

Statement on behalf of NGOs, Children and Youth, Indigenous peoples, Women, Farmers, Science and technology and Regional representatives on Sustainable Consumption and Production and Green Economy

OE-CPR
UNEP, March, 2014

We recognise that humanity is confronted with increasing resource constraints fuelled by unsustainable production and consumption patterns. We are aware that the ecological and social problems inherent in the perpetual growth model of development compromise our present and future well-being. This is painfully illustrated by the multiple and interlinked social, environmental and economic crises. We need a sustainable model of development and lifestyles.

We see the UNEA to be an opportunity to facilitate global agreement on how we deal with these problems. UNEP should take a lead role among agencies working to ensure sustainable consumption and production globally. We are glad to see that green economy and SCP is one of the priorities of UNEP.

We emphasize the need to integrate the green economy in the broader concept of sustainable development, and thus to recognize its close linkages with economic, social and cultural rights. The green economy must also be based on democratic governance principles, such as the principle of democratic inclusion, which secures individuals and communities the full enjoyment of access rights to information, public participation and access to justice.

As civil society we are advocating immediate and transformative action to keep the economy within planetary boundaries. To this end it is essential to guarantee a fair sharing of ecological space and commons among nations and different social groups, with special consideration given to poverty eradication through redistribution of wealth. At present there is increasing inequality between and within nations. The (over)consumption of a minority is at the expense of the poor majority including the women and children who suffer the most and the degradation of our biophysical support systems. It is imperative that the basic needs of all are met.

We fully agree that we have to apply effective combinations of legislation, policy instruments and fiscal mechanisms to promote resource efficiency and life cycle approach, to build markets for sustainable products and services, to create green jobs, to promote green investment, to transfer environmentally and socially sound technologies to various economic sectors and to support research, innovations, education and training to secure the achievements of a green economy.

We also believe, however, that this will not automatically:

- lead to an **equal distribution of resources**, which is the base for an economic security;
- change public **values, norms** and **behaviour** patterns to ensure living within the **carrying capacity** of the Earth, and
- **eradicate poverty** and improve quality of life for all.

WSSD in 2002 had already highlighted the overarching objective of changing consumption and production patterns. Green economy cannot ignore the consensus reached in Johannesburg. Both discussions on greening economy and sustainable consumption and production should recognize

the environment friendly traditional livelihood practices of indigenous peoples and be combined, as supply and demand are the integral parts of the economy.

Current government initiatives mostly focus on one part of this objective – improving efficiency, creating green jobs, green investment and green production, while neglecting steps towards sufficiency. There is a clear '**policy gap**' when we talk about green economy. The current approach will not bring us to sustainable development if we don't address both production and consumption patterns to eradicate existing destructive economic activities (e.g. environmentally harmful subsidies) and ensure fair distribution of resources.

The concept of sustainable development must mean the transition from fossil fuel- to renewable energy-economies; a change in consumption and production patterns (including agricultural production) going beyond efficiency into sufficiency directives; conservation and restoration of the natural support systems; eradication of extreme poverty; reduction in the inequality (including gender) gap, both in developing and developed countries; profound changes in the production and consumption of chemicals and waste; and new indicators for measuring development based on an integral concept of well-being. Our constituents stress the importance of the universality character of the UNEP agenda, where the framework, targets and directives are established at global level. The overall targets, however, are implemented at all national and local levels with citizen inputs, based on common but differentiated responsibilities leaving women behind.

To ensure access to sufficient energy and natural resources in the “Global South” for their endogenous development, fair resource and energy use caps on the Global North, in accordance with CBDR, should be put in place. These need to be in line with the proposals of the contraction and convergence scenarios identified by the UN International Resource Panel.

We also underline the importance of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience in buildings; health, water access sanitation and hygiene (WASH); biodiversity protection; forest protection and restoration; animal welfare, oceans and seas; and the protection of Grassroots and Rural women, indigenous peoples and marginalised groups.

NGOs and other stakeholders have been working on different aspects of green economy and SCP for several decades. Some promote clean production and ethical investment others drive sustainable design and construction in buildings or support sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods. These organizations constitute a significant and available resource willing to work for sustainable future, supported by existing frameworks, such as the 10-Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP).

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