

Rio+20 ESCAP Update
Day 0: 18 June 2012

By the nature of topics addressed for resolution, it is but natural that the negotiations at Rio will take the collective energy of the delegations present to chart a new course. Sometimes of course the path is quite tortuous but progress has been made. All indications are that the negotiations will result in agreement on the “the future we want” for adoption by the time the Heads of State and Government meet on Wednesday.

Despite the many remaining issues of difference, the negotiations have made progress of significance to Asia and the Pacific. Specifically the agreement reached already acknowledge the role that regional economic commissions and their subregional offices can play in implementing decisions adopted here in Rio.

Also significant has been the Sustainable Development Dialogues – a new innovation for Rio+20, which acknowledge the role that major groups (civil society groups) can play in promoting sustainable development across a wide range of activities at local and national and global levels have created space for these groups to engage in a discussion among themselves assisted by a group of experts across a range of issues under negotiation. The conclusions will be presented to the Heads of State and Government without any approvals from governments!

Despite these achievements, there is still a huge amount of work that must still be done in the next three days – during the high-level segment of Rio+20, if the outcome document is to begin to fully address the critical challenges of sustainable development.

But, as the Secretary-General has said, the real achievement of Rio+20 is already plain to see – the global movement that it has sparked and the growing global consensus on the need to build a future that balances the needs of our people and our planet.

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