area of urban air quality through their joint Sustainable Cities Programme, which ended in 2008. Since the conclusion of that programme, UNEP has developed further expertise in monitoring urban air quality. Meanwhile, UN-Habitat is beginning to reengage in helping cities plan for improved urban air quality through a new project funded by Norway initiated in late 2016 and entitled “Planning for Improved Air Quality in Urban Areas”, whose initial regional focus is on Asia. There are plans to combine these complementary areas of expertise under an expanded Greener Cities Partnership strategy.

41. The Greener Cities Partnership hopes to engage with stakeholders on the topic of green city development with the objective of inspiring cities to sustain and expand their innovative green interventions, reinvest in planning, design more sustainable urban configurations and embrace new advances in understanding, mapping and quantifying ecosystem services. In that regard, the Government of Malaysia has expressed an interest in receiving technical support to expand its green cities activities. The Partnership has developed a proposal that is currently under review by the Government.

42. Under the strategy for the period 2017–2019, plans are under way to seek access to more significant donor funding, including through GEF, the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund, for potential new activities. The resources, experience and expertise of both programmes can be used to shape new proposals depending on the areas of interest of such funds. The Greener Cities Partnership is closely monitoring upcoming funding opportunities in 2017.

43. UN-Habitat and UNEP will continue their efforts to develop further projects under the Greener Cities Partnership and to implement joint activities in their regional offices, branches and divisions. Regular assessment of the two programmes’ shared vision and the comparative advantage of the Partnership remains vital to the successful collaboration of UN-Habitat and UNEP. A high-level meeting with both executive directors and both senior management teams is planned for the third quarter of 2017, with the overall objective of reviewing the strengths and requirements of the Greener Cities Partnership, including the mobilization of additional management and stakeholder resources.
