

- provision of improved shelter with access to essential amenities in a clear and secure setting conducive to health and to the prevention of environment-related diseases, while alleviating serious environmental degradation;
- establishment of an equitable system of international economic relations aimed at achieving continuing economic advancement for all States based on principles recognized by the international community in order to stimulate and sustain environmentally sound development, especially in developing countries.³⁸

In the same resolution in 1987 the Assembly refined UNEP's mandate by endorsing the following statement of program priorities and functions for UNEP:

- To provide leadership, advice, and guidance in the UN system on restoring, protecting, and improving the environmental basis for, and in general be a catalyst in the promotion of, sustainable development;
- To monitor, assess, and report regularly on the state of the environment and natural resources and emerging environmental issues;
- to make available, in co-operation with other agencies where appropriate, guidance for environmental management, including the development of management techniques, criteria and indicators for environmental quality standards and guidelines for sustainable use and management of natural resources;
- to initiate and support the programmes and activities worked out by the developing countries for dealing with their serious environmental problems;
- to initiate and facilitate the development and, upon request, the co-ordination of implementation of action plans, in the developing countries, for the management of ecosystems and critical environmental problems. Such plans should be implemented and financed by the Governments concerned with appropriate external assistance.
- In co-operation with other concerned institutions, to establish and strengthen the institutional and professional capacity of developing countries with a view to integrating environmental considerations into their development policy and planning;
- to promote awareness of environmental matters through education and mass media;
- to co-operate with UNDP and other UN agencies, the World Bank and regional development banks, to strengthen the environmental dimensions of their programmes and technical assistance projects, inter alia, through training and personnel secondments.³⁹

Despite considerable success in carrying out the various tasks assigned by the General Assembly, UNEP's Governing Council, at the suggestion of the Executive Director, decided at its most recent regular session in May 1989 to strengthen UNEP's role as the "central catalyzing, co-ordinating and stimulating body in the field of the environment within the United Nations system."

A number of substantive "areas of concentration" were also identified that closely resemble the current agenda of the UNCED Preparatory Committee - atmosphere, freshwater, oceans and coastal areas, land resources (deforestation and desertification), biological diversity, biotechnology, and hazardous wastes and toxics - and within these broad areas the Council decided special