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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

Emerging policy issues: environment and development

Regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

The note sets out statements and recommendations by major groups and stakeholders prepared during regional consultations held in preparation for the thirteenth session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the twelfth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The statements and recommendations are reproduced as received, without formal editing.

Discussions at the regional consultations were structured according to the following themes: the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; the institutional framework for sustainable development, and international environmental governance; additional messages to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development; emerging issues and the fifth report in the Global Environment Outlook series; and access to information, public participation and environmental justice.

Although the statements and recommendations reflect areas of general consensus, the various groups and stakeholders do not necessarily endorse every conclusion.

* UNEP/GCSS.XII/1.

Background

1. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) organizes regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders every year in preparation for the sessions of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. They result in statements and/or key messages and recommendations to the Council/Forum, which are forwarded to member States six weeks before the session of the Governing Council in an information document.
2. The regional consultations serve as a platform for engaging major groups and stakeholders in addressing the main areas and topics for discussion by the Governing Council. For the twelfth special session, they afforded an opportunity better to inform major groups and stakeholders about and raise support for the objectives of UNEP for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.
3. The consultations held in 2011 will feed into the thirteenth session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, the twelfth special session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the Conference itself.

Topics for discussion

4. The discussions at the regional consultations were structured according to the following themes:
 - (a) The green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication;
 - (b) The institutional framework for sustainable development, and international environmental governance;
 - (c) Additional messages to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, especially in terms of the desired outcomes and the role of civil society in shaping the Conference agenda and its outcomes;
 - (d) Emerging issues and the fifth report in the Global Environment Outlook series;
 - (e) Access to information, public participation and environmental justice;
 - (f) Relevant regional priority issues.

The consultations were held as described in table 1.

Table 1

Schedule of regional consultations

<i>Region</i>	<i>Meeting dates and location</i>
Africa	11 September 2011, Bamako
West Asia	9 and 10 October 2011, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Asia and the Pacific	17 and 18 October 2011, Seoul
Europe	2 September 2011, Bonn, Germany
North America	13 and 14 October 2011, Washington D.C.
Latin America and Caribbean	5 September 2011, Santiago

A total of 396 participants attended the consultations. Table 2 provides an overview of participation, disaggregated by major groups and stakeholders, and by region. It shows that non-governmental organizations had the highest representation, at 59 per cent.

Table 2
Representation

	Major group and stakeholder	Africa	Asia and the Pacific	Europe ¹	Latin America and the Caribbean	North America	West Asia	Total	%
1	Business and industry	0	4	7	1	3	0	15	4%
2	Children and young people	2	6	12	1	4	0	25	6%
3	Indigenous peoples	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	3%
4	Local authorities	0	2	3	1	3	0	9	2%
5	Non-governmental organizations	38	46	78	8	49	16	235	59%
6	Science and technology	0	6	8	1	4	5	24	6%
7	Women	4	6	14	1	2	0	27	7%
8	Farmers	0	10	2	1	2	1	16	4%
9	Workers and trade unions	0	1	3	3	1	0	8	2%
10	Other ²	4	3	7	0	11	0	25	6%
	Total / region	52	88	137	18	79	22	396	

The following delegates, who are not recorded in the above table, participated in the consultations in Europe and North America: German Government (one), United States Environmental Protection Agency (one), United States Government (five) and Canadian Government (one).

The annex to the present note sets out the statements and major key messages devised at the regional consultations. They have been reproduced without formal editing.

1 This includes the participants from the consultation on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held on 1 September and the regional consultations held on 2 September. There were also participants from other regions.

2 The category "Other" includes other stakeholders such as faith-based groups, media, organizations whose mandate cuts across several sectors such as indigenous issues, gender issues and agriculture. In some instances, it also included government delegates. The table does not include participants from United Nations bodies.

Annex

UNEP Regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders for Africa

Bamako, Mali, 11 September 2011

African Major Groups and Stakeholders Statement

We, the participants at the African Regional Consultative Meeting of Major Groups and Stakeholders in preparation for 12th Special Session of the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-12/GMEF), gathered on 11 September 2011, in Bamako, Mali.

Hereby recommend;

I. Rio+20

- That Civil society be fully involved in the processes towards, during and after Rio+20 through; regular inclusion in national delegations; recognizing rights of indigenous peoples; granting full access and participation during negotiations and establishing predictable financial mechanisms so as to enhance representation and participation
- That African governments should accelerate the implementation of Principle 10 of Rio Declaration first by implementing the UNEP Guidelines and also adopt with an African convention on Principle 10.
- Addressing poverty reduction, food security and youth employment be top on agenda at Rio+20
- The North honors its commitment and avails the necessary technology and funds so as to fully realize the implementation of Agenda 21

II. Green economy and poverty reduction

- Transition to a green economy serve as a vehicle to a low carbon growth and transfer of appropriate green technology
- Actions and mechanisms to achieve a green economy do not increase social inequalities, exacerbate negative socio-economic environmental impacts such as monoculture and land grabbing BUT address structural limitations that always put women, youth and vulnerable groups at disadvantaged position
- National Development Plans be the driving policy instruments towards a realizing a green economy baring in mind that this transition be sector specific such as waste management, forestry, agriculture and tourism
- As the concept of green economy has found its way into international debate and is taking a prominent position, it must be unpacked to make it understandable to African governments and its people before being sanctioned. It should not be used as a tool to distract or slow down the right to development for African countries. It is therefore necessary to identify the tools and costs of green economy and ensure that it is not being imposed by foreign interests that are avoiding their historical responsibilities.
- It must serve as a vehicle to deliver a low carbon growth for Africa and hence must facilitate transfer of appropriate green technology from developed industrialized to Africa. It must also take cognizance Africa's renewable energy endowment as an asset.
- Must ensure that actions towards green economy do not increase social inequalities and that revenues generated out of investment in Africa benefit the African people and contribute to poverty reduction. Green economy must not be green business that only benefits cooperates interests to the detriment of the African peoples.
- Green Economy in Africa must address the underlying structural limitations that always put women and vulnerable groups in the disadvantaged position. Women and other marginalized groups, therefore, should directly benefit from the transition to green economy and be seen as key players in the architecture of the green economy rather than the victims.
- Green economy must not exacerbate negative environmental impacts such as encroaching of biodiversity, environmental degradation, monoculture cropping, land grabs and invasion that threatens food security and sovereignty. It must take into account precautionary principles as well as the need to undertake SEA and EIA before affirming the policy shifts.

III. Institutional framework for Sustainable Development

- Action plan of the Environmental Initiative of NEPAD be reviewed so as to ensure effective implementation of regional and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) so as to match the required funding for their implementation
- African Environmental Fund be operationalized so as to fastrack management of Africa's new and emerging environmental problems such as toxic substances and hazardous chemicals, air pollution and e-waste management
- Monitoring and Review framework so as to track Africa's progress in balancing the 3 pillars of Sustainable Development
- A clear coordinated framework of UN agencies, programmes and Funds with the Commission on Sustainable Development elevated to a status of a Council with decision making mandates whereas UNEP transformed into a specialized agency based in Nairobi with universal membership and national presence
- That for Environmental Governance to be reality, citizens should be involved at all levels of decision making at national and International levels.
- In order to promote conservation of ecosystems environmental governance in Africa must encourage recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples, secure tenure, empower them with management and access to their traditional land. As key rights holders who have been stewards over natural resources for generations, they must be integrally involved in discussions and decisions concerning their environment.

IV. Global Environment Outlook 5 (GEO 5) and the Foresight Process

- Major Groups and Stakeholders be involved in the preparation and dissemination of the Global Environmental Outlook
- We also duly elect representative for English speaking Africa in the person of Augustine Njamnshi and a French Speaking Africa representative in the person of Zenaïbou Sedga for the term of 12 months.

UNEP Regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders for Asia and the Pacific

17-18 October 2011, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Asia-Pacific Regional Statement

Introduction

The Major Groups and Stakeholders Asia Pacific Meeting 2011 was held from 17–18 October 2011, immediately prior to the Asia–Pacific Regional Preparatory Committee Meeting on 19-20 October, 2011. More than 100 delegates participated in the meeting. Discussions were organized under four themes: Regional and Sub-regional priorities and emerging challenges, Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, Institutional framework for sustainable development, and Access to information, public participation and environmental justice.

Many of the MGS who participated in the meeting also joined the Asia Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting that took place Oct. 19-20, 2011 in Seoul, where they had an opportunity to share the MGS Asia Pacific statement, which was shared by the elected Vice-Chair, Chee Yokeling, from Third World Network. Different major groups were also able to share their statements during the meeting, which is annexed to the Asia Pacific Statement given below.

Asia-Pacific Regional Statement for the 2011 Global Civil Society Forum

Below are summarized the key issues, challenges and courses of action that have been identified and affirmed in the Major Groups and Stakeholders' meeting.

On Regional Priorities and Emerging Challenges

1. As a diverse region that comprises developing countries, including small island developing states, land-locked nations and least developed countries, as well as developed countries, the Asia Pacific region has many common but also particular sub-regional priorities and challenges.
2. As a region that is home to the largest part of humanity, the right to a life of dignity free from conflict and war is integral to sustainable development.
3. Some regional and sub-regional priorities include:
 - Eradication of poverty – while many have been lifted from poverty, the region still has the most number of people living in poverty.
 - Capacity to respond to natural disasters and impacts of climate change, including monitoring, surveillance and alert systems; emergency responses; disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change.
 - Conservation and sustainable use of depleting natural resources and biodiversity, including by indigenous peoples and local communities in managing forest, land and water resources, and in the practice of sustainable agriculture.
 - Specific circumstances of small island developing states in the Pacific highlighting the crucial importance of marine resources management and governance, within and beyond national jurisdictions, (including EEZs) necessary for the survival of the people in these islands.
 - More equitable distribution of income and natural resources, particularly land.
 - Stronger national policies that protect and promote food sovereignty in the face of competing resource use (e.g., land for biofuels).
 - Need for food self-sufficiency policies and regulation that would reduce reliance on imports, as well as support and incentives for sustainable food production practices.

- Regulation at the international, regional and national levels with effective enforcement mechanisms to ensure corporate social responsibility, accountability and transparency.
- Stronger regulation on foreign investments related to natural resources to protect the rights of indigenous peoples, impoverished and marginalized peoples, and the environment.
- Compliance with trans-boundary agreements to ensure equitable sharing of resources, particularly water.
- Protection and promotion of community access and control of all natural resources, which are vital for impoverished and disadvantaged communities.
- Honoring the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in national policies and laws.
- Safeguarding natural resources (including agriculture, forests, ancestral lands, waters, oceans) against commodification and privatization.
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for environmentally-sound disposal of toxic substances and wastes, and enforcement of international regulations on toxic substances and wastes, in particular hazardous substances is required to avoid the adverse impacts on communities and the environment.
- Creation of local employment and recognition of labor rights to address population mobility and increasing urbanization.
- Global, regional and sub-regional systems based on science to engage communities and CSOs in community-based monitoring and sharing of data related to impacts on the three dimensions of sustainability, including inter alia chemicals and nuclear emissions.
- Involvement of communities and CSOs in the development, implementation and monitoring of new technologies or techniques.
- Compliance, accountability and transparency of corporations to redress displacements and other violations of rights against communities and the environment.

4. Some emerging challenges include:

- Worsening income and social inequalities in several developing countries that have experienced rapid economic growth, and a trend of social inequity in some developed countries.
- Massive infrastructure projects targeted for the next 10 years, with ecological and social sustainability as well as economic viability requiring thorough assessment. Several current large-scale infrastructure projects are already at the centre of controversy.
- Spread of unsustainable consumption patterns that with growing income disparities result in the wealthy consuming beyond their needs while the poor lack basic needs. Unsustainable consumption patterns put additional pressures on natural resources and the environment as well as lead to new health problems.
- Demographic changes and increased urbanization that result in declining rural workforce with resultant stresses on food production and security.
- Critical importance to the region of active promotion and support of sustainable fishing particularly involving small-scale fishers, in view of the dangerous level of depletion of fisheries resources across the region's seas and oceans.
- Need to ensure faithful and consistent enforcement of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal; ban dumping of wastes and toxic chemicals into the marine environment; and ensure proper management of electronic waste, including efforts towards their reduction and eventual elimination.

On Green Economy in the Context of Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development

5. In view of the need for clearer understanding on the concept of "green economy," participants reaffirmed sustainable development as the overarching paradigm and centered discussions on key attributes of sustainable "economies", viz:
- Built on sustainable production and consumption patterns and ensuring all people's wellbeing;
 - Democratizes access to, ownership and control over productive resources and assets, particularly for women, and promotes equitable access to opportunities for advancement and improvement of human and family welfare;

- Provides decent work and right livelihoods and ensures that social benefits are distributed equitably among all peoples;
 - Fosters citizen participation;
 - Upholds social justice, human rights, equity, and gender equality;
 - Achieves economic sufficiency;
 - Safeguards animal welfare and protects ecosystems;
 - Ensures agriculture systems and supply chains are sustainable and humane; and
 - Regulates financial markets and holds firms accountable for the social and environmental impacts of their operations.
6. Governments in Rio 1992 agreed to reform existing patterns of consumption and production in pursuit of sustainable development objectives, recognising the link between poverty and unsustainable production and consumption patterns. However, more attention has been given to environmentally friendly production than on consumption patterns. High economic growth in the region has been accompanied by unsustainable consumption patterns. A more rational pattern of consumption is needed to ensure a more rational pattern of production. Consumption patterns are in turn highly influenced by the distribution of incomes across and within countries.
 7. Due to the unequal distribution of world incomes, an inordinately large share of goods and services produced are targeted for those with purchasing power. On the other hand, the poor who have great unmet needs but limited capacity to pay lack basic goods and services such as housing, clean water, sanitation, health services, basic education and food. Solutions cannot be found in the market mechanisms, but must be provided in public policy and government actions. Governments must ensure universal access to basic health, education, sanitation, and other essential services, removing all social and cultural barriers that discriminate against minorities including on the basis of age, sexuality, ethnicity, caste, disability and gender.
 8. Economy and economic life must be defined not in the narrow sense of efficiently allocating scarce resources, but as the range of processes, activities, relations and structures involved in and affecting the provisioning for human life in all its fullness, integrity and dignity. These include not only those involved in “production” as commonly understood, but also activities, processes, relations and structures in what is termed “social reproduction,” rendered primarily through the unrecognized and un(der)valued labor of women.
 9. Technological fixes alone will not solve environmental problems that are consequences of social and economic factors. Fundamental issues such as access, intellectual property rights (IPR), and assessment of the potential impacts of new and untested technologies (e.g., geo-engineering, ocean fertilization, etc.) before they are released in the environment and deployed commercially must be addressed in the development and transfer of technologies.
 10. Opposition was expressed against nuclear energy, mega-dams and agrofuel plantations; instead, governments are called upon to scale up public financing to provide wide access to renewable energy.
 11. Opposition was similarly raised against the privatisation and commodification of nature and ecosystem functions that lead to further marginalization of communities.
 12. There is need to uphold food sovereignty to address the global food crisis. Communities should have the right to determine their patterns of food production and consumption, and farmers should be able to prioritise food production for domestic consumption. Governments must support small-scale farmers, including women, as they form the heart of sustainable food production systems and along with their families, are the primary objects of rural development.
 13. The pursuit of sustainable development in the rural areas must aim at the optimum balance between rural and urban development, with the view towards avoiding problems attendant to excessive rural-urban migration. Efforts to promote sustainable cities via green infrastructure, improved waste management, access to sustainable sanitation and urban food sufficiency are likewise important, but need to be mindful of this rural-urban balance that is determined, among other things, by environmental carrying capacities.
 14. Financing sustainable development and a just transition to sustainable economies requires significant public financing, financial and technology transfer from more endowed to less-endowed countries, private sector

investments that are productive and non-speculative in nature, and fair and innovative modes of taxation, including a financial transaction tax.

15. Market-based mechanisms that permit developed countries to avoid the delivery of commitments to deep cuts in their greenhouse gas emissions and pass on such obligations through the markets must be reconsidered.
16. Governments must provide enabling policies for promoting sustainable economies as an important impetus to eradicate poverty reduction and achieve sustainable development. Governments must also examine fiscal policies and economic instruments to promote measures conducive to promoting sustainable development, and remove measures detrimental to such objectives including those that subsidize fossil fuel use and support inefficient resource use and economic activities.
17. Governments need to establish regional and inter-regional programmes for supporting capacity development in support of sustainable development. These must inherently involve mechanisms that promote the active participation of stakeholder groups and organisations to exchange good practices and expertise and to support pilot projects, research work, human resource development including training and education, and network activities within and across countries.
18. Stronger partnerships among governments, civil society organisations, private businesses and stakeholder groups must be established for promoting sustainable economies. Such partnerships need to be within frameworks of accountability and transparency including regulation. In line with this, research institutes, educational institutions and other stakeholder groups are enjoined to support good practice case studies and promote dissemination of information on such good practices for promoting sustainable economies in the context of poverty eradication and sustainable development.
19. As young people make up more than 40 per cent of the world's unemployed, governments must provide children, adolescents and youth with education, training and opportunities for the active participation in economic, political, social and cultural life; promote youth employment rights, and security to prevent their marginalisation and social exclusion; and child labour by addressing the conditions that lead to it.
20. Finally, disaggregated indicators to monitor and assess sustainable economies need to be developed, not based on GDP, but on people's wellbeing, inclusiveness, social equity, human rights, gender equality, decent work, biodiversity and ecological footprint.

On the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD)

21. The IFSD should implement the agreed sustainable development commitments and actions at the international, regional, sub-regional levels and national levels with broad public participation in the various bodies and in decision-making. The three dimensions of sustainable development must be strengthened (or transformed where necessary) and closely integrated. The framework must:
 - Promote accountability and legitimacy
 - Improve coordination and synergies among sectors, actors and levels
 - Ensure coherence, complementarity, effectiveness and efficiency
 - Guarantee meaningful public participation
22. There is need to transform the Commission on Sustainable Development into a Council on Sustainable Development under the General Assembly to integrate the work of disparate multilateral bodies working on each of the three dimensions of sustainable development, including the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation. The body must have strong technical support, an independent secretariat and dedicated budget.
23. In support of the IFSD, and in recognition of the continuing weakness of the environmental pillar in the existing IFSD structure, significant strengthening of international environmental governance is needed to deal with the evolving scale and scope of environmental issues and challenges. As the entity with the primary responsibility for the global environment, UNEP should be upgraded and provided with adequate resources for its work. The institutions and work of the numerous multilateral environmental agreements need to be further coordinated within the context of integrating the 3 dimensions of sustainable development.
24. Strengthening of the environmental dimension must come alongside transformation of the economic dimension to make it supportive of the two other dimensions, rather than overwhelm them. In particular, this transformation needs to be geared toward prevention of the occurrence of more financial and economic debacles, which cause much social dislocation and environmental degradation. The UN must also take a direct hand in economic and

financial policy-making and act as an effective counterbalance to the traditional dominant global economic and financial bodies.

25. At the regional level, corresponding sustainable development bodies could be established. Sub-regional analogs could also be created where size and diversity of the region warrant it, such as in the Asia-Pacific.
26. At the national level, governments must establish multistakeholder councils for sustainable development (NCSDs) where absent, and strengthen them where already existing. NCSDs must coordinate planning, policy making, issues resolution, and reporting to the corresponding sub-regional/regional and global sustainable development bodies to ensure vertical coherence from implementation levels to the global level.
27. Local authorities are closest to the ground and directly serve the people. They must be given a responsibility and be involved in decision-shaping that concerns in particular sustainable development.
28. To be effective, the national sustainable development councils should be (a) organized at highest possible level, i.e., chaired by the Head of State/Government; (b) lodged with an appropriate coordinating body such Office of the Prime Minister or Planning Ministry; (c) composed of relevant ministries and major groups/stakeholders including local authorities; and (d) institutionally stable by virtue of a strong legal mandate and endowed with a dedicated budget.
29. The above proposals are initial steps to start fundamental changes that are necessary to meet the challenges of the 21st century. In the long term this may include updating the Charter of the UN.

On Access to Information, Public Participation and Environmental Justice

30. As stipulated in Principle 10 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, access to environmental information, participation in decision-making and judicial proceedings over environmental matters are a critical part of the policy and institutional framework for achieving sustainable development. Thus the policies on access to environmental information, participation in decision-making and judicial proceedings over environmental matters must be fully implemented at the multiple levels. The Aarhus Convention and UNEP Guideline on Principle 10 provide useful frameworks for developing and implementing policy measures to achieve Principle 10 objectives.
31. The general public is often denied access to information, participation and justice. In the implementation of P-10 policies, due consideration should be given to respect of human rights, gender equality and the realities and needs of the marginalized groups such as women, youth and indigenous peoples
32. A number of countries in Asia and the Pacific have adopted freedom of information acts and promote the public access to environmental information. However, the level of implementation and compliance with Principle 10 varies considerably, and there are cases where the poor and socially marginalized groups such as women, youth, and indigenous peoples are denied or unable to benefit from the access to environmental information.
33. Governments must provide mechanisms and avenues that support the empowerment of the stakeholders, particularly the socially marginalized groups, to recognize their key roles and to enable their active participation in decision making. Government must also involve major groups and stakeholders in policy dialogues and decision making processes over the environment and sustainability policy issues.
34. Governments must promote the application of P-10 in dealing with the new and emerging issues such as the potential impacts of the emerging technology on the human and environment, by ensuring access to information, public participation in technology assessment, access to liability and redress in cases of damages.
35. Governments must extend the application of the P-10 for promoting and ensuring accountability and transparency of the government, corporations and organizations through effective feedback from the citizens.
36. Governments must recognize and allow alternative peoples' initiatives such as citizen juries, peoples' tribunals, and technology observation platforms.
37. Governments need to exercise the authority to obtain information from the private sector and make available such information to the stakeholders when private sector activities are to cause the impacts on the environment or public concerns. Exceptions to the public access to environmental information and other Principle 10 policy measures should be restricted and should not be abused.

38. To facilitate effective implementation of the Principle 10 policy measures, education, awareness raising, training and capacity development activities must be strengthened.
39. Inadequacy of the forums and institutions at different levels has to be recognized and addressed through such measures as strengthening of the existing mechanism, “Green Bench”, establishment of environmental courts, and consideration of creating an international environment court.
40. Governments are called upon to mandate and enable UNEP to develop a robust programme on UNEP Bali 2010 guidelines. In additions, governments must adopt and implement UNEP guidelines on P-10 at national level through adopting necessary legal framework and appropriate policies
41. Governments in Asia and the Pacific must develop the regional/sub-regional conventions on P-10. At the same time, interested governments in the region are enjoined to accede to the Aarhus convention, and/or to adopt its features such as the peer policy review, and complaint/individual petition procedures without precluding the adoption of the Asia Pacific convention. The negotiation for establishment of an international convention on Access to Information, Public Participation and Environmental Justice must be launched at the soonest possible time.
42. To ensure the compliance of countries to Principle10 policy measures at the national level, it is suggested to define the legal rights, obligations and enforcement procedures, and incorporate penalty clauses in such measures in order to pose penalty on the individuals or corporations that fail to provide information despite their legal obligations.
43. Finally, the useful benchmarks and indicators to assess performance on Principle 10 policy measures must be adopted and widely applied.

UNEP Regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders for Europe

Bonn, Germany, 2 September 2011

Regional major group and stakeholder statement Europe

Introduction

The more than 100 representatives of major groups and stakeholders which met for the UNEP regional consultation in Bonn, on September 2, 2011, prepared input for the upcoming UNEP Governing Council/GMEF in February 2012. UNEP's major groups and stakeholders are organised by 9 major groups.

This regional paper is prepared by the following 7 major groups: children & youth, farmers, local authorities, environmental NGOs, science & technology, women, workers & trade unions. This paper does not reflect the views of the business and industry major group. There was no representative of indigenous peoples from the European region present at the regional UNEP consultation.

The regional statement is not a negotiated document, but represents the variety of views of different major groups from the UNEP European region, which includes more than 50 countries from the European Union, Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and South Eastern Europe, as well as input from observers from other countries worldwide.

A. KEY AREAS

This part focuses on areas where a number of major groups shared common interests, recommendations and/or concerns.

Preamble

It was commonly agreed that social equity and environmental justice must remain at the heart of sustainable development, and must be strongly reflected in the outcomes of the Rio+20 UN conference in 2012. The urgency of the current environmental, social and economic crises call for ambitious policies and reforms to be adopted at the Rio +20 Conference.

I. 'GREEN' ECONOMY

1. **A 'green' economic system must promote social equity, gender equity and intergenerational equity.** A truly sustainable 'green economy' functions within the limits of the planet, and ensures a fair distribution of resources among all countries and social groups - as well as between men and women. We need an economy that provides incentives for zero-waste, low-carbon economies that enhance and restore the natural environment, while also providing new 'green' livelihoods, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for women as well as men. That is why 10 YFP SCP implementation should be the basis of Green Economy policies
2. In order to achieve a truly green economy, we need **better regulation of international financial actors and financial flows. Specific instruments** to achieve a greening of the economy were proposed by several groups:
 - **New indicators for well-being.** It is in the interest of youth and future generations, that bold steps will be taken towards a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. In order to achieve the transition to green economies, the actual political implementation of concepts such as **new (set of) indicators** for measuring development and the **internalisation of external costs** must be ensured and backed up by effective governance systems.
 - **Planetary boundaries** to be assessed and made the basis of decision-making on the basis of best available scientific knowledge, taking into account the **precautionary principle**.
 - Promotion of **green and decent jobs** agenda as an engine for development and poverty eradication, and **just transition measures** for a smoother shift towards a more sustainable society.

- The introduction of a global **Financial Transaction Tax**, to contribute to financing protection of our global commons and of sustainable development and investments in green and inclusive economies.
 - Eco-efficiency instruments are important, but there is also a need for ‘sufficiency’ instruments (social innovation, caps on resource use, ...), especially in the Northern countries to tackle the over-consumption of - and excessive pressure on - natural resources.
3. **Independent Technology Assessment.** The need for a Multi-stakeholder technology assessment for existing and emerging technologies mechanism that guarantees prior informed consent and rights of communities impacted by the financial flows, timely information, effective participation, and redress mechanisms. At Rio+20, governments could commit to such an agreement for assessment and monitoring of new technologies before their widespread use – e.g. geo-engineering.
 4. **Nuclear & uranium lifecycle control.** Based on the UNEP foresight report, we call on governments to start developing legally binding mechanisms to address the cost of decommissioning and clean up of nuclear powerplants, nuclear waste and uranium mines. Currently, most countries have no funds to pay for decommissioning of closed nuclear powerplants or containment and clean-up of uranium mining tailings, causing long-term, inter-generational and partly cross-border pollution and security risks for water, food, and eco-systems.

We call for the development of a global strategy to address the risks that nuclear energy and the whole uranium cycle, such as mining and waste disposal, pose to global environment and human lives and health, and decide on an effective and rapid global government response. In particular:

- We call for the establishment of a UN rapporteur on uranium and nuclear risks.
- We call for the establishment of a global financial mechanism to redress and clean-up of damage and pollution of nuclear and uranium lifecycles.
- We call for the establishment of an independent institutional framework to document, monitor and assess the environmental damages and risks of nuclear and uranium activities and increased lifecycle control. Such an institution will assure effective public participation, transparency and access to information.

II. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

Strong International Environmental Governance is needed. This can be achieved by:

1. **Upgrading UNEP** with new responsibilities and resources, proposals include:
 - Upgrade to a specialized agency (based in Nairobi, Africa)
 - Strong programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production under UNEP
 - Further strengthen the Trade and the Environment activities of UNEP
 - Further strengthen civil society participation in UNEP, a.o. by applying the Aarhus Convention Guidelines on ‘public participation in international environmental policy processes’
 - Upgrade the mandate of Panel of Natural Resources (under UNEP), to govern better the use of natural resources and the fair distribution of those.
2. **Strong Technology Assessment Body.** The need for inter-disciplinary approach, the application of precautionary principle and the rights of the impacted communities must be at the heart of the work of the assessments.
 - Rio+20 presents a unique opportunity to develop institutional arrangements necessary to the effective implementation of the **precautionary principle**.
 - Decision-making based on best available science urgently requires systematic research on planetary ecological boundaries, which must be used for the assessment at the international level of the impact of emerging practices and technologies.
 - Decision-making needs to be framed by the system perspective of sustainable development impacts. Furthermore, the development of an insurance scheme for social and environmental risks would enable to the pricing of such risks.
3. **Ombudspersons for Future Generations** at all governance level.
 - Establish an ombudsperson for future generations **at the UN level**, e.g. as part of a strengthened mandate for UNEP or in combination/rotation with other UN bodies

- Establish an ombudsperson for future generations **at national levels** with the mandate to work independently from the heart of government monitoring and ensuring that long-term goals and the rights of future generations are guaranteed in all policy decisions and their implementation.
4. **International implementation of Rio Principle 10.** Access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice on environmental matters: we endorse the idea of bringing Rio Principle 10 to an international level, opening negotiations for a framework or a global convention and/or several regional conventions, similar to the existing Aarhus Convention.

B. STATEMENTS PER MAJOR GROUP

NB: The Business & Industry Major Group and the Indigenous People's major group for the European region did not/ could not contribute.

I. CHILDREN AND YOUTH MAJOR GROUP

The major group Children & Youth calls specifically for:

Governance of sustainable development

- Rio+20 presents a unique opportunity to develop institutional arrangements necessary to the effective implementation of the **precautionary principle**. Decision-making based on best available science urgently requires systematic research on planetary ecological boundaries, which must be used for the assessment at the international level of the impact of emerging practices and technologies. Decision-making needs to be framed by the system perspective of sustainable development impacts. Furthermore, the development of an insurance scheme for social and environmental risks would enable to the pricing of such risks.
- **Sustainable Development Goals:** building on the Millennium Consumption Goals, propose Sustainable Development Goals for the post-2015 framework, succeeding the MDGs. This should provide holistic coherence for the processes on Sustainable Development and Development at international level and gather UN-system wide and financial institutions impetus for Sustainable Development. This should also instigate mechanisms to develop a similar cross-sectoral coherence across fields and departments at the national level.
- Establish a **trusteeship** for the transitional governance of the **global commons** until they are adequately governed by legally binding rules. This should have a clear mandate to negotiate effective structures at national and international levels for the governance of global commons.
- **Ombudspersons for Future Generations** at all governance levels (see above under A.)

Green Economy

- It is in the interest of youth and future generations, that bold steps will be taken towards a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. In order to achieve the transition to green economies, the actual political implementation of concepts such as new indicators for measuring development and the **internalisation of external costs** must be ensured and backed up by effective governance systems.
- **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)** is a key building block towards a green economy. Therefore it is crucial to integrate Sustainable Development into study curricula from primary school on. Moreover, the role of non-formal education, especially by youth-led organisations needs to be acknowledged, supported, funded and promoted. Those steps need to be taken in particular with the objective to deliver ESD before the end of the Decade on ESD (2014).
- **Green and decent job creation** helps building capacity within the work force for a transition towards a green economy as well as it can provide an answer to youth unemployment and should therefore be promoted.³

³ See ILO definition of the concept presented in the 1999 report of ILO director general on decent work.

II. Women's Major Group

The major group Women calls specifically for:

Green Economy

- Women do not want growth without equity, not even green growth. Our economies are sustained by women and the earth, but both their contributions is often not recognized and invisible. Most of the poor are women. To participate in the green economy the poor need access to basic services. Therefore, women call for:
 - A basic income for women in low-income groups;
 - Targets to training and creation of green and decent jobs for women in Rio+20 road maps.

Governance for sustainable development

- **Women in Governance:** all recent studies show that communities and the economy benefit from women's increased political participation. Sustainable development needs full women's participation, women therefore call on all government to:
 - Aim at 50% women representation in decision making posts, from local level to national level.
- **Environmental Governance:** the women's major group sees the need for **fundamental reform** of International Environmental Governance. We also need stronger environment and sustainable development governance at the national level. Women therefore call on governments to:
 - Support upgrading of UNEP to a UN specialized agency. We call on the governing council of UNEP to also increase further (women's) participation in the UNEP processes, amongst others according to the Aarhus guidelines.
- **Financing Sustainable Development:** financing of sustainable development needs a reform of global funding mechanisms, and better regulation of financial markets, and increased accessibility for women of funding mechanisms. Women call on governments to:
 - Support the introduction of the financial transaction tax and to commit to channelling a considerable share into a green and inclusive, social just investments, with a significant share going to local community development.
 - Establishing funding mechanisms needs to guarantee prior informed consent and rights of communities impacted by the financial flows, timely information, effective participation, and redress mechanisms.

III. Workers and Trade Unions

The major group Workers and Trade Unions calls specifically for:

International Environmental Governance

- The current economic crises have shown the limits of the current system to delivery both socially and environmentally. Discussions on the challenges of governance does not limit to environmental governance. Economic crises expresses clear the deficits of current social and economic governance that need to be resolved.
- Environmental governance is a fundamental dimension in itself to contribute to the global governance. We as trade unions would like to see a strong organization. A strong institution is not an ultimate goal in itself, but it is a key and indispensable element to achieve international environmental governance. Transparency, accountability, compliance, enforcement and access to information need to be ensured.

Green Economy

- There is a general agreement that the economy so far has not been able to deliver on social progress, equity and on the environmental dimension.
- Green economy will not be per se a fairer, pro-poor, inclusive or pro-decent jobs economy. It is necessary to identify how the transition will be managed, a just transition, and define the principles that will guide action.

In this regard:

- Workers & Trade Unions ask Governments to commit on Rio on **national green jobs targets**. In order to become an engine for development and poverty eradication. Green jobs that need to be decent jobs.
- Workers & Trade Unions want to see inclusion of “**just transition**” adopted as a way of managing the changes. The lack of management will make it unfair and much more expensive and will lack social support.
- Workers & Trade Unions would like to see in Rio+20 a commitment:
 - (i) to **strengthen existing social protection systems** in both developed and developing countries, with specific programmes that address the effects of the transitions; and
 - (ii) the **commitment for a universal social protection floor** as part of the poverty eradication strategy to make societies more resilient to global challenges and environmental impacts, as climate change.
- Workers & Trade Unions call on governments to make concrete and tangible steps for a new **fiscal and tax policy**, as an engine for a better social distribution of economic wealth in our societies. Rio+20 is the time to adopt the Financial Transaction Tax (FTT).

IV. Local Authorities

The major group Local Authorities calls specifically for:

Governance

1. Build upon the results of COP16 and ensure that local and regional governments can act as the key governmental stakeholders in the framework of the sustainable development agenda of the Rio+20 conference in 2012.
2. Make the UN Rio+20 conference 2012 the starting point for a renewed and increased commitment to support local governments in delivering sustainable local development, and to establish enduring local partnerships between government, business, science and research and civil society.
3. Recognise that local and regional governments are taking ambitious measures on climate mitigation and adaptation.
4. Ensure local, regional, national and EU monitoring and auditing systems be in place to evaluate actions and policies on sustainable development.

Green Economy

5. Green Economy should include green and decent jobs and reduce ecological scarcities and environmental risks and take into account opportunities cities offer when it comes to both sides of the green economy coin.
6. Offer local building blocks for a global green economy roadmap and secure renewed global political commitment for sustainable development by establishing fiscal and regulatory framework conditions that support sustainable practice in all sectors and on all governmental levels.
7. Facilitate the development of consensus on a new definition of “quality of life” beyond economic growth based on the planet's capacities and social justice.

V. Farmers

The major group Farmers calls specifically for:

The UNCSD 2012 (Rio+20) must include agreements on food and agriculture that:

1. ensure **agriculture's primary purpose is to nourish** all people and communities both today and in the future with healthy, diverse and culturally appropriate food that respects animal welfare and the integrity of natural ecosystems at both the local and global level.
2. acknowledge that a **transition to an ecologically-based, resilient, fair and fully inclusive and humane agriculture is essential** if the goals of sustainability and poverty eradication are to be simultaneously achieved.

3. establish a working program under the auspices of FAO that implements the findings of the 2008 *International Assessment of Agricultural Science, Knowledge and Technology for Development (IAASTD)* report with the goal of enabling the implementation necessary to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication.
4. establish an '**International Multi-stakeholder Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems**', based on the IAASTD process and its objectives, that informs the transition to a green, fair, ecologically sound and humane agriculture through the provision of regular updates on Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology options that address food and water security within the context of sustainable development and which compliments the role of the CFS of FAO.
5. guarantee the **rights of farmers to participate in decision making** processes in all aspects of agriculture processes including production, distribution, pricing, marketing, standard setting, policy making and regulation of the agricultural commodities market, and empower them to exercise these rights.
6. ensure that **adverse policies** that undermine the livelihood and well-being of agricultural based communities especially in LDCs **are removed**
7. ensure that agriculture and rural development are treated in a holistic manner including establishing enabling conditions for investments for sustainable development in rural areas, which **prioritize the needs of small scale food producers, indigenous peoples, peasants and the rural poor.**
8. **recognize the value of traditional and indigenous knowledge** and innovations of farmers and local communities and **protect their rights** over this and **ensure their unimpeded access** to utilize this knowledge.
9. call for agriculture and food systems to be **assessed** in light of all costs and benefits including environmental and **social externalities, the depletion of natural resources and resilience** of the systems to shocks and gradual changes.
10. ensure small scale food producers, indigenous peoples, peasants and the rural poor are provided with **enhanced access to information as basis for decision-making; access to justice; and free, prior and informed consent** for both policy development and implementation actions on the ground including issues that pose a threat to local food security and tenurial rights such as land-grabbing.
11. ensure that **Food Sovereignty and the Right to Food** are acknowledged, respected and universally implemented.
12. establish a **multi-stakeholder technology assessment mechanism** at the global and regional levels that assesses the potential environmental, health and social economic impacts of new and emerging technologies based on the precautionary principle. Such a mechanism must be transparent and participatory and build the capacities of countries and communities in all aspects of technology assessment.

On the occasion of the UNEP Regional Consultation for Europe the farmers Major Group **calls for the European Union to take a leadership role by transforming its food production and consumption patterns** to fit within ecological limits and enhance social equity in-line with its common but differentiated responsibilities.

VI. Science and Technology

The major group Science & Technology calls specifically for:

1. The Scientific and Technological Community urges renewed political commitment to sustainable development goals.
2. We support calls for further research on sustainable development challenges, including planetary boundaries.
3. We support calls to strengthen Principle 10 on access to information & and Principle 15 on the precautionary principle.
4. We support calls for the establishment of an international multistakeholder technology assessment mechanism to evaluate the potential environmental, health, social and economic impacts of new and emerging technologies, based on the precautionary principle.
5. There needs to be substantial scientific input into the conceptualization and implementation of the green economy, and in monitoring its progress and impacts, with full collaboration with other stakeholder groups.

6. We stress the need for rigorous transdisciplinary research into the transformations implicit in a move to a green economy, to ensure that such a transition is both environmentally and socially beneficial.
7. We support UNEP's foresight work on new and emerging challenges, and would like to see this used to further inform governments on these pressing issues.
8. While we welcome UNEP's efforts to improve the science-base within the organisation, we urge further action and commitment in this direction.
9. To ensure the relevance, transparency and credibility of all research and activities within the UNEP context, collaboration is essential at all stages between governments, the scientific and technological community and the Major Groups.
10. The S&T community recognise UNEP's 12th Global session of the governing council as a crucial step on the road to Rio+20.
11. We recognise Rio+20 as a crucial forum at which governments can recognise, enhance and map out the relationship between policy-making and the science, technology and innovation.
12. We see Rio+20 as a fundamental milestone in the implementation of a new social contract for science, technology and innovation with the inclusion of all society, particularly women, vulnerable communities and indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge, for the benefit of present and future generations.

VII. NGOs

The major group NGOs calls specifically for:

A lot has happened since Rio 1992. But we also see that Business-as-usual is no option anymore. There is a need for a fundamental systemic change, therefore The Green Economy concept (which seems too much a 'green Business As Usual' scenario) does not replace Sustainable Development as a guiding concept.

Governance

We call for commitments for following legal binding instruments:

1. Access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice on environmental matters: we endorse the idea of bringing Rio Principle 10 to an international level, opening negotiations on framework global convention.
2. Precautionary principle: its translation into legal frameworks is needed, especially for Economies in Transition.
3. Legally binding Framework on safe chemicals management should strengthen SAICM soft agreement.
4. Soft law is not delivering. Environmental law is not functioning well, there is a need for new mechanisms for implementation and compliance.
5. For strengthening Global SD governance, sustainability impact assessment (SIA) and strategic environmental assessment (SEA) for policies, programmes and projects should apply.
6. Legally binding Multilateral Environmental Agreement on corporate social responsibility (CSD) and corporate accountability based on ISO 26000.

We call for commitments for Institutional improvements:

1. International trade rules are often an impediment to Sustainable Development and environmental management. We call for increased support of research and activities (including capacity build by) the branch of UNEP on trade and environment, aiming to create a common playing field where trade and economies have to act.
2. Ombudsperson for future generations on all national levels, international and local level.
3. Other (set of) indicators, which better measure well-being, need to be used.

4. Strengthen UNEP. Upgrade to a specialised agency, with appropriate funding.
5. Upgrade the Natural Resource Panel, with same mandate as IPCC (or even stronger) to manage natural resources and fair distribution.
6. Strengthen at national and local level the institutionalisation of Sustainable Development and (independent) councils of SD with pro-active and relevant involvement and participation of all stakeholders. At all levels of decision making relevant stakeholders has to be involved in implementation as well, and it has to be transparent. Multi stakeholder dialogue is important. (A specialised agency will also be good for facilitating and promote this on national levels). Appropriate funding has to be there to realise this.
7. Establish a UN Council for Sustainable Development (former CSD). Its mandate should include universal periodic reviews with national compliance on international agreements, SD reporting for countries, based on an alternative (set of) indicators on SD or well being.

Green Economy

NGOs call for:

1. European and national Roadmaps for a green and fair economy. Based on supply of our commons and with fair distribution. And with space for all living species.
2. The results of the 10 YFP SCP should be the basis of Green Economy policies.
3. Green Economy considers the findings of the TEEB, but considering that we need regulation and capping of use of resources as well.
4. Avoid green-washing by obliging transparent information on products and Life Cycle Analysis.
5. To promote Millennium Consumption Goals (MCG) with binding and measurable targets.
6. The economy has to fit with in the carrying capacity of our environmental and social capital and with damaging global ecosystems: recognition of boundaries.

Transition from brown economy towards green:

1. We are calling UN to develop a global strategy to address the risks that nuclear and the whole uranium cycle, such as mining and waste disposal pose to global environment and human lives and health and decide on an effective and quick global government response.
2. We need to establish the institutional framework and the financial means to document, monitor and assess the environmental damages and risks of nuclear and uranium technologies. Such an institution shall make comprehensive use of all parties concerned and their diverse types of knowledge and experiences.
3. Redress and clean up should be financed according to the polluter pays principle, amongst others by mining industry.

Emerging issues/others

1. Concrete action plans on formal and informal education on Sustainable Development.
2. Population variables (size; growth rate, age structure, density etc) should be considered, alongside consumption.

UNEP Regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders for Latin America and the Caribbean

5 September 2011, Santiago, Chile

Recommendations of the Regional consultation meeting with major groups and stakeholders for Latin America and the Caribbean

The representatives of the major groups, gathered in Santiago, Chile, on 5 September 2011, considering the goal of reducing environmental degradation, increasing equity, improving human well-being, promoting good living and generating decent jobs, and recognizing our inter-generational obligations, state:

1. We reaffirm the applicability of Agenda 21, the Principles of the Rio Declaration and the Rio agreements;
2. We affirm that the Rio 2012 Summit on Sustainable Development should focus on assessing the implementation of the commitments undertaken in Agenda 21, the Rio principles and the international obligations of the Rio Conventions as well as the Barbados Action Plan, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Earth Charter, among others;
3. Recalling Rio principle 7, we call upon developed countries to fulfil their financial and technology transfer commitments so as to support developing countries in implementing these agreements, and we request an assessment on the implementation of these commitments;
4. We propose that on the basis of these evaluations, an action plan be established to address the disequilibria between the three pillars of sustainable development;
5. We reiterate the need for the financial sector to integrate the Rio criteria and agreements as well as United Nations agreements in general into its operations;
6. We state that there is no consensus on the concept of “green economy”;
7. We recognize that it is necessary to make a transition towards sustainable consumption and production patterns, with the involvement of the various government institutions (ministries of finance, planning, etc.) and the representatives of the major groups, and that this is a key topic for the Rio Summit 2012;
8. We reiterate the importance of framing this transition within the context of sustainable development and Agenda 21, recognizing the key role of the United Nations;
9. We call for broadening the discussion and promoting greater participation by all the major groups in the preparatory process for Rio 2012 and in the follow-up of its outcomes, by establishing indicators for participatory and transparent monitoring and evaluation;
10. Recognizing the critical role of the United Nations, we recommend promoting an institutional framework to encourage the integration of its actions in favour of sustainable development;
11. Against the backdrop of numerous crises, we call upon the Governments to revise the rules and regulations of financial institutions for the implementation of Agenda 21 and the remaining conventions, to initiate a participatory analysis and to amend those conventions;
12. These analysis processes should be carried out with the full participation of the major groups, in order to enhance national ownership and equity in decision-making processes and in the outcome;
13. We call upon the United Nations System to increase its support for the Governments in achieving sustainable development.

UNEP Regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders for North America

October 13-14, 2011, Washington, DC - Hosted by World Resources Institute

Key Messages from North American Major Groups and Stakeholders

Key points raised by participants in the UNEP North American Civil Society Consultation are enumerated below, structured under the following themes:

- a) The Green Economy,
- b) Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD),
- c) Additional Messages for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

These key messages reflect areas of general consensus from the meeting; however, the various groups present do not necessarily endorse every conclusion.

With respect to the Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

1. **We call on governments to reaffirm their commitment to sustainable development and poverty eradication, including implementing Agenda 21, and indicate their commitment by arriving in Rio with “to-do” lists of concrete steps they will take for implementation.** Such reaffirmation sends a strong signal of their prioritization of sustainable development and serves to support the mobilization of green economies at the national, regional, and global levels.
2. Furthermore, **governments should establish a set of sustainable development goals**, with clear timelines and measurements of success, accompanied by an assessment process. Such goals should align with existing global development goals, including equity and gender equality.
3. **Greater civil society participation is needed.** Clear and regular opportunities to provide input and expertise, in an equitable and more participatory manner, are needed. Existing stakeholder voices must be strengthened and expansion beyond the current major groups model should be considered with an aim of expanding participation. Furthermore, new stakeholders must be included in the dialogue, especially those involved in trade and economic policy, the WTO, economic and finance ministries.
4. **Women** have a vital role in environmental management and development and their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development.
5. **The transition to a green economy requires a fundamental shift in production and consumption patterns.** We call on governments to commit to the following to lead this transition:
 - Governments, at all levels, should commit to sustainable procurement practices to support environmental standards and social certification such as Fair Trade.
 - At Rio+20, governments should finalize the negotiation of the 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production.
6. **We call on governments to commit to the elimination of perverse subsidies in energy, agriculture, and other sectors.**
7. **We call on governments to rethink their measurement of progress and incorporate more comprehensive and wellbeing indicators into their national accounts.** Measuring and tracking sustainable development requires more comprehensive measurement than measuring Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
8. **We support the use of financial incentives (e.g. tax reforms) that reward sustainable behaviors, thus reflecting full cost pricing and making it economically advantageous to do business in a sustainable manner.**
9. **We call for increased training and start-up funding to support green jobs, particularly among young people.** Increasing knowledge of and opportunities for green jobs will help drive the transition to a green economy. Environmental education must be integrated into the education system, particularly within vocational and business schools. This not only helps generate a green workforce, but also provides entrepreneurs with the knowledge and tools they need to establish environmentally sustainable businesses.

10. UNEP should provide **the international community with a clearinghouse of best practices in the environmental aspects of sustainable development**. Creating a repository of best practices enables the transfer of knowledge and capacity building, at both the national and sub-national level.
11. This repository of best practices could serve as the basis for a **global program or partnership that supports countries and communities in developing and implementing their local and national sustainability strategies and action plans**. Such assistance, including funding such as that promised local communities under Chapter 28 of Agenda 21, would help communities realize a green economy and achieve international sustainable development agreements.
12. **We note that institutional frameworks for sustainable development, at all levels of governance, are necessary to promote the transition to a green economy.**

With respect to the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD)

We note that designing an effective institutional framework for sustainable development requires:

- A focus on the interconnectedness and interdependence of the social, ecological and economic pillars, and on the local and global as well as long term consequences of our actions;
- A balance between valuing activities in specific areas, sectors, issues and building institutional mechanisms that connect across these activities;
- Building effective governance architectures that facilitate connection, learning and implementation across scales (watershed management systems can serve as a model);
- Implementing Principle #10 on transparency, participation and accountability in all governance institutions and processes;
- The inclusion of civil society as a full partner in governance decision-making and implementation;
- The importance of designing governance interactions as open, interactive, facilitated dialogue with accessible language to engage diverse demographics, including women and Indigenous peoples; and
- An emphasis on institutional mechanisms for implementation, accountability, compliance, and enforcement, supported by a science based approach.

Thus, we deliver the following messages on IFSD:

13. We call on the Rio + 20 Conference to launch negotiations for the **establishment of an international convention on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration** that deals with access to information, public participation and environmental justice.
14. We encourage countries to continue to **adopt Principle 10** in their domestic context, establish **environmental tribunals, freedom of information acts and pollution release inventories**, and create **enforcement mechanisms** that empower citizens to call for and seek legal recourse in terms of compliance to commitments, laws and regulations.
15. We underscore the **importance of inclusive and comprehensive metrics for tracking implementation** of commitments and holding governments accountable for their commitments.
16. We highlight **the critical role of national compliance and enforcement systems in holding governments accountable for national and international commitments**. We recommend **capacity building programs for parliamentarians, inspectors, prosecutors, and judges**, to ensure environmental laws and regulations are enforced at the national level.
17. We call on governments to engage **Auditor Generals** in defining an international framework for ensuring accountability, compliance and enforcement.
18. We call for a **strengthened UNEP** with funding and staff capacity that aligns with the scale and scope of its mandate. This could include upgrading UNEP to a specialized agency within the U.N. UNEP should be tasked with tracking implementation of national and international environmental commitments and should establish a review process that ensures countries are held accountable for their commitments.
19. We ask for **linked UNEP / UNDP capacity building budgets** in order to facilitate a joint and complementary effort in capacity building that advances sustainable development, green economies and poverty eradication.

20. We recommend **an in-depth analysis of barriers to and promising practices in implementing existing sustainable development commitments**, including Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, to inform strategic action. This analysis could begin by taking stock of the extent to which each article has been implemented to date, and provide recommendations on how to fill existing gaps.
21. We call for a **review of the existing civil society / Major Groups and Stakeholders model** to analyze its effectiveness, to explore alternative approaches (drawing on models from other international agencies) and to propose alternatives for consideration by countries at Rio +20.
22. We call for **strengthening the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development within the U.N. system**. This could entail upgrading the U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to a permanent Council status, including in its mandate a focus on outcomes and on holding countries and international agencies accountable for implementing their sustainable development commitments. Key to such efforts would be the inclusion of civil society and stakeholders in decision-making processes.
23. **We call on Rio+20 to pay special attention to the role of national and sub-national institutions and develop mechanisms that facilitate knowledge transfer and capacity building.**
Effective national and sub-national frameworks that promote sustainability are critical for the success of sustainable development at the global level and thus local, municipal, sub-national and regional governments should be given increased status in international processes and negotiations. Furthermore, such frameworks should take into account the role of both urban and rural communities in promoting sustainable development practices. Rural communities, in particular, can benefit from local and regional mechanisms that inform and support community based approaches to sustainable development.
24. **We recognize that the institutional framework for sustainable development includes private sector actors and that advancing sustainable development should include tracking and rewarding private sector efforts to implement environmentally sustainable and socially just practices.**
25. We call for the establishment of a **Financial Transaction Tax** to help build social protection systems in the most vulnerable countries (e.g. the Least Developed Countries), contribute to sustainable climate adaptation, strengthen civil society worldwide and support more sustainable and equitable economies.
26. We emphasize that **technology transfer for development** requires the transfer of know-how that **builds skills capacity** and that intellectual property rights, patent laws and other policies do not undermine such transfers, the delivery of public goods and the stimulation to develop new technological innovations.

Regional institutional framework for sustainable development:

27. We call the US and Canadian governments to develop a **North American Sustainable Consumption and Production Framework** in consultation and partnership with civil society, business, and other key stakeholders and which includes a review process and support mechanisms for implementation.
28. We call on the US and Canadian governments to launch negotiations for the **establishment of a regional convention on Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration that deals with access to information, public participation and environmental justice.**
29. We call on the US and Canadian governments to develop a **Regional Framework on Sustainable Development.**

Additional Messages for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)

30. **Rio+20 is an opportunity for concrete progress and implementation of commitments.** Science tells us we are running out of time and, while progress has been made since the Rio Earth Summit twenty years ago, we are bumping up against planetary boundaries. Current models of economic development are not sustainable.

The time for talking has passed, what is needed now is implementation. Governments have already made commitments to further sustainable development and poverty eradication – including Agenda 21, the Rio Conventions, and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation - and must now deliver on such commitments. We call on governments to utilize the opportunity of the Rio+20 Conference to set concrete goals with clear timelines and measurements of success. A proposal has already been introduced in the form of *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, and we welcome the establishment of such goals.

31. **Rio+20 is an opportunity to inspire and re-ignite the Spirit of Rio.** Twenty years ago the Earth Summit inspired a generation of environmental leaders. Rio+20 must do the same and inspire citizens, especially Youth, around the globe to be leaders in advancing sustainability in their lives and in the lives of others. We need a new generation of global stewards who promote environmental and socially sustainable practices, including the principles of equity and solidarity.
32. **Rio+20 can establish a shared understanding of sustainability and highlight the interconnectedness of the three pillars of sustainable development.** This shared understanding should incorporate shared values, such as the principles of equity and empathy for others.
33. **Rio+20 should not be just another U.N. Conference but incorporate new approaches to dialogue and stakeholder engagement.** Rio+20 should be a new type of UN Conference. It must engage non-traditional actors in dialogue and provide an open and transparent forum.
34. **We call on Heads of State and Government and Ministers of Finance to attend Rio+20.**

UNEP Regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders for West Asia

9-10 October 2011, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Statement/ recommendations of the Regional consultation meeting with major groups and stakeholders for West Asia

- We, the participants in the Regional Consultation Meeting of Civil Society Organizations and Major Groups of Western Asia, met on 9 and 10 October 2011 in Dubai in preparation for Rio +20 Summit and the Twelfth special session of the Governing Council/General Ministers of Environment Forum (GC.SS-XII/GMEF) as well as the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-13),
- Abiding by Rio Declarations (1992), Agenda 21 and the Millennium Development Declarations (2000),
- Recognizing and stressing on their calls to enhance international co-operation in order to overcome the global development and environmental challenges,
- Emphasizing the key role of committed international co-operation in promoting fair trade, improving the quantity, quality and effectiveness of overseas development aids to developing countries,
- Recognizing the latter's contribution in supporting sustainable development initiatives, protecting and sustaining natural resources and their efficient use and reforming the production and consumption patterns and facilitating not only the transfer of environment-friendly technologies but its indigenization,
- Discussed Rio+20 agenda items and agreed on the following recommendations:

First: Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD) and International Environment Governance (IEG)

While stressing the importance of the efforts made by different organizations towards developing International Environment Governance (IEG) within the United Nations system, we emphasized the need to enhance the framework of sustainable development to ensure equity and transparency in line with the international law, through the following:

1. Initiating and developing sound science policy and planning interface; hence crafting environmental and development policies and programs based on strong, credible integrated and coherent science base.
2. Strengthening the Committee of Sustainable Development (CSD) and upgrading it into a "Global Council for Sustainable Development", empowered to oversee the implementation of international conventions and resolutions, particularly Agenda 21, the MDGs and related international conventions. This would enhance cohesion, co-ordination and harmonization among them and hold the governments and other relevant entities subject to regular monitoring.
3. Enhancing UNEP's role and mandate through upgrading its status to be one of the UN organizations similar to WHO and ILO, among others.
4. Encouraging the developed countries to meet their declared commitments during Rio 1992 and Johannesburg 2002 Summits towards the developing countries in order to enable the latter fulfill their needs to achieve the Agenda 21 and the MDGs and overcome the threats hindering the implementation of their sustainable development plans.
5. Finding and developing innovative sources of funds, and securing diversified, sustainable and predictable funding.
6. Promoting the principles of good governance and rejecting all forms of corruption at the various local, national, regional and global levels while empowering the monitoring role of civil society organizations in this respect.
7. Ensuring the participation of civil society organizations and other stakeholders as well as ensuring transparency and accountability at all levels (local, national, regional and global), based on principle 10 of Agenda 21 within the global environmental governance system through:

- Securing means to respond to the needs of countries which lack good governance mechanisms and regulations.
 - Building capacities in democratic governance and developing national professional and scientific capabilities through the provision of resources, training and education.
 - Setting standards for transparency and accountability and disseminating best practices.
 - Crafting guidelines and standards that promote civil society and stakeholders' participation, and advocate for establishing sustainable development councils both at the local and national levels.
8. Adopting comprehensiveness to ensure that all significant environmental threats are appropriately addressed, through mechanisms that ensure:
- Continuous evaluation of the state of the environment and technological developments in order to assess and address urgent problems and emerging threats;
 - Developing early warning systems, building and enhancing capabilities to promptly respond to and rectify environmental threats at various levels (local, national, regional and global) in a co-ordinated and precautionary manner.

Second: Green Economy

In view of UNEP's definition of Green Economy as one "that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. In its simplest expression, a green economy can be thought of as one which is low in carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive (...). The concept of a green economy does not replace sustainable development, but there is growing recognition that achieving sustainability rests almost entirely on getting the economy right⁴"; and despite the reservations of some CSOs and MGS on this definition⁵, we stressed the need that Green Economy should:

1. Achieve social justice, eliminate poverty, enhance social integration, create job opportunities and provide basic requirements for human welfare;
2. Ensure optimum and wise use of natural resources with high efficiency while protecting them from all forms of adverse practices and activities in order to ensure their sustainability for future generations;
3. Halt unsustainable production and consumption practices which hinder sustainable development, and curb activities that aggravate the greenhouse effect and climate change impacts in order to sustain safe living on earth.

Accordingly, we highlighted the following:

1. Green Economy is one tool to achieve sustainable development objectives and principles, and not a substitute. It is a means and not an end by itself.
2. The need for developing nations to acquire environment-friendly technologies which enable them to embark in the transition to green economy and to indigenize these technologies to ensure their sustainability.
3. Not to use Green Economy as a vehicle to impose taxes or non-tariff barriers as a form of hidden protectionism by developed countries.
4. Enhancing, activating and institutionalizing the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in building capacities and eliminating poverty, provided that this concept relies on respecting human rights, all international conventions and agreements related to economic, social and cultural rights as well as the Universal Declaration on the Right for Development.

4 Towards a green economy- paths to sustainable development and elimination of poverty. Reference for policy makers, UNEP, 2011.

5 Arab Non-Governmental Development Organizations Network expressed its reservation on the definition of the green economy on the ground that it still revolves around general goals without addressing neither the means to achieve them nor the obligations to be taken by governments, particularly of the industrialized countries)

More specifically, on West Asia front, we emphasized the need for:

1. Promoting regional co-operation to meet the region's needs through prioritizing the economic development programs and the implementation mechanisms in the transition to Green Economy.
2. Laying down a mechanism for regional co-operation in the sector of renewable and/or alternative energy.
3. Catalyzing technology transfer within the region to ensure proper transfer and indigenization along with capacity building and training.
4. Encouraging investment in scientific research through the provision of incentives to companies (within the region and with developed countries), ensuring the participation of different segments of the society, supporting scientists and funding researchers in the region.
5. Adopting high quality control/quality performance standards in managing the process of transition to Green Economy and beyond.
6. Integrating sustainable development concepts in the educational and training curricula at different levels.
7. Empowering civil society organizations and promoting their participation along with governments and private sectors in sustainably managing the various natural resources in the different stages of planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation.
8. Making use of and direct the resources available in Waqf funds among other resources, including Zakat, etc. (in accordance with Shari'a guidelines) as well as some Arab development funds (sovereign funds) to implement sustainable development programs that serve in minimizing disparities and eliminating poverty.
9. Reviewing, updating and enforcing environmental legislations at the national and regional levels.
10. Integrating the environmental dimension into national policies, strategies and programs to realize the objectives of sustainable development.

Based on the above, we emphasized that Green Economy should spring from a vision that takes into consideration the specificities of local communities (particularly developing nations) through defining their economic and social development priorities and implementation means. The latter shall be based on enhancing productive sectors in the framework of Green Economy in a way that would meet local needs; create new green job opportunities, realize effective social participation in development and ensure just distribution of development outcomes, reduce poverty and marginalization and increase social welfare.

In this respect and within the strategies of transition towards Green Economy, we highlighted the need for adopting the following priorities:

1. Production and consumption trends: to urge nations to change their consumption and production patterns and behaviors to be more sustainable, in line with Agenda 21, by facilitating and promoting initiatives that adopt environment-friendly production trends and conscious consumption practices.
1. Renewable energy: to urge states and empowering them technologically to use different types of renewable energy, such as solar energy, wind, waves among other forms of alternative clean energy resources available in the region.
2. Green building: to urge states and promote the application of the green building policies and tools in the private and public sectors through developing and adopting environmental specifications and standards (such as the use of environment-friendly materials as well as energy and water efficient techniques).
3. Clean means of transport: to urge states to provide reliable public transport infrastructure and operations and promote the use of environment-friendly means through extending incentives.
4. Water management: to urge governments to develop integrated water resource management strategies, and specifically improving the efficient utilization of both conventional non-conventional water resources to the largest extent possible through recycling and reusing of treated effluent of all degrees, as per appropriate specifications, in different sectors such as agriculture and industry.
5. Waste management: to urge governments to adopt the integrated waste management approach aiming at reducing waste generation at source, through rationalization of consumption patterns, adopting of the green production inputs and concepts, using high quality commodities, reducing the use of packaging materials; segregating and reclaiming urban waste; ending with safe disposal of toxic waste.
6. Sustainable natural resource management: to urge governments to employ and use integrated regional planning basics for use of land and conserving biodiversity habitats, establishing genetic banks, promoting

organic agriculture, reducing the use of agricultural chemicals to safeguard human health and the quality of environment. .

In light of the above, and recognizing Principle 10 of Agenda 21, we stressed the need to mobilize the efforts of governments, major groups, civil society and the concerned UN organizations, including UNEP to:

1. Enhance the role of civil society organizations and stakeholders in influencing environmental related policies nationally, regionally and internationally.
 2. Develop consultation and follow up mechanisms with civil society organizations and major groups in West Asia (ROWA), build their capacities and develop a centralized information network to exchange expertise and best practices among them.
 3. Develop mechanisms to present, raise and discuss the output of the regional consultation meetings (statements) in global arenas, particularly at the Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF).
 4. Enhance the role and representation of the Regions in the Major Groups and Stakeholders' MGS Facilitating committee similar to the MGS representation with regard to status (full rather than an observer status) and membership terms.
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