

**Asia and the Pacific Regional Statement for the 2011 Global Major Groups and Stakeholder
Forum (GMGSF)
Regional Consultation Meeting. Astana, Kazakhstan. 28 – 29 September 2010**

1. Introduction

The Regional Consultation Meeting for Asia and the Pacific in preparation for the 2011 GMGSF was held at the Palace of Independence, Astana, Kazakhstan from 28 – 29 September 2010 in conjunction with the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED VI). 27 representatives of the civil society organisations in Asia and the Pacific attended the Meeting and had intensive discussions based on a series of thematic presentations made at the meeting. The participants have reaffirmed their commitment to invigorate their efforts to promote their actions toward achieving environmental management and sustainable development. They agreed to adopt the following text as a regional statement of Asia and the Pacific regional civil society group to provide inputs to the 2011 GMGSF.

2. Major group and stakeholder involvement in the UNEP work programme development and implementation

- UNEP efforts were appreciated to enhance the effective involvement of major group and stakeholders including regional group representatives in the dialogues on the UNEP work programme development and its implementation.
- UNEP needs to continue its efforts to facilitate administrative procedures of civil society stakeholders' accreditation and participation in meetings, and to mobilise financial resources to enable civil society stakeholders in Asia and the Pacific to meet and effectively discuss environmental and sustainability policy achievements and challenges, and to provide substantive inputs to support the GMGSF
- UNEP should pay due consideration to the regional, gender and sectoral balance in the representation of civil society members including youth group in the UNEP work programme at the global level.

3. Green Economy and Sustainable Consumption and Production

- Policies for promoting green economy reinforce effective environmental and sustainability policies in the region and increased efforts must be made to facilitate green growth promotion policies in the context of promoting sustainable development and not to undermine ongoing and/or emerging sector specific processes,
- Green economy dialogues must be promoted in conjunction with the ongoing preparation for the Rio+20 particularly on green economy in the context of promoting sustainable development and reducing poverty.
- The scope and content of green economy depend substantively on varying socio-economic and environmental conditions of respective locality, countries, sub-regions, regions and the world, and the programmes should be developed through multi-stakeholder dialogues in a way to meet the varying conditions at multiple levels.
- Comprehensive, multi-factor and life-cycle impact assessment must be ensured in assessing the environmental soundness and sustainability of policies and projects.
- Multi-stakeholder platforms and mechanisms must be developed and strengthened to promote the exchange of good practices, access to environmentally sound technologies and capacity development, and to promote multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder partnership particularly through involving those stakeholders who have operationalised models of green economy and materialised paradigm shifts at the level of localities,

countries, sub-regions, and regions.

- UNEP should be given a mandate and funding source and operate such multi-stakeholder platforms and mechanisms through its Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific particularly through involving stakeholders in different countries including small enterprises and farmer groups at the regional and inter-regional levels for sharing and transferring good practices and through bilateral or multi-lateral partnership in collaboration with other like-minded agencies and organisations.

4. Institutional arrangement for sustainable development and international environmental governance

- The momentum and process for reviewing and revitalising international environmental governance (IEG) must be supported more widely with the greater involvement of civil society stakeholders including the UNEP Civil Society regional forum representatives and members.
- IEG dialogues must be promoted in conjunction with the ongoing preparation for the Rio+20 particularly on institutional arrangements for sustainable development.
- UN efforts to promote stakeholder participation in IEG discourse should be continued and enhanced including the promotion of equitable stakeholder participation through the Civil Society Organisations IEG Advisory Group recently established.
- Discussions on IEG revitalisation should be promoted from the holistic viewpoint to reflect not only UN and international agency and their programme transformation, but also the multi-level institutional and programmatic frameworks and their mutual interface based on the proper assessment of needs, priority, efficiency, effectiveness, and policy relevance.
- Effective environmental governance should be explored based on the pivotal principle of (i) access to information, (ii) public participation in decision making, and (iii) access to justice in environmental matters,
- Mechanisms should be developed and strengthened at multiple levels particularly to provide platforms to facilitate (i) awareness raising, (ii) multi-stakeholder policy dialogue, (iii) capacity development, (iv) good practice studies and information exchange, (v) catalytic assistance to the pilot projects, and (vi) strategic research on environment and sustainability issues.
- Such mechanisms should also respond to address trans-boundary ecosystem and environmental management and sub-regional interests in light of the growing merits and dynamisms of sub-regional cooperation.
- The Asia and the Pacific CSO Regional Forum supported by UNEP/ROAP and operating as a leading regional environmental network for the region must be further expanded and institutionalised with enhanced communication, operational at multiple levels, financing mechanisms and sub-regional institutional set-ups, and UNEP must intensify its efforts to mobilise and provide increased support for such regional networks.

5. GEO5

- UNEP's efforts to promote the assessment process in a participatory manner should be continued and enhanced as it provides useful information.
- GEO5 information content should be tailored to promote the better use of information by major groups and multi-stakeholder groups.
- GEO5 should include not just the assessment on biophysical and environmental conditions, but identify persistent and/emerging policy and institutional gaps, good practice and options of policy prescriptions

- Windows of information provisions and flows to support the UNEP GEO5 should be ensured for all the interested stakeholders without unduly undermining the efficiency in the assessment process.

6. Rio+20

- Rio+20 process should be used to mobilize and enhance a wide range and high level policy and public support to address and tackle environment and sustainability policy challenges, and enhanced regional and international cooperation.
- It is important to provide opportunities for stakeholders in the region to properly assess progress, gaps and challenges in terms of policies and activities toward achieving effective environmental management and sustainable development and UNEP is particularly requested to intensify its efforts to mobilise resources to support such processes.
- It is essential to ensure that stakeholder groups, government and international agency representatives and other partners should have a sufficient number of occasions to exchange views to develop and adopt effective action plans at the Rio +20 Summit for promoting environmental management and sustainable development.
- The countries in Asia and the Pacific must prioritise and intensify their efforts to formulate legislations and develop policies and programmes in the Rio+20 preparatory process in order to operationalise at the national, sub-regional and regional levels the guidelines adopted at the UNEP GC/GMEF in February 2010 with respect to access to information, participation in decision making and access to justice in environmental matters, and the development of domestic legislation on liability, response action and compensation for damage caused by activities dangerous to the environment.
- Governments and private sector are encouraged to explore concrete regional and inter-regional collaborative programmes in cooperation with stakeholder groups to invigorate innovation in policy development, technological application and social mobilisation to promote environmental management and sustainable development.
- It is vital to promote the linkages of major regional and international meetings to address environmental and sustainability policy issues in the proper sequence of contexts, and to enable stakeholders to participate in major meetings in order to ensure the continuity of environmental and sustainability policy discourse and to undertake effective preparation for the Rio+20.

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