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AFRICA REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION POLICY STATEMENT TO CSD 18 AND 19 ON THE 10-YEAR FRAMEWORK OF PROGRAMMES ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

1.0   Introduction

Governments at the Johannesburg Summit in 2002 called for the development of a 10-year framework of programmes (10-YFP) in support of regional and national initiatives to accelerate the shift towards Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) patterns. SCP is broadly defined as a holistic approach to minimizing negative environmental impacts from production and consumption in society. The main objective of SCP is to promote social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems and the de-coupling of economic growth from environmental degradation. In Africa, the overall aim of reducing poverty while attaining sustainability can be accomplished through actions that are directly relevant to SCP. As governments and other actors consider how to manage energy, food and water crises and build a Green Economy, promoting and implementing holistic and integrated policies and actions towards SCP will help to address these crises.

2.0   Major trends and emerging issues

The African region encompasses a vast area of widely differing economic, demographic and social situations and development trends and the recommended approach for promoting SCP will vary from country to country. The following major trends and emerging issues related to SCP can be identified:

(i)   African economies remain insufficiently diversified. Agriculture remains an important sector in much of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and is still largely oriented towards subsistence agriculture. The continent lags behind other developing

regions in industrial performance and environmental best practices need to be incorporated at early stages of industrialization.

(ii)   SSA is not on track to achieve any of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) many Africans remain trapped in dire poverty.

(iii)   Population growth is still strong and SSA's population is very young.

(iv)   Africa has the highest urbanization rate in the world which has a strong impact on patterns and impacts of consumption.

(v)   The continent lags behind all others in energy use while energy production relies heavily on fossil fuels despite significant renewable energy potential.

(vi)   Access to freshwater is worsening in the region and increased water scarcity in the future implies a need for efficient water resources management.

(vii)   Urbanization and increasing motorization in SSA have resulted in degradation of air quality in large cities

(viii) Solid and hazardous waste management is one of the major challenges in the promotion of SCP in the region

(ix)   The tourism industry in Africa is characterized by a large number of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) that lack the capacity to integrate sustainable tourism principles

(x)   Africa is undergoing a severe process of deforestation.

(xi)   Compared to the rest of the world, the average African's ecological footprint is small. However, several African countries already have a footprint larger than their bio-capacity per capita.

In much of Africa the main challenge will have to satisfy the basic needs of the population. But at the same time, the environmental pillar of sustainability must be addressed. Policies and actions supporting SCP can serve to bolster poverty reduction efforts and support sustainable long term growth and help to meet the MDGs. There are many opportunities to "leapfrog" towards more SCP patterns.

3.0   Progress and Achievements

The following achievements have been made on various SCP issues in Africa:

(i)   The African 10 Year Framework Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production has been launched. The African 10-YFP has a strategic focus of linking SCP with the challenges of meeting basic needs in more sustainable manners and has four thematic areas of focus: *energy; water and sanitation; habitat and sustainable urban development; and renewable resource based industries*. A regional institutional focal mechanism -the African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (ARSCP)-and the Marrakech Taskforce on Cooperation with Africa supported by the German Federal Ministry of Environment have been established. Noteworthy is the implementation of an eco-labelling project-the development of an African Ecolabelling Mechanism- and the development of national and local SCP programmes in initially four countries within the framework of this programme.

(ii)   In addition to several regional energy infrastructure projects to increase access and progress in the means of implementation, off-grid systems based on renewable energy have been developed in rural areas of many countries.

(iii)   Some countries are on track in meeting the MDGs on water and sanitation while an increasing number of countries are undertaking policy, legal and institutional reforms and developing strategies for water resources development and management based on the Integrated Water Resources Management.

(iv)   Urban centers in the region have benefited through global urban management programs. Many countries are beginning to put in place the strategic policy and institutional framework to address some of the transport-related problems in cities.

(v)   Cleaner production is being promoted through thus far ten National Cleaner Production Centers in the region and industrial environmental policies are being developed in some countries.

(vi)   African business organizations are participating in the Global Compact initiative and several companies have become members of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development.

(vii)   In addition to a number of measures taken at national, sub-regional and regional levels to improve agricultural production, there is an increasing number of initiatives in organic food production.

(viii)   Many African countries have ratified major chemicals-related and waste-related conventions while a number of projects are under way to implement regional action plans for the implementation of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management in the Africa region. Many African countries have adopted policies and legislation on hazardous wastes and are implementing activities to support the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes.

(ix)   Many African countries have adopted the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and are reporting on progress in implementation. There have been many capacity building initiatives on sustainable tourism and some countries have started to adopt policies that create opportunities for the poor within tourism.

(x)   In most countries there are examples of addressing SCP-relevant topics, albeit in an isolated fashion. Few economic instruments are in use in African countries and little progress has been made in the area of Sustainable Public Procurement.

(xi)   Some universities have embarked upon introducing sustainable development into their education and training programmes.

Despite the achievements, the impact and penetration of SCP activities is still very limited in most countries. Few key activities have been conducted in most countries as part of the implementation of the African 10-YFP. SCP is a relatively new concept in the region and there are only very few examples of integrated SCP activities. There are several examples of activities and efforts targeting particularly Sustainable Production and to a much lesser extent Sustainable Consumption. The regional capacity for promoting Sustainable Consumption is far less developed than for Sustainable Production.

4.0   Implementation Challenges and Constraints

Priority areas for SCP will differ from one country to another, but the following challenges and constraints are commonplace in most countries:

(i)   Poor Education and lack of awareness on the benefits of SCP among all stakeholders

(ii)   Government failures such as lack of legislation and/or enforcement, weak recognition of SCP in most policies and weak institutional capacity for monitoring and use of economic instruments.

(iii)   Lack of human and technical capacity.

(iv)   Economic challenges such as financial instability of National Cleaner Prodcution Centers (NCPCs), under-pricing of natural resources, lack of financial incentives and appropriate financing mechanisms for SCP investments.

(v)   Systemic challenges such as lack of monitoring, lack of R&D in Industry, lack of data on pollution and resources use and inadequate research on SCP patterns.

(vi)   Organizational challenges such as absence of collaborative projects and exchange programs in the region to facilitate knowledge sharing.

5.0   Lessons learned and the way forward

The following are some of the lessons learned about the generic vital components needed for SCP strategies:

(i)   Political will and commitment is essential to the effective implementation of the African 10-YFP. The organizational support that has been provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) together with the political leadership and support provided by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the financial support provided by the Marrakech Taskforce on

Cooperation with Africa have been highly instrumental for the achievements that have been registered so far.

(ii)   A basic condition for SCP is to achieve general awareness and understanding of the concept among all people.

(iii)   Individual initiatives will not bring about wholesale changes in SCP patterns unless there is a national integrated strategy to promote SCP using a range of policies. SCP should be integrated into Poverty Reduction Strategies Papers (PRSPs), National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs) or National Environment Action Plans (NEAPs). Once integrated, a second step would be to develop concrete sectoral action plans or frameworks (e.g. on energy, water, agriculture, transport) that aim to promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production, with concrete targets and indicators.

(iv)   The effective development and implementation of SCP in African countries could be significantly facilitated through the mainstreaming of SCP in the priorities and decision making criteria of development financing agencies.

(v)   Governments should include SCP indicators in national statistics.

(vi)   A mix of policies and instruments is desirable for implementation of SCP, with economic instruments, information tools, and voluntary approaches complementing regulation.

(vii)   All African countries and local governments require assistance in starting sustainable procurement, including guidance on specific products.

(viii)   Visible implementation of SCP activities at an early stage is important to demonstrate the concept. Examples include government green procurement programs, waste recycling schemes, SMEs support programs for Cleaner Production, Introduction of Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs), Incentives for Solar Water Heaters, etc.

(ix)   Capacity building and skills development is important in the context of the promotion of SCP.

(x)   There is need for broader adoption and implementation by industry, of values consistent with corporate social and environmental responsibility, such as those embodied in the Global Compact.

(xi)   It is necessary to focus on creating demand for SCP, rather than focusing on the supply side. Such demand is created when enforcement of legislation is practiced, suitable economic incentives are established and efficiency improvements offered by SCP provide a competitive edge.

(xii)   In order to make further progress on sustainable lifestyles there is a need for massive education and awareness campaigns utilizing TV and media to inspire actions for change to sustainable lifestyles and the active involvement of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

Priority approaches and actions needed to enhance implementation of programs to effectively address SCP in the region can be grouped under the following four clusters:

1. ***Institutional and policy mechanisms:*** An enabling policy framework which covers a broad range of policy interventions is required to influence the activities of key stakeholders such as the development and implementation of target-oriented national and local action plans on SCP the promotion and integration of SCP in the policies of major development organizations and agencies.

2. ***Supporting tools and instrument :*** Specific tools and instruments that target one or more stakeholders for the promotion of SCP and creating cross-sectoral opportunities are important such as the promotion of Sustainable Manufacturing and Value Chains targeting SMEs and supporting governments at all levels working to implement sustainable procurement policies and procedures

3. ***Education for SCP:*** Education and information on SCP influence producers' and consumers' behaviour and values and is one of the prominent cross-cutting issues that need to be addressed for the promotion of SCP.

4. ***Means of implementation:*** The array of above programs needs to be supported. Many countries have ideas or needs with regard to SCP policies and implementation, but lack the finances, knowledge or institutional capacity to implement them. Brokering access to knowledge and financing, and networking to facilitate experience exchange are the logical answer.

6.0   Conclusions

It is important to focus on some concrete priority SCP projects at the regional level and then mobilize support for their implementation. The following priority projects were identified during the Ad-Hoc Expert Group Meeting on the Sustainable Development Report on Africa (SDRA) 2008-2009, held in Addis Ababa from 24th to 26th June 2009. Development partners are invited to support these projects.

1.   **Capacity building for National SCP Action Plans**
2.   **The African Local SCP Initiative**
3.   **Regional programme on Resource Efficiency and Cleaner Production (RECP) including building capacities of NCPCs and SCP institutions**
4.   **The African Eco-labelling Mechanism**
5.   **Promoting an Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM) System in Africa**
6.   **Education for Sustainable Consumption and Production in Africa**
7.   **Sustainable Building and Construction in Africa**
8.   **Promotion of small-scale renewables and biomass-based co-generation**
9.   **Regional Knowledge Management and Information Exchange on SCP in Africa**

In conclusion, the on-going economic and social restructuring in Africa offers a unique opportunity to establish more resource efficient SCP patterns. Change towards SCP is a systemic challenge. Businesses, consumers or policy makers usually cannot solve problems alone but must work together in a 'triangle of change'. Lessons learnt from niche experiments and pilot studies and their sharing and replication throughout the region will help in mainstreaming SCP in national policies & strategies and achieving the aim of changing the socio-economic landscape for more SCP patterns and Green Economies in Africa .