

## Draft Chair's Summary

### Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the UNCSD, 19-20 October 2011, Seoul, ROK

1. Over three hundred delegates from more than 41 countries of the Asian and Pacific region met in Seoul to prepare for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.
2. The diversity of the region was noted. The emerging development challenges that were shared were also highlighted. In this regard, the need to change development and economic models to respond to these challenges and as a way to improve progress on sustainable development. This would also require changes in social values and practices in addition to technical solutions. At the same time, the diversity of the region's resource endowments, stage of development and capacities means that there is no universally applicable model of sustainable development.
3. Many countries in the region are already addressing sustainable development challenges with different national and sub-regional green economy related management policies, strategies, initiatives, and economic instruments. Several are establishing supportive institutional frameworks such as committees and inter-ministerial working groups. The outcomes of the 5th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development (MCED-5, March 2005, Seoul, ROK), which addressed environmentally sustainable economic growth, or green growth, had been a catalyst for many of these initiatives.
4. Some of the regional priorities included: access to basic needs, food security and sovereignty, equitable income distribution, and the provision of opportunities for a better life, in an inclusive and sustainable way. The challenges of climate change and the need for specific support in this regard was noted, including in particular for Small Island Developing States and for farmers. Among the priority development areas identified were: harmonizing rapid economic growth with employment generation and environmental sustainability; promoting sustainable urban development and transport; enhancing ecological carrying capacity; improving energy access resource management for sustainable development; improving water resource management for sustainable development; provision of quality and enhancing the resilience of socio-economic development to climate change.
5. In this regard, there is need to make provisions for technology, finance and capacity building for the economic transformation necessary for sustainable development and to support developing countries efforts. Appropriate technology and technology cooperation and technology transfer need to be strengthened. Developed countries should take the lead in changing consumption and production patterns and help developing countries with financial support, technology transfer, capacity building and market access.
6. It was acknowledged that to drive the required changes, which will foster and promote a development path towards sustainable development there is a need to engage all stakeholders. The international community's support to help create an enabling environment for sustainable

development, including through a transition to a green economy, would be needed. Support to member states in GE is currently being provided by the Government of Republic of Korea, GGGI, ESCAP, UNDP and UNEP.

7. Outcomes of Rio +20 should include practical measures for achieving sustainable development and for supporting a transition to GE at global and national levels. Among the proposals tabled in this regard were SD Goals that are linked to the MDGs; the adoption of Poverty Reduction Goals that could be used as GE indicators and the adoption of sustainable development measures to complement national GDP measures; and the creation of a Sustainable Development Fund; the creation of a Green Economy Fund, including revenue collected through a tax on financial transactions; and the establishment of a Green Economy Clearing House. It was proposed that knowledge systems and innovations needed to be galvanized.

8. An effective reform of the Institutional Framework on Sustainable Development would also support just transition to a green economy. When the establishment of a Sustainable Development Council is considered, provisions should be made for an advisory body comprised of major groups' representatives, including women and youth, and the scientific community to allow better informed decision making on SD. Such structure also needs to be duplicated on national level to allow effective implementation of sustainable development.

9. An objective appraisal on the implementation of sustainable development commitments and action plans was urged, including identification of areas for further progress. Further progress was urged on: strengthening the holistic integration of the environment, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development; strengthening national councils for sustainable development; defining post-Kyoto commitments; implementing the agreed Rio principles, in particular Rio Principle 10, access to information; gender equality, democracy and human rights; regulatory frameworks for financial markets; recognizing the importance of peoples' participation; addressing the challenges of the least developed countries and small island states; providing children and youth with education, training and opportunities and addressing child labour.

10. Other areas where the need for further progress was identified included: framework for promoting sustainable consumption and production, commitments to workers rights and decent jobs; promoting rights based approaches to development; participation of major group in decision making - in particular in relation to management of natural resources; gender equality and the use of gender-disaggregated data; partnerships between business and industry, governments and the natural science, social science and technology community .

### **Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction**

11. A green economy is a means to achieve sustainable development, a vehicle for integrating the three pillars of sustainable development and a way of reinforcing coherence among economic, environmental and social policies. A green economy was identified as an essential strategy for achieving sustainable development.

12. While Rio +20 would consider this important theme, several delegations emphasized need for Rio +20 to secure a renewed and strengthened political commitment to sustainable development. Potential confusion regarding the introduction of a new term to the international development agenda was noted. It was noted that green economy measures could not substitute for Kyoto protocol commitments.

13. Although it was recognized that there is no consensus on the definition of green economy some common themes were identified including low carbon growth that delivers affordable and sustainable energy supplies to households, more sustainable consumption and production, increased resource efficiency, strengthened measures to manage climate change, sustainable forestry management, sustainable development of mega-cities, and strengthened environmental health of oceans, inter-linkages between environmental degradation and health of people and ecosystems.

14. A transition to a green economy should follow a people-centred approach that recognises human security issues and in this context there must be a clear link between green economy and poverty reduction. Comments in this regard included that a people-centred approach should also address the needs of the disadvantaged and most vulnerable; enhance social justice; and that partnerships should promote sustainable development rather than be exploitative and opportunistic.

15. It was emphasized that member states need the flexibility to select those measures to achieve a green economy that are applicable to their own development contexts and that GE options should be fair, open, inclusive, equitable and rules based. Applying the theme of "Greening Economies" in the "Blue World" context of the Pacific small island states and countries with significant fisheries sectors and large numbers of coastal communities, requires special focus and attention at Rio+20. This is important not just for their benefit but for the sake of the globe as a whole, which depends significantly on the state of the Pacific Ocean and its resources.

16. Several interventions emphasized that a transition to a green economy will require common but differentiated responsibilities among developed and developing countries. Developing countries should commit to establishing enabling regulatory and market based measures including thorough addressing the issue of fuel and fisheries subsidies in a way that mitigates any adverse impacts on the poorest and most vulnerable. Several delegations noted that the provided to developing countries must be coordinated to promote aid effectiveness and that a transition to a GE should not include the imposition of conditionality on overseas development aid. In the context of aid effectiveness, it was noted that there is a need for the simplification of climate change financing modalities to allow increased access and reduced transaction costs for developing countries.

17. It was proposed that developing and developed countries should promote the systematic exchange of knowledge and best practices of promoting GE through appropriate mechanisms that could include establishing knowledge exchange platforms and centres of excellence in green

technologies and global cooperation in priority sectoral areas such as water, energy and marine environments.

18. The implementation of a green economy must involve all parts of society down to the community and individual levels. In this regard, there was a call for countries to integrate concept of SD into national education curricula; public awareness raising campaigns to promote sustainable development; and for CSOs to be included in decision making and implementation processes. It was noted that there is a key role for the private sector in research and development, technological innovation, investment, and support through cooperate social responsibility programmes. The meeting also called for the current and potential role of women in achieving sustainable development to be addressed at Rio +20.

19. The use of unilateral measures that use a green economy and environmental protection as an obstacle to trade must be avoided. It was proposed that where there is a conflict between environmental protection and trade support should be provided in the form of capacity development and technology transfers to overcome these conflicts. This would allow access to global markets for countries in the region, which is central to achieving a green economy and sustainable development.

20. The interventions of delegations noted that a green economy would need to :

- Be appropriately adapted to country-specific circumstances and as understood in the context of sustainable development;
- Be built on sustainable production and consumption patterns and ensuring all people's wellbeing
- Be implemented in a way that fully engages stakeholders to ensure an inclusive transition to more sustainable development pathways, including through equitable access to resources and opportunities for advancement and providing decent work and ensuring equitable distribution of benefits;
- Ensure that these approaches do not constitute conditionality to economic development of developing countries, and that no additional trade related barriers to the exports of developing countries are being imposed;
- Ensure that the necessary investments towards sustainable management of ecosystems but avoid the marginalisation of communities;
- Be strengthened through the development and application of an explicit and supportive programmatic approach for poverty reduction;
- Be mobilized via innovative financing from domestic sources, including through reducing or eliminating environmentally and economically damaging subsidies and internalizing environmental costs in market prices; and
- Promote technologies that are critical for increasing access to basic services, in particular water, sanitation and energy in an integrated manner, in addition to eco-efficient resource use.

## **Institutional Framework on Sustainable Development**

21. The core of sustainable development lies in the coordinated development of the three pillars of economic development, social progress and environmental protection. Any institutional framework for sustainable development must be centred on these three pillars in a balanced manner.

22. The international community need to commit to meaningful steps to strengthen the governance in all three pillars, as well as to improve integration among the three pillars of sustainable development in policymaking as a priority. Any reforms would need to focus on improving the functioning of governance structures in this regard on all levels – local and sub-national, national, sub-regional and regional, and global. Furthermore this reforms would need to ensure open and inclusive mechanisms for engaging the civil society and all stakeholders, in particular the most disadvantaged, women and youth in the decision making process to ensure people-centred development.

23. The UN should continue to play a key leading role in advancing the progress of sustainable development and to provide technical and capacity development support to developing countries. In this regard, a better coordination between the UN agencies, programmes, funds and institutions need to be ensured following the principle of “Delivering as One”, which will increase effective field and country implementation. The role of Regional Commissions, which can be the regional institutional framework for integration of the three pillars sustainable development as per provisions of Agenda 21 needs to be further strengthened to effectively support implementation of sub-regional sustainable development strategies and plans.

24. The International Financial Institutions would also need to review their programmatic strategies to ensure provision of better support to developing countries for the implementation of sustainable development. Establishing a global Green Economy Fund/Sustainable Development Fund would also greatly facilitate countries efforts for financing national efforts for implementation of sustainable development. Such fund will also support development of cleaner and greener technologies and North-South and South-South technology.

25. The Rio+20 would need to consider establishing reforming the current global governance for sustainable development. A step by step approach is desirable with short term and medium term actions. In this regard, review of existing institutional architecture would need to examine the options of either strengthening ECOSOC and/or establishing a Sustainable Development Council. The SDC key role would be to enhance monitoring of the progress of implementation of sustainable development. Furthermore, the to make SDC more effective and inclusive, an advisory body comprised of major groups representatives, including women and youth, and the scientific community could be established to allow better informed decision making on SD. Such structure

need to be duplicated on national level to allow effective implementation of sustainable development.

26. Any institutional reform need to ensure that that the environmental governance is also strengthened to eliminate the segregation of the environment pillar from the economic and social pillars and to cater for the proliferation of the multilateral environmental agreements. In this regard, universal membership and predictable funding for UNEP would be important on the short run. In the long run, the international community need to review the options for further strengthening and elevating UNEP status to a global environment organization.

## **Partnerships for Sustainable Development**

27. Global, regional and sub-regional partnerships have proven to be successful mechanisms for a more inclusive approach to implementation of sustainable development after the World Summit for Sustainable Development, 2002. Forming regional and inter-regional partnerships to provide support for developing capacity, enhancing policy and decision making, and increasing awareness were underlined as creating more effective means of implementation, financing and technology transfer.

28. There was a proposal for a “Global Partnership for Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction”, outlining new political commitment, areas of action and identifying support needed for developing countries.

29. Delegates proposed partnerships for sustainable development as regional contributions to Rio +20 outcomes:

- Astana Green Bridge Initiative: Europe-Asia-Pacific Partnership for Implementation of Green Growth (Kazakhstan): The Green Bridge Partnership Program developed under this initiative requires a multilateral, long-term partnership and more stable basis for green investments, a technology transfer mechanism for green technologies and innovations. The programme will be able to ensure free assistance and advice to countries and intuitions on new technologies or innovation but also to use other countries’ experiences in reforming policies to attract green investment. For this programme, Kazakhstan welcomes strong partners with experience;
- Eco-city development (Japan) - the future mega-cities in Asia need to be designed and developed in a sustainable manner to maximise benefit of low carbon technologies and waste management; and
- Initiative to Nurture Sustainable Citizens (Japan) – development of human resources in Asia and pacific is the key in implementation of sustainable development