Fourth meeting of the IAEA’s Coordination Group on Radiation Protection of the Environment, Vienna

Perspective of UNEP

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Global issues for UN

- Climate change
- Globalization and development
- Environment
- Human rights & gender issues
- Energy
- Population and poverty
- Security
Role of UNEP

- **Environment Programme of United Nations** established 1972; HQ in Nairobi, Kenya
- Voice for environment within UN system
- Promotes sustainable use of global environment
- Wide range of partners, inc. UN bodies, international organizations, national governments, NGOs, private sector & civil society
- Evidence-based policy-relevant assessments
- Hosts several secretariats including
  - Basel Convention on Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes
  - Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
  - Vienna Convention & Montreal Protocol for Protection of Ozone Layer
  - Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
  - GPA to protect marine environment from land-based sources of pollution
- **Six priority areas:**
  - Climate change
  - Disasters and conflicts
  - Ecosystem management
  - Environmental governance
  - Harmful substances
  - Resource efficiency

Six priority areas define uNEP's focus on the environmental challenges of the 21st century.
Responsibilities within UN system related to radiation protection of the environment

- UNEP is **voice for the environment**
- Radiation protection of environment is **low priority** for UNEP
- IAEA has responsibility “to **establish or adopt safety standards**” so that it may promote peaceful uses of atomic energy
- “In **consultation, and where appropriate in collaboration, with competent organs of United Nations**”
- UNEP would expect proposed IAEA standards **be compatible** with general **international environmental protection instruments, principles and declarations**
UNEP co-sponsored 2006 fundamental safety principles

- 4. Justification of facilities and activities
- 5. Optimization of protection
- 7. “People and the environment, present and future, must be protected against radiation risks.”
- 10. Protective actions to reduce existing or unregulated radiation risks
Revision of Basic Safety Standards

• UNEP intends to co-sponsor revised BSS
  – Expressed concern that radiation protection community was interpreting protection of environment in too narrow sense
  – Need to define ‘environment’, ‘protection of the environment’, ‘radiation protection of the environment’
  – Justification and optimization take account of environment
  – Some global issues beyond national governments
  – Consistency with Stockholm and Rio declarations

• Look forward to increasing cooperation
• Environment
  – The conditions under which people, animals and plants live or develop and which sustain all life and development; especially such conditions as affected by human activities.

• Protection of the environment includes the protection of:
  – non-human species, both animal and plant;
  – environmental goods and services such as the production of food and feed;
  – resources used in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism;
  – amenities used in spiritual, cultural and recreational activities;
  – media such as soil, water and air;
  – and natural processes such as carbon, nitrogen and water cycles.

• Environment considerations in justification and optimization (mainly non-radiological impact)
Radiation protection of environment

- Recognize considerable efforts of ICRP, IAEA to develop frameworks
- Ethical basis needed ultimately
- Policy-relevant, simple, efficient, and robust approach
- Identify where the problems really are, if any
- Sustainable use, equity and transnational issues more important than biota?

Can we actually identify situations where common derived levels in media would imply radiation damage to biota?
Future

• 2006-2009: Ad hoc arrangements to co-sponsor safety fundamentals

• 2010-2011: Issue formally recognized in UNEP’s programme budget. Seed level to support co-sponsorship of BSS.

• 2012-2013: Programme budget being proposed now. Foresee collaboration on detailed guidance. What form to take?

• UNEP is essential to obtain acceptance of standards by Ministries of Environment around the world