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Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

Nairobi, 18–22 February 2013

Item 4 (e) of the provisional agenda*

**Policy issues: coordination and cooperation with
major groups**

Regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

The annex to the present note sets out statements and recommendations by major groups and stakeholders prepared during regional consultations held in preparation for the fourteenth session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the twenty-seventh 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: implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development; sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda; and regional priorities, linking civil society priorities to regional ministerial forums.

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

* UNEP/GC.27/1.

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 prior to 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.
3. The consultations held in 2012 will feed into the fourteenth session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum and the twenty-seventh session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.

Topics for discussion

4. The discussions at the regional consultations were structured according to the following themes:
 - (a) Implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, including:
 - (i) Institutional framework for sustainable development;
 - (ii) Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication;
 - (iii) Public participation, access to information and engagement of civil society;
 - (iv) Ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns;
 - (v) Sound and safe chemicals management;
 - (b) Sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda;
 - (c) Regional priorities, such as climate change in Africa; linking civil society priorities to regional ministerial forums; mainstreaming sound and safe chemicals management; achieving the goals of social responsibility, gender and intergenerational equity and stronger accountability and transparency mechanisms for the private sector; increased subregional and regional collaboration for the sustainable management of natural resources; engagement in sustainable development policy dialogues and implementation at global and regional levels; and wider engagement of major groups and stakeholders and non-State actors in sustainable development governance and implementation.
5. The regional consultations were held according to the schedule set out in table 1.

Table 1

Schedule of regional consultations

<i>Region</i>	<i>Meeting dates and location</i>
Africa	7–9 September 2012, Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania
Europe	13 November 2012, Baku
Western Asia	19 and 20 November 2012, Dubai
Latin America and the Caribbean	19 and 20 November 2012, Port of Spain
Asia-Pacific	22 and 23 November 2012, Kathmandu
North America	12 and 13 December 2012, Washington, D.C.

6. A total of 364 participants attended the regional consultations. Table 2 provides an overview of the participation, disaggregated by major groups and stakeholders and by region. It shows that non-governmental organizations had the highest participation, at 33 per cent, followed by children and young people, at 17 per cent.

Table 2
Representation

<i>Major groups and stakeholders</i>	<i>Africa</i>	<i>Europe</i>	<i>Western Asia</i>	<i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i>	<i>Asia-Pacific</i>	<i>North America</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Business and industry	1	15	3	1	2	10	32	9
Children and young people	20	23	2	3	13	1	62	17
Indigenous peoples	5	-	-	1	7	-	13	4
Local authorities	-	6	1	2	1	-	10	3
Non-governmental organizations	33	17	16	2	14	37	119	33
Science and technology (including research institutions and universities)	1	12	3	4	4	5	29	8
Women	6	10	-	2	8	1	27	7
Farmers	2	3	-	1	5	1	12	3
Workers and trade unions	1	5	-	-	-	2	8	2
Other ^a	19	12	1	-	13	7	52	14
Total	88	103	26	16	67	64	364	100

^a Includes faith-based groups, the media, organizations whose mandates cut across several sectors and intergovernmental bodies such as the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Government representatives from Azerbaijan and the United States of America also participated.

Annex

UNEP regional consultations with major groups and stakeholders for Africa

Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, 7-9 September 2012

African Major Groups and Stakeholders Statement to AMCEN 14 and UNEP GC27/GMEF

Africa Regional Consultation with Major Groups and Stakeholders of Civil Society held in conjunction with the fourteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), 7-9 September 2012, Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania. The statement is followed by the Youth Statement to AMCEN and GC/GMEF

1. Representatives of African Major Groups and Stakeholders met from 7 to 9 September 2012 in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, and discussed the African perspective on the implementation of the outcomes of Rio+20, the preparations for the eighteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and AMCEN organizational matters.
2. We identify the following as overarching priority areas of intervention to achieve sustainable development and address adverse Climate Change in Africa: i) Poverty eradication, ii) Access to quality Education for All, iii) Sustainable agriculture and food security, iv) Gender responsiveness, v) Adaptation, vi) Disaster preparedness and management, vii) Resource mobilization and management, and viii) Protection of environment and ecosystems.

We hereby recommend:

Part 1. Climate Change and COP 18 of the UNFCCC

Climate change finance

3. We urge African ministers to support the need for grants in the form of new, predictable and additional public finance by setting up national funds. This will minimize foreign aid dependence and send a strong signal against climate loans contracted by vulnerable African countries to address climate change.

Climate change negotiations

4. We are gravely concerned about the slow progress and low level of ambition in the on-going international climate change dialogue process. and particularly agreeing on contentious issues such as second commitment period of protocol, Ad Hoc Working Group on Durban Platform and the where to get the US\$100 Billion for the period 2012 – 2020. We further urge you to put pressure on Annex I countries in mitigation to demonstrate their commitment.
5. We ask governments to avail adequate resources to our negotiators in the UNFCCC process so as to eliminate our dependence on foreign aid and follow negotiations in a consistent manner.
6. We urge African Ministers to call for substantial scaled-up provision of climate finance at COP18, particularly to the Green Climate Fund for disbursements, with a view to address urgent adaptation needs of developing countries. These funds must be new, additional, predictable and long-term, disbursed in the form of grants. To complement of funds, innovative financing mechanisms – such as global levy on shipping with no net impact on developing countries or financial transaction taxes in developed countries as well as special drawing rights - could significantly scale up developed countries budgetary contributions to finance climate change.
7. We urge African governments to focus climate change negotiations not only on scientific knowledge but also on Justice and fundamental rights of vulnerable groups such as women, smallholder farmers, youth, the physically challenged and indigenous peoples.
8. We acknowledge the efforts being done by our governments to mainstream climate change in national sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies and plans that will ensure that as we move towards a low-carbon growth future, we avoid growth models by industrialized countries that have resulted into the current situation.

9. We urge the governments to entrench the principles of gender equality and equity in any emerging climate change agreement.
10. We urge the African group to follow up on financing commitments and ensure that there is a monitoring framework to make Annex I countries accountable for their commitments.

Climate Change Governance

11. We urge the government to engage development issues that focuses on sustainability while addressing climate change adaptation and mitigation.
12. We urge AMCEN to operationalize the inter agency technical committee to provide CSOs with an opportunity to contribute to the AMCEN process.
13. We urge the African group, AMCEN and CAHOSSOC, to work harmoniously to realize a unified African Position.
14. There is a need to acknowledge, integrate and promote indigenous knowledge with science in addressing climate change and natural resources management.
15. We urge the government for support to enable youth to engage in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects that respond to climate change within their communities.

Part 2. African perspective on the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

16. We urge governments to develop strong policies and institutional frameworks that will provide oversight roles and ensure accountability, transparency and integrity in budget spending which will strengthen Africa's capacity to achieve sustainable development.

Citizen Participation and Information

17. We urge African ministers to implement Principle 10 of Rio declaration on access to information, public participation and access to justice on decision making. AMCEN should initiate a programme on the adoption of principle 10 related laws and regulations in the member countries.
18. We call for balanced representation from Africa that will include CSOs and allow for their full participation in the different working groups in shaping the Sustainable Development Goals.
19. We are concern about the timeline for civil societies' participation in the post-2015 process considering the scare resources that characterize most CSOs.

Sustainable Development Goals

20. Africa should adopt a bottom-up approach in designing the sustainable development goals that are realistic, measurable and reportable. We urge African governments to initiate support national consultation processes that are inclusive encouraging and assuring the participation of major groups (such as youth, indigenous, women, industry).
21. We call for renewed commitment for the development of clear cut timelines for implementation of agreed outcomes and the establishment of National Sustainable Development Councils as proposed in Rio 1992.
22. We urge AMCEN to define the concept of green economy in the context of Africa as they committed to do in their last session.
23. We call on the governments to encourage and ensure youth participation in the post 2015 framework consultation process.

Part 3. African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in the context of the African Union institutional structure

24. We call on Ministers of Environment to institute a monitoring and review framework to ensure follow-up of decisions and declarations made at various sessions of AMCEN.
25. We believe that the strengthened UNEP, the only United Nations agency in developing countries, could play a major role in Africa's sustainable development and environmental consciousness. The location of the AMCEN Secretariat at UNEP Regional Office for Africa

should thus be seen as a strategic positioning and should be supported by all African stakeholders. We express our gratitude to the UNEP Regional Office for Africa for the facilitative role they continue to provide to us, and urge the African Ministers to strengthen AMCEN to deliver on its mandate.

26. We consider that a specific window for environment should be ensured in the African Union Commission structure and AMCEN should be retained there rather than under Agriculture & Rural economy.

Part 4. Cross-cutting Issues

We have also identified a number of cross cutting issues:

Research

27. We urge Ministers of environment to map out necessities and consequently collect, package and manage environmental data at national and regional level in line with the Eye on Earth Summit in Abu Dhabi in 2011.

Technology Transfer and Assessment

28. We call African governments to be aware of the precautionary principle and the decisions made at Rio, to move towards building regional and national capacities and mechanisms for Technology assessment and implementation. We urge governments to offset the unintended consequences of the deployment of new and emerging technologies and to transfer appropriate, clean and environmentally sound technologies.

Community-based Projects

29. We ask governments to engage with active Community Based Organizations through the local, regional and national government. They should allocate specific budget for sustainable development and climate change activities and mainstream it in other sectors such as agriculture, water, energy, wildlife and health. In this regard it worth to mention the Rwandan policy as a best practice; it ensures that any community based project is approved by the local government, who must look for ways of engagement, before its implementation.
30. Ongoing community-based projects that improve agriculture practices, water, land and forest management, implement alternative energies or diversify livelihoods, among others, not only help communities adapting to climate change but also achieving sustainable development. We urge ministers of environment to look for best practices in this regard in their countries and the continent and scale them up.
31. Strengthening our good will to contribute to the achievement of equitable and pro-poor responses to climate change for sustainable development in the African Continent we thank the AMCEN representatives in advance and we highlight that we remain at their disposal for further collaboration.

Part 5. Youth Statement to AMCEN and GC/GMEF

We ask for nothing but a platform, we ask you to listen, listen to us.... And hear how we are active in capacity building...

Watch us... And see what we do for communities to adapt and make ourselves more resilient to the effects of climate change.

Talk to us and help speak the language of change, with us.

In the past we have asked for governance and training, skills development and more. We stand before you saying we are governing, we the youth, the young leaders of today are not only governing we are communicating, we are teaching.

For a long time, the youth of Africa and the world have asked for youth involvement and participation... And now is our time, here we are. You have given us the space, the time and stature to speak. We thank you for this opportunity... Because we, the youth of Burundi, the Gambia, Kenya, South Africa, the Niger, Ghana, Togo, Cameroon, the United Republic of Tanzania, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda. Present here today we were not invited but got ourselves here despite limited funding.

Yes we were welcomed but we made the decision to have our first youth gathering with 150 young Tanzanian youth along with the other 15 young representatives from the countries in Africa just mentioned. This is what we have done ourselves, with limited support. Can you imagine what we would be able to accomplish with your support. Help us enhance what we are already doing...

Through resources, facilities, knowledge and our involvement, let us show you the creativity, the energy, our ability to change, the hope that we see in every child's eye.

Of all the things we mentioned, we have not included finances, allow us to fund ourselves, allow us to set the foundation of what we are passionate about. Help extend the opportunity of inclusion to us because if we want this deep enough we will get here. Extend the invite to all major groups that should be present irrespective of funding issues.

This meeting was intended for major groups, but where are they? Invite, include and involve all. Accreditation should be available to all our major groups and allow them the opportunity to make things happen. It's this effort that will not go unnoticed by this forum.

We the youth are here to build a stronger Africa alongside the other stakeholders. We encourage UNEP for more clarity on our role in similar processes. We are engaged, we are living the change but where are our leaders....? May we teach and lead you...

Participation means being a key player at conferences and in our communities as well, we are doing this with Generation Earth councils that are set up in South Africa, education and workshop training for youth in Tanzania, the rolling out of solar projects to minimize the effects of burning coal in Burkina Faso and working in communities to help protect forests and natural spaces in Burundi.

We appreciate the discussion around Principle 10, it's the reality we think UNEP should show us the way, lead us in how we will live this new thinking. We are champions of Principle 10 and are implementing this every day in our lives.

We include and make decisions for all. We all have equal standing and there are no high level segments that exclude one or the other. We teach in Swahili, we dance in French, we laugh in Portuguese, we play in Zulu and when we are disappointed by people who consider themselves leaders of the world we mobilize our peers through networks by speaking Ndebele and overthrow unjust powers in Arabic.

We know what happened to all of our contributions in the process towards Rio+20 as to what happens next we are watching.

UNEP Regional Consultations with Major Groups and Stakeholders for Europe

Baku, Azerbaijan, 13 November 2012

Major Groups and Stakeholders Recommendations to UNEP GC27/GMEF

The UNEP European Regional Consultation Meeting (RCM) with Major Groups and Stakeholders (MGS) in preparations for the 14th Session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF.14) and the 27th session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC27/GMEF) was held on 13 November 2012, in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The RCM was held in the margins of the “Green Week Baku” initiative that showcased a series of environmental sustainability events, including a youth forum on the outcome of Rio+20, a lecture on environmental diplomacy, the launch of the Green Economy Scoping Study for Azerbaijan, organized by the Government of Azerbaijan, the International Dialogue for Environmental Action (IDEA), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The RCM brought together representatives of European civil society organizations, UNEP national committees, local NGOs from Azerbaijan, and observers from other regions of the world who attended the youth forum and environmental diplomacy lecture.

The format of the RCM included a number of presentations, briefings, interventions and thematic group discussions on the following items: the outcome and contribution of MGS to GMGSF-13 and GCSS.XII/GMEF; overview of the major issues from the Rio+20 Outcome Document for MGS and implications for UNEP; MGS perspective on the outcome of Rio 20; Principle 10 application and prospects from the Rio+20 outcome; the role and potential mechanisms for engagement and participation of civil society in a reformed UNEP; the post-2015 development agenda and involvement of civil society; Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); UNEP Global Chemicals Outlook (GCO) report; and briefing on the preparations for GMGSF-14 and GC27/GMEF.

In preparation of this regional statement, participants were divided into four breakout groups to discuss: 1) Potential mechanisms for engagement and participation of civil society in a reformed UNEP (Public Participation in UNEP); 2) Involvement of Major Groups and Stakeholders in the post-2015 Development Agenda, including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); 3) The 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production patterns; and 4) Mainstreaming Sound and Safe Chemicals Management.

This non-negotiated document reports back on recommendations that the breakout groups formulated for UNEP and Governments in preparation for the GC27/GMEF.

Group 1) Potential mechanisms for engagement and participation of civil society in a reformed UNEP (Public participation in UNEP)

UNEP and civil society are natural allies sharing the same goals for global environmental sustainability. Paragraph 88h of the Rio+20 outcome document recognizes that even closer collaboration between UNEP and civil society is desirable. Public participation in UNEP could be improved in terms of structure, outreach, communication, education and inclusion in decision-making through the following principles and measures:

1. Train all civil society participants to UNEP events in communication/outreach. Improve the capacity of stakeholder groups to communicate environmental issues to other audiences, for example scientists to the public, and journalists when reporting environmental issues.
2. Encourage systematic engagement of civil society organizations (CSOs) into each UNEP sub-programme and project, and include such activities in the work plan of every UNEP division and branch. UNEP should also ensure that such a participatory approach is implemented in relation to processes that it facilitates or for which it acts as a secretariat. The UNEP Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch should be invited to train other UNEP offices to increase public participation on the programmatic level throughout UNEP.
3. Involve Major Groups and Stakeholders in the UNEP Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), including through the right to participate in CPR meetings, access to all information, the opportunity to comment on draft documents, and the possibility of initiating policy recommendations.

4. Establish an ombudsman for future generations within UNEP, with a UNEP specific mandate, to advise the institution on a long-term perspective for its policy guidelines, actions and programmes.
5. UNEP should lead by example and co-operate with other UN agencies and programmes in developing strategies, policies and practical actions for engaging civil society to enhance environmental management. UNEP can become a UN model organization in terms of public participation and access to information.
6. Encourage the free flow of environmental information and application of the Aarhus Convention implementation guide globally. UNEP should promote the idea of a legally binding international instrument for the implementation of procedural rights, to increase the impacts of major groups and stakeholders in any consultation. This can be built on the guidelines for the development of national legislation on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters, adopted by UNEP/GC in 2010. UNEP should also adopt an internal policy in relation to the access of information for all stakeholders.
7. Encourage communication with and involvement of all groups through the development of appropriate communication tools, especially focusing on unempowered groups.
8. Make use of modern technologies such as social media and e-tools for translating summaries and making key information available in all relevant local languages.
9. Translate reports and documents into different formats that are relevant to each major group, remembering to address the digital divide in the process, support translation by MGs of UNEP guidelines and publications into local languages.
10. The UNEP Regional Office for Europe should increase the involvement of its regional civil society organizations and networks throughout the year, collecting feedback and inviting comments on its programmes on a regular basis, including through the regional representatives, constituencies of all the nine Major Groups in the region, and revived National Committees.
11. UNEP regional offices should provide frameworks and resources to enable closer engagement between major groups and governments.
12. UNEP should introduce compulsory fieldwork within communities for its staff members, to increase their understanding of and connectedness with realities on the ground.
13. UNEP should work together with youth, students and the educational community to scale up its activities related to promoting Education for Sustainable Development, in particular in the context of the final years of the UNESCO Decade on Education for Sustainable Development.

Group 2) Involvement of Major Groups and Stakeholders in the post-2015 Development Agenda and post-Rio+20 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

As governments and UN agencies plan, design and prepare the ground work to stimulate a debate on the development and articulation of the Post-2015 agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through national, thematic and other forms of consultations, the common solutions needed to meet the sustainable development challenges and “The Future and the World We Want” cannot be achieved without the full engagement and involvement of major groups and stakeholders. Therefore, the following should be key areas for achieving “The Future and the World We Want”:

1. Support, facilitate and create opportunities for MGS to actively participate in national and thematic consultation processes.
2. Education for sustainable development. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is an integral part of sustainable development. ESD should be one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with concrete indicators and goals.
3. Youth empowerment. Give full participation rights to young people in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of local, subnational, national, regional and global sustainable development policies and strategies, as well as to other non-empowered groups including women, indigenous peoples and minorities.
4. Assessment mechanisms. Assess the achievements of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at a national level, and promote participatory assessment tools and mechanisms to do

- so. Assess what worked and deduct that from that what did not work. Establish concrete goals and targets for the post-2015 development framework and assure involvement of MGS in its monitoring and evaluation.
5. Human rights based approach and accountability. Base post-2015 and SDG frameworks on a human rights approach. Establish accountability systems for regions and countries to hold governments accountable for their post-2015 development agreements. These systems should hold governments accountable also on commitments made related to means of implementation (financial support, capacity building, public participation etc.) and the implementation of human rights.
 6. Social media for sustainability. Promote the use of new technologies and social media to improve access to information, accountability and sharing of best practices on sustainable development.
 7. Regional cooperation for protection of our global environmental commons. Strengthen regional cooperation and establish partnerships in order to share innovative tools and best practices and better achieve sustainable development goals.
 8. Research and innovation. Promote research and innovation that support the development of “green sectors” and creation of decent jobs/employment. Close collaboration with academia, trade unions and also the social-responsible private sector is crucial.
 9. Coordinated stakeholder effort. Promote better coordination of efforts between stakeholders representing governments, businesses, CSOs, international organizations, academia and media to ensure synchronized actions on local, regional and global levels, based on the subsidiarity principle (what is best done locally, do it locally) increasing their effectiveness and preventing gaps, overlaps and duplication.

Group 3) The 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns

The adoption of the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns, even as a voluntary measure, opens an opportunity to address sustainable development challenges. Therefore, in order to operationalize the framework, the following must be taken into consideration:

1. Mainstream sustainable consumption and production (SCP) into national development strategies and plans. Create adequate legislative and regulatory frameworks for SCP, including national SCP 10-Year Frameworks of Programmes (10YFPs), strategies and action plans, in line with the regional and international agreements and processes, including the 10YFP.
2. Ensure that, in doing so, governments establish proper consultation mechanisms for engaging different stakeholders (civil society actors, businesses, academia, local self-governance bodies and others) in SCP policy processes, ensuring coordination both between sectors (horizontal) and between different levels – international, regional, national and local (vertical) of SCP policy development and implementation.
3. When developing SCP policies, ensure that consultations and engagement reach to the grassroots level, encouraging communities to establish their own specific SCP priorities and define strategies for fulfilling these.
4. Endorse the UNEP mandate on studying the best SCP practices at all levels and developing a methodology for assessing progress in SCP, as well as providing relevant advice to stakeholders.
5. Establish a knowledge-sharing platform to provide information exchange on best available green technologies and business practices, accessible to all interested stakeholders. Reach out to all stakeholders in order to create awareness of the platform.
6. Within the SCP process, establish necessary provisions for promoting the use of strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and environmental impact assessment (EIA).
7. Develop legislative and regulatory frameworks and incentives to promote green procurement, both for the private and the public sector.
8. Promote good eco-labelling practices, ensuring proper tracking of adherence to SCP principles over the whole product life cycle.

9. Develop and implement comprehensive SCP awareness raising programmes, achieving broad understanding of the need and feasibility of vibrant economies which function within and not beyond the carrying capacity of the planet, encouraging individuals, organizations and businesses to make their consumption choices more sustainable.
10. Mainstream SCP into education processes, including formal, informal and non-formal education.
11. Conduct a region-wide conference on SCP policies in light of the 10YFP, with participation of different stakeholders, to assess the state of art in this sphere, share lessons learned in SCP policy development, learn about best practices and discuss future actions and opportunities for cooperation.

Group 4) Mainstreaming Sound and Safe Chemicals Management

The Global Chemicals Outlook (GCO) is a timely publication that frames current understanding of trends in chemicals production, use and disposal, economic implications of these trends, and policy options. To that end:

1. Major Groups welcome the Global Chemicals Outlook that has brought together governments, industry, academia and civil society to provide the first comprehensive assessment of its kind, which gives valid reasons for investing in sound and sustainable management of chemicals.
2. We particularly welcome the convincing set of scientifically based economic and policy arguments to bring sound chemical management to the top of the international policy agenda, as an essential contribution to achieving the 2020 goals. Due to the ever-increasing use of chemicals in economies, they have become the largest constituents of waste streams and pollution, thereby increasing the exposure of humans and the environment to chemical hazard.
3. We note also the unrecognized economic, environmental and health burden caused by hazardous chemical waste, particularly in developing countries, and we call for urgent coordinated action by governments, industry and civil society to reduce the growing risks to human health and the environment amongst others through application of efficient management of chemicals instruments in particularly polluter pays principle, precautionary principle and no-data no-market principle.
4. We fully support the call of the Global Chemicals Outlook report for a comprehensive multi-stakeholder and preventative strategy for sound and safe management of chemicals that paves the way for a thriving green economy.
5. We call on governments to commit to the implementation of general recommendations particularly related to mainstreaming sound and safe chemicals management into national, public health, labour, social and economic development programmes, and to commit also to contribute to the implementation of specific recommendations for countries, corporations and civil society to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2020 goals. Chemicals should be produced and used in a way that significantly decreases adverse effects on human health and the environment, and we call for a global fund for clean-up of damage and health costs paid from contributions by the chemical industry.
6. The UNEP Regional Office for Europe should continue to examine carefully input from stakeholders about potential improvements in chemicals, including suggestions for improved safety products in Balkan countries.
7. The UNEP Regional Office for Europe should provide funds for a number of activities to further improve chemicals management, including providing education and training on safety standards. A provision of training to those who need it, and the development of clear safety guidelines to strengthen the CSO's capacity building in Balkan countries.

We appeal to UNEP to take these sets of non-negotiated recommendations in the preparations for the 14th Session of the Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (MGGSF-14) and the 27th session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC27/GMEF), and beyond.

UNEP Regional Consultations with Major Groups and Stakeholders for Western Asia

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 19-20 November 2012

Western Asia Major Groups and Stakeholders Statement to UNEP GC27/GMEF

We, the participants in the Regional Consultative Meeting of Major Groups and Stakeholders for the countries of Western Asia, in preparation for the Twenty-Seventh Meeting of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-27/GMEF) and the Fourteenth Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF-14), met on 19 and 20 November 2012 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where we emphasized Agenda 21 and the Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the final document (The Future We Want) of the Rio+20 Summit.

Civil society organizations in Western Asia are aware of the importance of international resolutions in upgrading the forms of international environmental action, they share the disappointment with the civil society institutions in the world in the final document for "Rio +20", which did not live up to its expectations despite some of its positive elements. And the conferees assert that the shortcomings in the results of the "Rio +20" were mainly caused by the failure of governments of major industrialized nations to fulfil their commitments and obligations, which reverberated negatively on improving environmental work at the global level and led to its subsequent failure in shaping many of the decisions and recommendations to viable programmes of work. However, we emphasize the continuation of our approach to affirmative action and our unwavering commitment to work to influence our governments, to motivate their commitment to the positive outputs of the Summit, which correspond with the objective characteristics of our region, especially in relation to the Green Economy approach as a means of achieving the goals of sustainable development.

The conferees recognize the effects and the magnitude of the environmental risks resulting from the practices of the Israeli occupation in the destruction of the environmental elements, including the degradation and sabotage of agricultural land, the uprooting of trees, the depletion and contamination of natural resources in the occupied territories and the dismemberment of the structure of Palestinian society by establishing the apartheid wall, the representatives of civil society in Western Asia are appealing to the world community, states and governments and civil society organizations, to join us in condemning the authorities of the Israeli occupation and accounting them full responsibility for what the consequent damages are as a result of such practices.

Based on what was presented and in light of the deliberations, it was agreed that:

First: in the field of Green Economy:

Adoption of a green economy as the best practical alternative approach, and the implementation of the existing approach to economic development to achieve sustainable development, taking into consideration the following:

- Consideration of the level of inequality in economic growth among countries in the region, to achieve social justice and equal opportunities.
- The adoption of a gradual application of the green economy approach so that it does not entail any damage.
- Urging the region's governments to adopt development policies based on the pillars of sustainable development (environmental, economic and social).
- The need for the government and private sector to provide the necessary support for the transfer and resettlement of green technology in various sectors of development.
- Support civil society organizations and enabling them to fulfill their roles completely in education, public outreach and awareness, and exercise their role as a full-fledged partner in the planning, policy-making, implementation, follow-up and monitoring.

Second: in achieving the objectives of Sustainable Consumption and Production:

- Emphasis on the adoption of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production provided in Article 226 of the Final Document of the Rio+20 Conference by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and claim for the designation of a certified body by the Governing Council to be based in one of the countries in the region.
- Enabling civil society organizations by promoting their leadership role in education and awareness to changing consumption patterns that are misguided and unjustified, and the adoption of mechanisms of Sustainable Production and Consumption, and work to enact laws and regulations to ensure the adoption of this approach.

Third: in the field of technology transfer:

- Empower countries in the region to obtain the technology needed to shift towards a Green Economy, and the need to promote civil society organizations in the region to play an active role to facilitate this.
- Refrain from taking advantage of the absence of green technologies in the countries of the region to impose intolerable forms of protectionism by developed countries, and to find appropriate mechanisms to transfer green technology, without prejudice to the rights of intellectual property and patents.
- Need for the advancement of scientific research and technology development policies in the countries of the region, and providing financial support to create a suitable environment for research and technology development, to ensure a positive contribution to the global effort in the production of these technologies, and to emphasize the importance of the role of civil society organizations in achieving this.
- Urge governments to enact laws and regulations that promote forms of sustainable growth and to facilitate the necessary changes towards a green economy.

Fourth: in the field of the right of access to information:

- Emphasis on the role of the United Nations Environment Programme in urging the General Assembly of the United Nations to adopt paragraph (88) of the outcome document of "Rio+20", as an international convention.
- Enabling civil society organizations to gain access to information and environmental databases in an appropriate manner and time. Urge governments to implement policies and legislation, that guarantee the conditions and requirements for right of civil society organizations to easy access to sources of information for an environmentally sustainable development, and make them available to the public in a manner conducive to the essence (paragraph 88 of the Declaration of Rio +20).
- Appreciate the efforts of the countries that have worked on the involvement of knowledge of environmental concepts in their educational curriculum, and urge other countries that did not work on it yet to adopt systematic educational policies to ensure the incorporation of environmental concepts in their curriculum.

Fifth: in the field of working to activate the role of civil society:

- The involvement of civil society organizations and small groups that are locally active and enable them to contribute to decision-making related to the environment and sustainable development at the national and regional level, and to ensure the provision of the necessary procedures and the legal and administrative requirements to ensure their active participation in environmental action.

Sixth: in the field of working to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) post-2015:

- The need for regional governments to set targets for development that are transparent and measurable and depend on the involvement of other relevant societal sectors and consistent with the objectives of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in line with the conditions of each country in the region.

- Strengthening the role and forms of representation of civil society organizations during the development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The need to work to assess the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and combine both paths (Post-Rio+20 and Post-2015) into a path for a unified global environmental agenda.

Seventh: in the field of working to achieve the goals of social responsibility:

- States are urged to take the necessary measures to stimulate private sector institutions to adopt plans to support social and environmental projects, and to ensure their actual contribution to activating the principles of social responsibility, and activate the procedures for implementing the principle: "polluter pays" as a firm legal rule that commits the polluter to provide the necessary compensation for damage caused to the environment and society.

UNEP Regional Consultations with Major Groups and Stakeholders for Latin America and the Caribbean

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 19-20 November 2012

Latin America and the Caribbean Major Groups and Stakeholders Recommendations to UNEP GC27/GMEF

Latin America and the Caribbean encompasses a wide range of countries, cultures and languages which pose unique challenges and opportunities. It is becoming one of the most urbanized regions in the world with one of the highest levels of inequality.

While there is growing capacity to engage in the current international participatory processes including the development agenda beyond 2015, the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and the Sustainable Development Goals, there remain socioeconomic disparities that limit the voice and access of citizens, particularly indigenous peoples, vulnerable women and urban and rural poor.

Civil society is diverse, fragmented and requires a supporting mechanism to improve its ability to participate in the decision making processes. Policy makers need to recognize that environmental challenges exist at the local, national, regional and global levels and require customized solutions at each level.

Consequently, we the representatives of the Major Groups gathered here:

- (1) Call upon the States as well as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to implement the results of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, known as Rio+20, and to define the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), with the full and effective participation of the Major Groups and Stakeholders, conveying local, national, regional and global visions, proposals and concerns. Such participation should take place at every stage -definition, implementation, monitoring and assessment, including accountability mechanisms- and to this end we call upon the States to commit the necessary resources.

Accordingly, we urge the States to: (i) extract the lessons learned and best practices stemming from the design and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, to facilitate integration and balance between economic development, social equity and environmental sustainability; (ii) recognize the relevance of the binding and non-binding instruments and encourage and reinvigorate local Agenda 21 and the Earth Charter; (iii) respect different worldviews on development including those of indigenous peoples and local communities. All of this in order to formulate Sustainable Development Goals making it possible to frame public policy and realign the priorities of international cooperation.

- (2) The countries' progress in applying **Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration**^a has been uneven, and gaps remain between the corresponding regulatory frameworks and their effective implementation on the various scales, which significantly hampers access to information, full and effective participation in decision-making and the population's access to environmental justice.

We call upon the States to narrow these gaps, recognizing the countries' language and cultural differences, with the support of UNEP and international cooperation. At the regional level, we welcome the adoption of the Declaration on the Application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development as the beginning of an open multilateral process launched for the adoption of an instrument for Latin America and the Caribbean, which is materializing in a regional roadmap.^b We call upon the remaining countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to join this process. As for the countries signatory to this Declaration, we ask them to ensure the participation of all major groups in the process of negotiating this instrument and that the Bali Guidelines be taken into account^c in its formulation.

^a Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm>

^b The countries signatory are: Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

^c Guidelines for the Development of National Legislation on Access to Information, Public Participation and Access to justice in Environmental Issues: <http://www.pnuma.org/gobernanza/documentos/Guidelines%20Access%20to%20Justice%20Corrected.pdf>.

- (3) In terms of the **environmental pillar of the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development** (IFSD), the Rio+20 Conference constituted the loss of a historic opportunity to enable international environmental governance to take up the environmental challenges currently faced by humanity and the planet. The Governments' lack of political will in monitoring agreements, both on sustainable development commitments and on the means to implement them, has, in turn, caused profound concern among the organizations present at this Forum. Nonetheless, we welcome the decision to establish universal membership for the UNEP Governing Council; provide secure, stable, adequate and increased financial resources; and ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholders.
- (4) Consequently, it is essential to move forward with a review of the **Guidelines for Participation of Major Groups and Stakeholders in Policy Design at UNEP**, and to do so within the framework of the criteria established for this review taking into account the contributions made so far. In this regard, we must reiterate that our regional representatives — elected democratically in the framework of the UNEP policymaking cycle— should have the same status as the representatives of the major groups on the Major Groups Facilitation Committee (MGFC).

Furthermore, we request that the Guidelines be implemented openly and transparently; be inclusive of vulnerable groups; have established accountability mechanisms; reflect gender equality; ensure balance among regions and cultures; and respect the limits of the MGFC mandate on decision-making. Lastly, we understand that to achieve broad participation the requirements for organizations to receive accreditation in the UNEP Governing Council must be amended, in particular the requirement on the existence of an international scope of action.

- (5) Regarding the **Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean**, we understand that it is involved in highly important processes, and we consider that we the Major Groups and Stakeholders have significant contributions to make in the form of dynamic interventions over the course of the Forum's meetings such that they may be taken into account at the negotiations therein.

Lastly, we urge the States of the region to implement the commitments assumed in Decision 6 on civil society participation and in Decision 13 on strengthening the participation of the major groups, adopted by the 15th and 16th Forums, respectively.

UNEP Regional Consultations with Major Groups and Stakeholders for Asia and the Pacific

Kathmandu, Nepal, 22-23 November 2012

Asia and the Pacific Major Groups and Stakeholders Recommendations to UNEP GC27/GMEF

67 participants from 27 countries attended the Asia-Pacific Major Group and Stakeholders (MGS) Regional Consultation Meeting at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development in Kathmandu, Nepal on 22 – 23 November 2012. This Declaration was adopted as input to the Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, to be held in Nairobi on 16-17 February 2013.

Regional priority issues

The Asia-Pacific region faces wide-ranging challenges to achieving sustainable development. To overcome such challenges, it is vital to facilitate (i) public access to information, decision-making and justice, (ii) greater equity in wealth, resources and power between and within countries, as well as gender- and inter-generational equity, (iii) development and implementation of free prior-informed consent procedures, (iv) stronger accountability and transparency mechanisms for the private sector, particularly those involved in land acquisitions and extractive industries, (v) increased sub-regional and regional collaboration for sustainable management of natural resources (vi) engagement in sustainable development policy dialogues and implementation at global and regional levels and (vii) wider engagement of MGS and non-state actors in sustainable development governance and implementation.

Role of MGS in Rio+20 outcome implementation

Civil society organizations (CSOs) will play an increasingly important role in facilitating Rio+20 outcomes. It is vital to advance the institutionalization of MGSs engagement in Rio+20 follow-up processes such as the planned High-Level Political Forum, Open Working Groups, the proposed Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) and other current and emerging mechanisms.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Post 2015 Development Agenda

The SDGs and development agenda beyond 2015 should incorporate a comprehensive and transformative approach to address the diverse aspects of sustainable development beyond the economics, including environmental, social, cultural and political aspects. Efforts should be made to achieve coherence and synergy between the post-2015 and SDG processes, including other multilateral processes related to sustainable development. It is particularly important to reinforce a human rights-based approach by fully recognizing and integrating international standards on equality and non-discrimination, while addressing the root causes of poverty and discrimination. Peace, security, justice and democracy are essential foundations for achieving sustainable development and must be at the core of the post-2015 framework.

Institutional framework for sustainable development

Asia-Pacific States have adopted an increasing number of laws and acceded to relevant international agreements, but compliance with and enforcement of such laws, norms and standards is lacking. Periodic review mechanisms on compliance with time-bound implementation plans should be introduced. An independent ombudsperson for future generations should be established along with other actions to strengthen international environmental governance as reflected in the Rio+20 outcome document paragraph 88 and sub-paragraphs a-h. Environmental governance must include new technologies that are presented as solutions to environmental challenges and climate change.

Green economies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

Green economies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication must ensure gender equality; human well-being; environmental risk reduction; ecosystem and biodiversity conservation; disaster reduction; human rights protection; elimination of child labor; opportunities for green, decent work and right livelihoods; the needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups including indigenous peoples; food and energy security; and animal welfare. Green economies may be interpreted depending on national realities and implementation. Disguised or distortionary trade measures under the pretext of green economy should not be permitted. Green economies should be

synergic with the pursuit of SDGs and utilize UN mechanisms such as the future High-Level Political Forum to track progress.

Sustainable consumption and production

The 10-Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production must be implemented with enhanced involvement of MGS. Countries must be parties to all the international agreements on chemical and waste management while advancing the implementation of UNEP's guidelines. UNEP should develop and facilitate implementation of guidelines on zero waste, and must reinforce the implementation of guidelines on agrochemicals including their applications, trading and disposal. Strengthening UNEP's work on the Bali Guidelines on Principle 10 would promote the transparent implementation of the 10YFP.

Public participation and access to information

Access to information, decision-making and justice is essential to achieving sustainable development. It must be a core principle of the SDGs. We call for an Asia-Pacific Convention on Principle 10 to ensure access to information, decision-making and justice, as provided in Paragraph 99 of the Rio+20 outcome document. The Convention should reflect the needs and interests of various groups and include commitments for governments and private sectors. The process for developing the Convention should be spearheaded by the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP-ROAP) in collaboration with other relevant organizations and partners. It could gain momentum from cooperating with on-going efforts in other regions.

Financing

Conventional and innovative approaches must be vigorously pursued to generate incentives and mobilize funds for achieving sustainable development. Fossil fuel subsidies and other perverse incentives such as subsidies for commercial fishing vessels and agribusiness should be eliminated with due consideration to their impact on marginalized sectors. Other measures to put in place include taxes on international financial transactions; aviation, shipping, chemical and extractives industries; and carbon emissions. These must be designed and implemented in a progressive manner.

Asia – Pacific CSO mechanism

Civil society requires more institutionalized mechanisms for participation in intergovernmental processes, and regular policy dialogue forums at global and regional levels. UNEP, other UN agencies and donor countries/agencies should provide adequate and stable support and capacity development to enable effective and substantial MGS participation in policy dialogues and in implementing agreements and legislation. Regional CSO mechanisms must be improved and strengthened through transparent, inclusive, democratic and effective operational modalities, building on existing and emerging mechanisms that enable effective and meaningful CSO participation, such as the Civil Society Mechanism at the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in Rome and its regional processes. We call for dialogue with ministers and government decision-makers and other stakeholders to discuss and pursue strategies for sustainable development.

UNEP Regional Consultations with Major Groups and Stakeholders for North America

Washington D.C., United States, 12-13 December 2012

Major Groups and Stakeholders Recommendations to UNEP GC27/GMEF

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

Developing a narrative

The current environmental narrative is a reactive and deficit-based approach focusing on tragedy and guilt, instead of a proactive and positive narrative emphasizing the beauty of collaboration and well-being for all on a finite planet. UNEP should facilitate the development of a new narrative that captures the urgency of the environmental challenges we face as opportunities for collaboration, inspires stakeholders to take action, creates new communal identities around environmental responsibility, and provides accessible terminology to the general public. UNEP has a central role to play in helping to develop this narrative, and should invite media and communications experts from various industries to support the initiative.

Clearly link environment and development

The environment is critical to economic development. Sustainable human and economic development depends on sustainable use of the earth's natural resources, which are finite. This link needs to be better articulated and communicated to stakeholders and decision-makers. Integration versus fragmentation: While the concept of the three pillars of sustainable development aims to create a more comprehensive vision of development, in reality it contributes to a fragmented approach to sustainable development. A new concept of sustainable development is needed that acknowledges planetary limits and provides a truly integrated, systemic approach to development, which focuses on sustainable living systems and well-being. Better integration is also needed within policy development and governance processes, so that different U.N. agencies, government ministries, and Major Groups pursue common goals together rather than independently.

Advancing and communicating science

UNEP should continue to pursue methods to collect, synthesize and disseminate scientific knowledge. Current efforts such as UNEP-Live should be strengthened and built upon. New communication technologies should be employed and UNEP should seek to engage more directly with the education community. Particular attention should be given to communicating science to policymakers at all levels, so that they are both equipped with the facts they need to make scientifically-based decisions, as well as with an understanding as to why addressing urgent environmental issues such as climate change is in the best interest of their constituents. Civil society partners may serve as resources to policymakers in the translation of science to action.

Regarding the post-Rio+20 and post-2015 agenda

- More effective engagement of civil society is needed in the implementation of important post Rio+20 processes, e.g. the 10 YFP, addressing areas beyond national jurisdiction in our oceans, and the SDGs.
- The development of sustainable development goals is an opportunity to address urgent environmental issues, such as oceans, urbanization, consumption and production, water and agriculture. It is critical that such goals be universal in application, as all countries should have a role to play in their implementation.
- The SDGs should be integrated with the formulation of post-2015 development goals. There should ultimately be one set of global goals, with sustainability as a core tenet for each goal.
- The SDGs should incorporate a process goal, such as a goal pertaining to sustainability indicators or environmental safeguards.
- Policy frameworks and SDG's focusing on poverty alleviation should incorporate goals applicable to poverty within all nations to ensure the needs of disadvantaged communities are universally addressed.

Strengthening stakeholder participation within UNEP

UNEP should seek to broaden its stakeholder engagement beyond Major Groups to increase the diversity of expertise and perspectives in environmental discussions. UNEP accreditation should be expanded to include local and national groups, and UNEP should expand and strengthen its engagement with the private sector. The role of the private sector as an implementer and driver of market transformation needs to be acknowledged and elevated.

UNEP's environmental law program should be strengthened

UNEP should support efforts to build capacity for robust environmental governance systems at the national level and help countries comply with and implement international environmental laws (e.g. MEAs). Additionally, more support is needed for the delivery of the Bali Strategic Plan.

Advancing the Green Economy

UNEP should seek to better integrate its Green Economy program with related programs such as SCP and climate change. Further, advancing a green economy will require metrics beyond GDP. Natural capital accounting should be used as a mechanism to account for resource depletion and the incorporation of pricing externalities. UNEP should explore new and innovative mechanisms to educate and build the capacity of local stakeholders and decision-makers to transition their communities to a green economy.

Governance of High Seas

UNEP should look beyond national state boundaries and address High seas governance as a priority issue. Gender Balance: Gender balance is crucial to the creation of a sustainable future, since there is no community that does not include women. Gender balance must not be explored as a separate issue, but must be inclusive and universally applied as a key component in policy-making, environmental governance, and economic growth.

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