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Partnerships and SPAC

Climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion are the result of unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

In the Kiev Conference, NGOs called for a Pan-European regional strategy for SPAC. The 2003 Ministerial Declaration agreed to “encourage national efforts” and “development of a 10 year framework of programmes” supporting “the shift to sustainable production and consumption.” In Belgrade we hoped to see this “encouragement” take concrete shape in a Pan-European framework of cooperation to support those national efforts. Such a framework would be primarily about partnerships, not only among different stakeholders (national and local governments, businesses, NGOs, science), but also partnerships among countries and regions.

The sub-regions within the UNECE have yet to receive the support they need – only “encouragement”. But encouragement is not enough. We need the Environment for Europe process to accept the challenge of developing a Pan-European regional framework of cooperation, which addresses the needs of the entire UNECE region. Considering the cross border flows of products, services, resources and waste this action is essential. Further, the solution to climate, biodiversity loss and resource depletion and other global threats depends on coordinated regional action.

In the meantime, sub-regional initiatives are emerging on their own to create platforms for partnership and mutual support. Currently the EU is developing a sub-regional multi-stakeholder Action Plan. However this plan only covers the EU countries.

In the CEE sub-region, we applaud the Minister of Environment of the Czech Republic for his leadership in setting up a platform of support to develop and implement national strategies on SPAC. A similar initiative is also announced by Kazakhstan, which is also showing leadership to start a sub-regional process supporting a 10-year framework on SPAC in Central Asia.

Yet the gap remains between national and sub-regional initiatives and needs and a wider Pan-European framework to help support those efforts.

In 2010 each regional commission will be asked what progress they have made in contributing to the 10-year framework of programmes to support national and regional initiatives on SPAC. We are all part of a global discussion on how to achieve the overarching objective of sustainable production and consumption agreed in Johannesburg. We need to be part of a Global Stakeholder Dialogue on SPAC, sharing our experience and ideas for moving forward.

We continue to call upon governments, UNEP and other intergovernmental agencies, business and civil society to build the necessary bridges to work together towards a **Pan-European multi stakeholder framework** for sustainable production and consumption. The costs of investing in this effort are miniscule compared to the

costs of the impacts of rising production and consumption patterns. Our countries, the region and the future cannot afford these costs.

The price of inaction will only increase. We need you to put this on the Environment for Europe agenda now, not later.