

**MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS INPUT  
TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S HIGH LEVEL PANEL  
CONSULTATION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
June 2006**

The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document called for much stronger system-wide coherence across the various agencies, funds, and programmes of the United Nations. The Summit invited the Secretary-General to, "launch work to further strengthen the management and coordination of UN operational activities." In February 2006, the Secretary-General formally established the 15 member High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence in the fields of Humanitarian Assistance, Development and Environment. The Panel is expected to complete its work by the summer, to allow for the formal presentation of its recommendations to the next session of the General Assembly in September 2006, and possible implementation in 2007.

The High-Level Panel has requested a dialogue with Major Groups and stakeholders on three cross sectional issues: Sustainable Development, Human Rights, and Gender. The formal dialogue took place on July 2nd with the members of the Panel in Geneva. The sustainable development dialogues aimed to contribute to the work of the Panel by broadening the input to the Panel's work and soliciting actionable proposals that the Panel could take forward. Stakeholder Forum, in cooperation with the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS), and the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for sustainable development and environment (FBOMS), is managing the dialogue on sustainable development. To ensure a broad input by Major Groups and stakeholders to the Panel's work and the sustainable development consultation, Stakeholder Forum and its partners initiated a process to solicit submissions from Major Groups and stakeholders.

A total of 15 submissions from 16 organisations were received, including: Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and the Development; Centro De Estudios Ambientales (Argentina); Local Government International Bureau (United Kingdom); Greenpeace International; The Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development; Organisation for Social Development of Unemployed Youth (Bangladesh); World Information Transfer, Inc; ANPED-Northern Alliance for Sustainability; WWF, ANPED, and Greenpeace; International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance; World Business Council for Sustainable Development and International Chamber of Commerce; IUCN-World Conservation Union; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions; International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives; and Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future. All submissions received by Friday, 30 June have been included verbatim in this document.

The summary document is organised into five sections:

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**SECTION I.  
IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED**

**Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and the Development**

1. **UN Reform and IEG:** These have not been popular issues in Brazil and Latin America for NGOs and social movements up to now. This is mainly due to lack of structures and access to documents in English language, and to the difficulty of grassroots organisations to link daily life to the discussions within the UN system. UN resolutions are soft laws and therefore, people do not recognise that their life will improve as a consequence of the bureaucratic and for them poorly visible work done within the UN system. Global civil society discussions on IEG have been started several years ago and the UNEP Global Civil Society Forum has been a privileged discussion space. Declarations on IEG have been issued signed by the organisations assisting the Forum. However, the Northern NGOs strongly dominate discussions on IEG thanks to better access to technical, human and financial resources.
2. **Multilateral Environment Agreements:** MEAs are frequently undermined in favour of the WTO regime. The UN system is weak when it comes to guarantee the implementation of agreements compared to the powerful WTO with its enforcement mechanisms. One example of the existence of contradictions between WTO rules and sustainability is the TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) Agreement. The agreement has made it more difficult for the South to access pharmaceutical products and technology from the North. Biopiracy, the appropriation and patenting by biotechnological corporations of the North of biological resources and traditional knowledge originating in the South, has also increased during the last years, threatening national sovereignty over natural resources and traditional knowledge. The WTO agreements also weaken domestic policy sectors deregulating legal frameworks. Bilateral agreements sometimes prevail and undermine the MEAs. The WTO should never be allowed to have the final say in matters relating to perceived conflicts between trade and the environment and the agenda for the sustainable use of natural resources, the protection of traditional knowledge and the right of access to genetic resources must weigh upon neoliberal market reforms.
3. **Financial Mechanisms:** The UN system is also weak in ensuring implementation of its agreements when compared to the multilateral financial institution mechanisms. The Bretton Woods Institutions, especially the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, have destabilised economic structures in many developing countries. Conditionalities attached to credits and loans such as the adoption of macro-economic policies and structural adjustment programs have contributed to environmental degradation and social exclusion.

**Centro De Estudios Ambientales**

4. The integrated approaches that amalgamate social, economic and environmental issues, repeatedly projected by diverse stakeholders and institutions (among them the United Nations) have proven more elusive than existent. The sought cohesiveness and strengthening of institutionality within the UN should stride hand-in-hand with seeking policy cohesiveness by integrating fully all aspects of human development.
5. Therefore, the problem is not only institutional UN-system wide coherence from an organisational point of view but also system-wide consistency from a policy viewpoint. The challenge for the United Nations system as a whole is to harness the opportunities put forth for by re-structuring approach that it is undergoing and channel momentum so that the three mainstays of development are achieved at all levels.

## **Local Government International Bureau**

6. Supporting effective decentralisation to the lowest appropriate level is a key approach to enabling development. However, whilst some donor governments and UN agencies have embraced decentralisation as a means to fight poverty, local governments are generally not given adequate support to permit them to deliver essential services effectively or to effectively represent the communities that have elected them. The Executive Director of UN Habitat Anna Tibajuka recently highlighted “Local government responsibilities typically include the delivery of key services such as housing, water and sanitation, waste management, primary health care and education. How these services are provided have a major impact on attaining the Millennium Development Goals”. She argued “Decentralisation does not only entail the transfer of functions and responsibilities to lower levels, it has also to be accompanied with commensurate capacities and resources”.
7. A recent OECD report by the DAC Network on Development Evaluation outlined the ‘Lessons learned on Donor Support to decentralisation and local governance’. It noted a number of lessons and recommendations that the UN should take account of:
  - a. the need for long term support for decentralisation – successful decentralisation can take more than a decade in the context of financial and political instability;
  - b. lack of central government support - Implementation of decentralisation is not always coupled with high-level commitment by central governments;
  - c. gender gap – it is not always clear how decentralisation programmes have contributed to the empowerment of women in local decision-making or improved local government services for women;
  - d. pro-poor – There is still a lack of poverty focus in practical implementation of many decentralisation programmes;
  - e. partnerships – where local government and civil society are both supported it can improve local democratic procedures and strengthen civil society’s capacity to take advantage of such improvements; and
  - f. capacity and resources - Capacity building appear most successful when coupled with extra local government resources.
8. The OECD report recommended:
  - a. greater coordination between donors and the partners governments – to better integrate programmes in the government’s policies and plans;
  - b. enhanced coordination between donors – using forums to share information and coordinate, and establish basket funds when appropriate;
  - c. sustainability of donor support – build in short and long term sustainability to decentralisation and local government programmes;
  - d. strengthen the poverty focus – enable local government to target underprivileged groups and stimulate grassroots voices e.g. citizen budget watching and service delivery monitoring; and
  - e. strengthen financial development and sustainability of local government – enable local government to have greater financial autonomy and stimulate local revenue generation.

## **Greenpeace International**

9. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is increasingly acting as a global governance organisation, and has extended its work programme to new areas of competence, thereby frustrating bodies that possess more appropriate expertise, including some Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). The development and enforcement of existing and new environmental legislation should not be hindered by subordinating these policies to free trade and competition rules. It is critical that legislation to ensure sustainable development is not overruled by trade experts or international trade panels working in isolation from other concerns. Governments must grant the UN environment body and MEAs with trade-related provisions, objectives, or obligations, observer status at the WTO and must make it clear that the WTO does not have a mandate to set rules or

criteria that might in any way define or restrict the use or national implementation of any trade measures agreed to in MEAs.

10. The attitude of developed country governments, to demand market access to developing country markets, while refusing developing countries access to their own markets, is deeply hypocritical. However, Greenpeace remains extremely concerned about the social and environmental impacts of trade liberalisation, especially as UNEP's country studies of trade liberalisation show that the environment often loses in the process of trade liberalisation. Greenpeace therefore believes that a blind pursuit of the Doha Round of trade negotiations will not deliver more equity or sustainability. The current negotiation texts on the table at the WTO are biased towards developed country interests and, in particular, endanger the process of industrialisation in the developing world through the inclusion of an unbalanced Non Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) negotiation text. Trade liberalisation of forest and fishery sectors under NAMA is likely to result in an even speedier and more comprehensive destruction of forests and fish stocks – key natural resources on which many poor communities in the developing world depend for their livelihoods.

### **The Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development**

11. The role of UN in setting norms and delivering premises and the respect of the UN Treaty has to be strengthened. Basically, the UN reforms should contribute to solve the problems addressed in the Millennium Declaration.
12. The linkage between development and environment must be strengthened, and the environmental pillar in sustainable development must be more powerful. There is also a need to strengthen the UN work targeting women and youth. Peace building is a condition for sustainable development.
13. There is a potential for UN to deliver more efficiently results with regards to development, human aid and environment, without compromising the democratic decision-making of UN or limit the responsibility areas of UN.
14. There is a tendency that the most important decisions are taken in WTO, The World Bank and the IMF, institutions where the rich countries have more power than the poor countries.
15. There is a strong need to ensure a better financing of the UN.

### **Organisation for Social Development of Unemployed Youth**

16. Agriculture needs water. People need sanitation. Youth & Women need employment and children need education. Total agriculture with fisheries, Tree plantation, conservation, natural resource, renewable energy, reproductive health needs empowerment. Here in Bangladesh many more problems but also have solution. Need assessment now. Population is a big factor with flooding and security. Regeneration with agricultural sector it can solution of flooding and security too with all the information will be cited. Need safe transport for import the goods for human beings. It will make food security for human beings who are available in here. Lack of education and its use. So, we can start our total education with nature, human development. Lack of educational institution. Need more schools, colleges and university in the village area with environment & science base. Lack of medical institution with doctors and hospitals. Which will lead to know environment and protect them from darkness. A village can be changed through climate education like disciplined home bound in one area which will open more production land for human beings for human development. Science makes us to work together and we can make ourselves as a student of science. We need safe and sustained water for all now and for future generation. Bangladesh is a part one of poor country of the world. ICT will decrease our expenditure, It economically sustain when it connect every villages.

## World Information Transfer

17. World Information Transfer (WIT) advocates that further attention be given to synthesising the interlinkages between health and environmental degradation. The World Health Organisation's emphasis on triage tends to block environmental linkages. Although UNEP and the World Health Organisation (WHO) are currently working together on a number of initiatives to combat the increasing threat of environmentally linked diseases and also collaborate with UNICEF in the field of children's environmental health, particularly in the context of the WHO-led Healthy Environments for Children Alliance, further integration of programs would enhance their effectiveness. While UNEP and WHO cooperate on programs and policies, for example, the United Nations Ad Hoc Interagency Task Force On Tobacco Control, and WSSD partnerships (i.e., HECA or Healthy Environments for Children Alliance), WIT recommends that WHO increase its work with UNEP on all health issues with environmental components, and we suggest that the initiative come from UNEP. Working in conjunction with UNEP, WHO could develop a more effective overall program in resolving or mitigating health issues that stem from environmental degradation, i.e., not only water borne diseases but also toxic contamination of fresh and salt water, food contamination, waste disposal.
18. Each of us has traces of industrial chemicals and pesticides lodged in our bodies. Toxins like DDT, PCBs, dioxin, furans (even though banned by the Stockholm Convention) and mercury enter our bodies through the foods we eat, the air we breathe, and the water we drink. Every time we drink contaminated water we add to a growing toxic store held in our fatty tissues. Whenever fat deposits are used (pregnancy, weight loss, nursing, etc.) these chemical hormones re-enter the blood stream. Most people around the world already carry levels of endocrine-disrupting chemicals very close to those levels found in animals with disorders specifically linked to endocrine disruption. Dutch researchers have found a correlation between dioxin exposure and suppressed levels of disease-fighting white blood cells in children. The list of examples could regrettably go on. The international processes to manage toxic chemicals, Intergovernmental Forum on Chemical Safety (IFCS) and the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), also needs to be more fully integrated into WHO's programmes.
19. World Information Transfer recommends that CSD become the model for multi-stakeholder engagement for the following reasons:
  - a. the term has established parameters (unlike "civil society");
  - b. multi-stakeholder involvement with CSD is predictable based on the agenda of the Commission and thus enables the various stakeholders to plan well ahead of time for their work;
  - c. the process is relatively transparent and equitable; and
  - d. the process, which must continue to include robust stakeholder dialogue sessions, affords balanced engagement in discussion of issues.

## WWF, ANPED, Greenpeace

20. **Integrating environment in development decision making:** this requires the UN to facilitate the operationalisation of sustainable development by strengthening the environmental pillar dimension to the level of political weight that is given to the other key issues. The Secretary-General's High Level Panel must take on sustainable development as its primary focus.
21. **Strengthening the institutional architecture of the UN's environment-related activities:** this requires the creation of an independent monitoring and review mechanism, and the provision of a feedback system to UN policy and norm making bodies. It also requires greater environmental expertise in the UN's operational activities.
22. **Improving coherence within the UN's environmental work:** this requires the clustering of the functions and operations of the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) so

that synergies are generated, joint work plans are created and implemented, and resources are allocated so that they are put to their most effective uses. UN member states must create incentives for increasing cooperation among MEAs and the scheduling of MEA meetings back-to-back on related issues. The UN environment body also must act as a facilitator by bringing together focal points and expertise in MEAs at the national level.

23. There must be monitoring of progress made in operational activities and the review of progress in the UN's norm and policy making body for the environment to examine results on the ground and provide swift, direct and effective responses to emerging challenges. Such a monitoring and review mechanism should retain decision making power in countries and create an international system that is responsive to country needs and global problems. The information generated through this independent process would be used to set international policies, incentives, standards, and benchmarks and to facilitate capacity-building efforts. It would ensure that countries and donors assess development proposals for social and ecosystem impacts, using the monitoring and review mechanism as a starting point.
24. **Civil society stakeholders:** NGOs are and will always be important to the work the UN is doing on the environment and on sustainable development. Ever since the inception of UNEP, NGOs have played a significant role in researching and implementing sustainable development. In the suggested Programme of Work for UNEP for the period 2006 - 2007, there are almost 70 references to NGOs and Civil Society with respect to programme implementation. Wider input into the reform process should be sought from civil society including NGOs and scientists from various regions, both to ensure a wider ownership from "we, the peoples" as well as bringing the reform process in tune with the demands of the peoples living in this century. Sufficient time should be allotted to the reform process, even if this means extending the mandate of the panel. A proper, functional and permanent position for civil society, including NGOs must be found within a reformed system, and consideration of the special concerns of civil society must be ensured, including accountability, participation and transparency. Moreover, concerns expressed by particular sectors of society, such as Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, workers, should be given special attention.

### **ANPED**

25. UN reform must be about strengthening multilateralism and improving both the quality of UN policy/norm making and its implementation so that real results can be achieved on the ground. It must seek to make a real difference for the world's poorest and most vulnerable peoples. It must be about making the UN more effective in reaching its Charter aim of being 'a centre for harmonising the actions of nations' in the attainment of 'international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character'. Anything less would lack legitimacy and effect. We would strongly state that sufficient time should be allotted the reform process, even if this means extending the mandate of the panel.
26. ANPED would like to express its general support to those views expressed by the joint Greenpeace/WWF/ ANPED paper on UN reform as well as those expressed by both WEDO in their paper on the reform process and those views found in the paper from TWN titled "Reclaiming Development: Reasserting the Role of the UN in Finance and Economic Matters vis-à-vis the Bretton Woods Institutions."
27. More specifically we would like to emphasise that the following must be taken into consideration: development needs to be equitable and sustainable; and protection of the earth's environment and the life-supporting services it provides will be a key, if not the key requirement for achieving development goals. We recognise that the world's poor are those most directly affected by and those most vulnerable to the degradation of their environment, and providing for the environmentally and socially sound sustainable use of their natural resource base is one of the most effective ways of protecting and assisting such communities.

28. Any new proposal emanating from the Panel's discussion must have proposals consistent with existing international agreements on sustainable development, poverty reduction and protection of the environment that would work to:
- integrate the environment into UN and agency decision making;
  - strengthen the institutional framework for the UN system's environment activities'
  - achieve greater coherence in the UN system's environment work; and
  - link reform of work on environmental issues with work on trade, finance and support for civil society.

### **International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance**

29. Current fragmentation of UN sustainable development programmes & governance structure for Water and Sanitation limit NGO mainstreaming innovative approaches at national and local levels.
30. Sustainable Development decentralised initiatives such as rainwater harvesting (RWH) and management, encounter serious obstacles in the UN system when positioning RWH within government's Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) framework. There is no clear interlocutor in the UN to discuss regional strategies and participatory planning involving specialised NGOs and regional organisations (most of them do not have a consultative status).
31. NGO office in New York and Geneva are highly inefficient regarding the consultative status requested from civil society organisations. These bodies need basic changes in their interaction and examination of NGO demand for UN consultative status. These NGO offices should become regional bodies working in a more decentralised way and in different languages (i.e. Spanish, Russian). They do not take into consideration the topics relevant to the NGO mission.
32. Donors are not aware of the tense relationship between UN agencies, global & regional NGOs whose mandates are in Sustainable Development or in Humanitarian Aid and Human Rights. There is a lack of coordination between development and the urgency. This has generated gaps in the medium and the long term cooperation. NGO compete for the same funding with the UN agencies Poor coordination between UN agencies concerning water & Sanitation (23 agencies deal with the topic)
33. NGO efforts should be recognised as being the main implementing actors building coherence at local and national policy levels taking CSD recommendations to the ground. There is a weak recognition of the NGO networks in this process. NGO networks lack of trust from the UN system. Should governments insist to the UN system to change their working policy with NGOs?
34. All these factors prevent to develop means of Implementation and a broad impact contributing to the achievement of the MDGs.

### **Business & Industry represented by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)**

35. **Mainstreaming Sustainable Development at the UN:** A balanced approach to economic, social and environmental issues is more important than ever in light of the Millennium Declaration, Monterrey Consensus and WSSD - all ambitious multi-disciplinary efforts to tackle poverty and promote sustainable development. The UN and its relevant agencies and programmes are the recognised global institutions for promoting human rights and raising environmental and labour standards – the core values advocated by the UN Secretary-General in his Global Compact with business. History has shown that improvements in human rights and in labour and environmental standards are more readily attainable in conditions of rising prosperity, produced by the interaction of the market economy and good governance.

36. Strong commitment to open markets and the effective treatment of these issues are mutually reinforcing and should go hand in hand. Environmental and trade disciplines need not clash; rather they should each be formulated and implemented with due awareness of their respective rules and procedures.
37. World business recognises the need for the UN to have sufficient resources and authority to tackle the complex and often inter-related global problems of today, while urging further streamlining as part of UN institutional reforms to improve efficiency, reduce overlaps and duplication of tasks, and increase the UN's effectiveness in coordinating international activities. The UN should ensure that greater coordination of UN programmes and activities takes place at the national level and help governments implementing strong national development agendas. UN reform should also emphasise efforts to identify and inform cost effective, science- and risk-based policies to address agreed priorities.
38. **Role of Business in Civil Society and Engagement of Stakeholders:** As recognised by the UNGA, WSSD, Agenda 21 and the Millennium Declaration, business is a fundamental and unique component of society, and should have access and engagement in UN discussions and consultations, commensurate with its role in society, expertise, resources and inter-disciplinary knowledge and impact. For business to make substantive contributions in UN discussions and consultations, it must be allowed to have an early seat at the table.
39. Business welcomes the growing openness of UN processes and efforts made to include business expertise and views. The UN must recognise and give priority to stakeholders that bring expertise, resources and capacity to address issues and make progress. We are concerned that there is a proliferation of multistakeholder dialogues and forums that could crowd out substantive interactions and deplete limited institutional resources. Indiscriminately including more groups, or putting all groups on an equal footing, regardless of their size and constituency, will likely lead to important views being curtailed or lost altogether. Business is increasingly engaged with the UN at local level and encourages the UN to more fully recognise and seize on business' local expertise and knowledge to promote sustainable development for all.
40. **Deployment of UN expertise and best practice for Implementation:** In parallel to the multilateral institutions and intergovernmental cooperation to address transboundary and global issues, UN reform should strengthen national resources and capacity building for implementation, taking into account the necessary flexibility needed to reflect different country circumstances and priorities. The UN should also continue its efforts to encourage concepts of accountability, good governance, transparent tendering and adequate incentives at country-level. It should assist governments to set local strategies and economic, environmental and poverty reduction priorities, coherent with agreed international objectives. Finally it should encourage voluntary approaches and partnerships as helpful supplements to governmental commitments and actions.
41. **The Role of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD):** As organising partners of the Business & Industry Major Group at the CSD, ICC and the WBCSD believe that, in order to make progress, the Commission must be strengthened, with clear priorities, long-term frameworks and accountability to deliver results. The CSD must obtain the mandate and resources within the UN to ensure that its policy recommendations are fully integrated into other UN programmes and activities and in individual national policies. It should also strike a fair balance between the three pillars of sustainable development and hence be supported not only by environmental ministers, but also those concerned with finance, habitat and development cooperation. A committed Chair and Bureau are required to ensure that the outcomes are focused and pragmatic. Calls for input of the Bureau to all stakeholders on the currently discussed sustainable development topics would increase the understanding of the participants of the issues, barriers and problems leading to better informed discussions. The majority of discussions should be held in small working groups or

task forces, which report their findings back to the Bureau or plenary rather than having large sessions with the reading of various statements. Examples of these practices are the meetings of the UNFCCC. Business needs to be engaged in the sessions including those associated with investment, access and technologies. A transparent and consultative process with the major group organising partners needs to be undertaken in the selection of speakers/panellists.

42. **Efficiency and Integration:** Business welcomes simplification of entry points into the UN and strong coordinating units at the UN (for ex on water), greater integration of UN standard-setting and operational activities and coherence among UN entities, Bretton Woods institutions other intergovernmental bodies including the various MEA secretariats. We believe that development and environment considerations should be more fully integrated in the UN's work, particularly on matters relating to economics and commercial activity. Using resources more efficiently and bringing new financing into UN activities are both important. Business has consistently emphasised the importance of mobilisation of domestic resources and encouragement of local entrepreneurship; foreign direct investment and other private capital flows; good governance; overseas development assistance; and bringing the informal economy into the formal economy – UN reform should strive to enable and facilitate these important financing sources working in concert. We are concerned about the overlap between this process and that arising from para 169 of the WSSD JPOI document. Few organisations have the resources to seriously tackle two sets of consultations at the same time and on similar topics and it would be helpful if the consultations, which take place July 2, would be integrated with JPOI para 169 consultations.

#### **International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives**

43. The debate on decentralization is not progressing. The local agenda 21 movement of sustainable development planning and action seems to be waning. Yet, increasingly decentralization is recognized as the key to progress. Under a decentralized scenario, there is a significant amount of expectation that local governments will be the key to achieving the MDG's. However this has not translated into an adequate forum for local government to consult and implement appropriate sustainable development strategies.

#### **Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future**

44. Despite 15 years and several reform measures the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) remains as weak global authority on sustainable development. Despite being the high level forum on sustainable development, the CSD has struggled to appropriately address the three pillars of sustainable development, and as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) often lacks the appropriate political decision making powers of the General Assembly or its subsidiary organs. The CSD has been particularly inefficient in addressing the means of implementation, such as finance and technology transfer- as per its UNCED/WSSD mandates.
45. The CSD and its parent body ECOSOC are current failing to effectively oversee the system-wide coordination of sustainable development, as well as the balanced integration of economic, social and environmental aspects of United Nations policies and programmes. Attempts to reform both bodies have provided limited remedial benefits and the renewed focus on system-wide coherence in light of the World Summit 2005 and the urgent need to meet the MDG and JPOI targets in its self points to a problem with the current system. The lack of an operative function, particularly at the country-level, for sustainable development within the UN system and the fragmented coordination of the UN's work has led to overlap, duplication, and confused priorities. A similar situation arises that the UN leading environment body, the UN Environment Programme, has no operational mandate at the country-level, and the numerous multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) are not implementing agencies, and their mandates only allow these bodies to play a facilitative role for the Parties to undertake their commitments. The Executive Director of the UN Educational,

Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Koïchiro Matsuura, “UNESCO must be extremely wary of any tendency towards separating operational activities from normative, analytical and policy matters.” Noting that “this is a false dichotomy and is a recipe for incoherence, not coherence,” he said “ he could not accept the G-13’s argument if it meant that specialised agencies are no longer expected to involve themselves in implementation on the ground; the global and local roles of specialised agencies are inseparable in my view.”

46. The CSD is, however, not alone. All systems of global governance and management exhibit weaknesses that diminish the prospects for achieving sustainable development objectives.

**SECTION II:  
PROPOSALS FOR APPROACHES OR SOLUTIONS**

**Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and the Development**

47. **Strengthening of UNEP:** Consider the specific needs of developing countries and respect of the fundamental principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities”. Developed countries should promote technology transfer, new and additional financial resources, and capacity building for meaningful participation of developing countries in IEG. Strengthening of IEG should occur in the context of sustainable development and should involve civil society as important stakeholder and agent of transformation.
48. **Strengthening MEAs in face of the WTO regime:** Developed countries, instead of fulfilling their commitments made under the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), have prioritised the agenda of the WTO that promotes a regime of rules that are counter-running the Rio spirit and principles. The unilateral rejection of MEAs, such as the Kyoto Protocol, by some countries is another fact that puts at risk the common and binding efforts needed to advance towards sustainable development. The developed countries’ commitment to contribute with 0.7% of their GNI for Official Development Assistance (ODA) and to provide new and additional funds to implement MEAs has not become true and ODA has even decreased in some countries. Synergies among the MEAs, for instance, among UNFCCC, the CBD and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification have also to be strengthened.
49. **Civil society engagement:** Non-governmental organisations and grassroot movements have to get involved in discussions on UN reform, system-wide coherence and IEG. The Global Civil Society Forum during MOP-3 and COP-8 on the CBD in Curitiba, organised by the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and Development (FBOMS) was an excellent opportunity to involve civil society organisations in the debates on the effectiveness of the MEAs.
50. **Capacity-building** has to be carried out in developing countries on the efforts necessary to be done within the UN to improve system-wide coherence. A better cooperation between the UN and civil society organisations can help to make sustainable development programs and projects more effective.
51. **Make adequate financing available:** National implementation of MEA is weak in many cases because of highly inadequate financial resources. OECD countries should finally designate 0.7% of GNI for ODA. All developed countries and developing countries within the realm of their possibilities should increase financial contribution for environment and sustainable development programs.
52. **Support cross-ministerial approaches:** Sustainable Development has to be the context within IEG is discussed and this should involve other sectorial ministers, other than environment ministers, so that the linkages between development and environment can be promoted.
53. **Promote increased regional cooperation:** South-south cooperation for IEG is crucial so as to share resources, exchange technologies and defend the specific needs and interests of developing countries, based on strong alliances experienced in other multilateral negotiations processes such as the WTO.
54. **More public participation:** As a central component of IEG the implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration should be promoted and fully put in place at all levels in order to ensure public participation, access to information and to environmental justice. This has been repeatedly requested by the Global Civil Society Forum hosted by UNEP.

## Centro De Estudios Ambientales

55. Of course, operational sing organisational re-structuring and at the same time operationalising policy review is a rather difficult approach. In particular, taking into account the paramount changes needed in such an institution as dealing with. In general terms, however, the institutional changes necessary must be put forth from the organisational apex and permeate to the regional and country levels. That is, a very strong top-down re-organisation must take place. At this stage it is generally perceived that the work at the UN is rather different from headquarters than at the national and albeit project level. That it is integrated in some general areas but is rather atomised when the efforts are translated into country offices, agencies and of course projects. Therefore a greater integration is needed not only in headquarters but also making certain that this integration is translated into assimilation among the secretariats and the country-level operations.
56. At the inter-agency and at the country level, therefore, there has to be further union so that policies, projects, technical assistance, expertise transfer, and so on, is not done in an isolated manner. Many times the work of the UN is done in discrete units and therefore is not only not integrated but at times conflicting. At times, the pillars are not only un-integrated but cancel each other out by different policies or projects that do not act in an inclusive manner. In sum, the proposal for approaches is that the incipient integration present in some areas of the UN be seeped into agencies and country level operations. Institutional mechanisms for this can include, inter alia:
- clustering approaches of agencies and secretariats;
  - “inter –cabinet” – like approaches;
  - coordination of different agencies when working on the ground (i.e. at the country level);
  - simply maintaining obligatory channels of interchange at the national levels between the different agencies operating; and
  - strengthening of the “newer” theme areas so that the different pillars are taken into account on equal footing and not as “window dressing”.

## Local Government International Bureau

57. **Promoting effective decentralisation:** The UN should promote effective decentralisation and good local governance by donors as well as within its own agencies, not as a form of conditionality, but as a means of enabling effective local dialogue and ownership in development.
58. **Consistent approach to decentralisation:** In programme delivery there needs to be a more consistent approach to working with and supporting the strengthening of local government. UN Habitat is currently drafting “Guidelines on decentralisation and the strengthening of local authorities” to be agreed at UN Habitat’s Council in 2007. Such guidance, once agreed, should be recognised and supported throughout the UN – not only UN Habitat.
59. **International cooperation between local government:** Christophe Nuttall, director of UNDP’s partnerships initiative recently highlighted work by local authorities globally to help developing countries. He said there is potential for much more to be done, “we need to recognise that achieving the Millennium Development Goals will be done thanks to local authorities. I would say that 70% of the agenda is typically the mandates of local authorities.” Various UN agencies, not only UN Habitat and UNDP should do more to enable technical cooperation and exchange of good practice between local authorities internationally.
60. **National coordination function:** All UN programmes working at the national and local level should act in a coordinated fashion at the national level under a single umbrella to avoid duplication and improve the allocation of decentralisation activities according to appropriate competencies and need. They need to consult and work in partnership with national and regional associations of local government where they exist, alongside central government engagement. The UN should also assist the process of donor coordination and harmonisation.

### **Greenpeace International**

61. Ultimately, it should fall to an independent forum outside the WTO to examine the WTO-MEA relationship, as part of a coherent approach to addressing global challenges. In our view, the International Court of Justice and the United Nation's International Law Commission are the most suitable existing fora for clarifying the WTO/MEA relationship because of their broad expertise, the transparency of their process and their independence from particular interests.
62. The WTO agreements contain review clauses that should be used to analyse whether existing rules support and promote the development of sustainable societies, and conform with existing international law and obligations. National independent sustainability impact assessments are crucial in this regard.
63. A complete review of the social and environmental consequences of the trade policies implemented so far is urgently required. To ensure that sustainable development is at the heart of the future governance model to be built through the process of UN reform, a clear picture of the true impacts of the multilateral trade regime is needed. The rush to further trade liberalisation without first considering the complete impacts must be halted.

### **The Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development**

64. The proposals of the panel for organising UN bodies should be based on how the MDGs efficiently might be achieved.
65. The implementation of the principles of the UN Treaty should be strengthened. UN is given the task to be the multilateral institution also with regard to trade, economy and finance. These areas are even more important to developing countries than development, human aid and environment. UN must be enabled to conquer power and position on areas dominated by WTO and the Bretton Woods institutions.
66. It is necessary to coordinate better on the country level. A better coordination should include other donors. UN should aim at coordinating also the bilateral aid.
67. It is important to differ between political and organisational coherence. In politics diversity is welcomed, while organisational coherence should be based on the priorities of the receiver country. It is a goal that the receiver country itself can be able to coordinate. A local UN coordinator as a contact point might be useful. The UN system on the country level can be more efficient through common services, especially within sectors (health, education, etc). The local UN coordinator must have financial power.

### **World Information Transfer**

68. WIT recommends that WHO increase its work with UNEP on all health issues with environmental components, and we suggest that the initiative come from UNEP. Working in conjunction with UNEP, WHO could develop a more effective overall program in resolving or mitigating health issues that stem from environmental degradation, i.e., not only water borne diseases but also toxic contamination of fresh and salt water, food contamination, waste disposal. In an expanded role for WHO on issues of sustainable development including chemicals management, WIT specifically suggests that WHO adopt the CSD model for engaging NGOs as part of multi-stakeholder engagement.

**WWF, ANPED, Greenpeace (Full text in Annex 1)**

**69. Integrating Environment into Development Decision Making:**

- a. By **2008**, UN Member States must fully finance and effectively implement UNEP's Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building (making sure UNEP is allowed to develop and strengthen a sound scientific basis). Institutions such as UNEP, UNDP and UNCTAD must provide technical assistance to developing countries in meeting their 2005 World Summit commitment to produce new, MDG-consistent national development strategies;
- b. By **2010**, Member States must create direct and effective channels of communication between environment-related norm and policy setting and operational activities to monitor environment and development trends and to facilitate implementation of norms and policies on the ground and establish sufficient regulatory incentives, both nationally and internationally, to correct market shortcomings and to recognise and account for environmental services in development policy; and
- c. By **2015**, there must be full integration of sustainable development principles in all UN development policy-making and operational activities. Standards, benchmarks and models that include environmental considerations must ensure implementation throughout UN and IFI policies and implementation.

**70. The Institutional Framework for the UN System's Environment Activities**

- a. By **2008**, UN Member States must establish a sustainable funding mechanism providing increased, stable and predictable long-term funding to UN bodies dealing with the environment, and expand the work of UN regional offices in facilitating capacity building, technology transfer, information exchange, assessment and monitoring;
- b. By **2010**, UN Member States and UN country offices must have the capacity to access sufficient expertise from MEAs, and those with environment and development specialisation. UN Member States should create direct channels of communication with minimal layers between the UN environmental norm and policy setting body and operational activities to facilitate implementation, and establish a swift, direct and effective reporting mechanism to review progress in implementation of environmental policies through operational activities; and
- c. By **2015**, UN Member States must have in place a UN system for integrating environment and development that is responsive to country needs for achieving sustainable development and includes a function of a monitoring and review mechanism to assist, monitor, review, follow-up and report on progress of the implementation and renewal of UN environmental norms, agreements and policies on sustainable development.

**71. Coherence in the Normative Work in the field of Environment:**

- a. By **2008**, UN Member States could create incentives for increasing cooperation among MEAs and the scheduling of back-to-back MEA meetings on related issues Any new UN sustainable development system must act as a facilitator by bringing together focal points and expertise in MEAs at the national level;
- b. By **2010**, UN Member States should ensure: the clustering of MEA Secretariats where there is considerable overlap in expertise and mandate which in turn has hindered implementation; increased coherence among UN entities on cross-cutting issues concerning, among others, trade, and transnational environment-related crime; and the adoption of MEAs in areas where there are presently no international agreements, such as on protecting important biomes including the deep sea and the global commons; and
- c. By **2015**, UN Member States must ensure the creation of a strong norm and policy setting UN body for the environment, which can effectively coordinate the full spectrum of UN environmental normative and policy work and direct its implementation.

## **ANPED**

72. **A clear institutional framework for a UN environment system:** Any new UN body or agency working within a reformed UN system should focus on elements such as capacity-building, assistance, consistent funding, and technical information to enable nations to fully implement all relevant existing UN treaties and agreements.
73. A sustainable funding mechanism is needed to provide increased, stable and predictable long-term funding to UN bodies dealing with the environment. The UN should have one streamlined programme for each country and that those programmes include experts on environment and development issues and that work on setting strong norms and policy setting with a UN body for the environment has direct links to national level operational activities.
74. Sustainability and equity monitoring and feedback systems for development and investment programmes should be introduced and used by UN bodies in conjunction with governments, donors and International Financial Institutions; the information from these feed-back systems must be fed into international and country governance and financial policy frameworks. The UN needs to transform its general practice of using belated and generally ineffective reactive tools to using compelling evidence of damage to anticipate and prevent problems and integrate solutions into development action. There must be monitoring of progress made in operational activities and the review of progress in the UN's norm and policy making body for the environment to examine results on the ground and provide swift, direct and effective responses to emerging challenges. Such a monitoring and review mechanism should retain decision making power in countries and create an international system that is responsive to country needs and global problems. The information generated through this independent process would be used to set international policies, incentives, standards, and benchmarks and to facilitate capacity-building efforts. It would ensure that countries and donors assess development proposals for social and ecosystem impacts, using the monitoring and review mechanism as a starting point.
75. Integrating environment into development decision making: Sustainable development should be viewed as the central development paradigm, and, as mandated by UN GA Resolution 57/253, constitutes 'a key element of the overarching framework of United Nations activities'. Alongside this should be the full and effective financing and implementation of the 'Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building'; the creation of direct and effective channels between environment-related policy setting and operational activities in order to monitor environment and development trends and to facilitate implementation of norms and policies on the ground. There must be monitoring of progress made in operational activities and the review of progress in the UN's norm and policy making body.
76. **Setting Norms and Standards for work on the Environment:** One of the major functions of the UN is global standard setting. Work must be done to:
- a. ensure the realisation of the RIO principles, and pay especial attention to the Precautionary Principle;
  - b. ensure gender issues are fully integrated and understood;
  - c. create incentives for increasing cooperation around and between MEAs (Multilateral Environmental Agreements);
  - d. develop increased coherence among UN bodies on cross-cutting environmental issues;
  - e. develop MEAs for areas where there is no international agreement; and
  - f. develop a strong norm and policy setting UN body for the environment, which can effectively coordinate the full spectrum of UN environmental work.

77. **Linking to wider reforms:** The solutions needed to deliver equity and sustainability also require adjustments and reforms outside the UN. The paper suggests exploring some key issues:
- a. **Financial Institutions:** These institutions must explore mechanisms to integrate sustainable development criteria into core economic models, possibly through considering parallel reforms to those now being discussed within the UN system.
  - b. **Trade:** It is critical that the WTO does not have a mandate to set rules or criteria that might restrict the use or national implementation of any trade measures agreed to in MEAs. Governments must grant UNEP and the Secretariats of MEAs with trade-related provisions, objectives, or obligations permanent observer status in all relevant bodies of the WTO. UNCTAD must be preserved and strengthened in the process of UN reform and given a critical role in ensuring sustainability and equity in global trade.

### **International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance**

78. **Sustainable Development issues where new and/or further attention is required by the UN system:**
- a. UN specialised agencies need to establish a better working strategy with NGOs at HQ and country level;
  - b. Assign funding sources for thematic NGOs and for UN agencies to avoid competition of resources;
  - c. Consultation should not be an ad-hoc task but should be fully recognised for the time and effort it demands. This would improve the now-a-days weak relationships with civil society organisations. The worst case is the ILO with a mandate that prevents to cooperate with informal economy actors (not included in ILO tripartite mandate and never consulted);
  - d. UNEP, UNDP, UNHABITAT, among others, need to strengthen their regional basis to be more coherent with civil society organisations partnership building; and
  - e. New NGOs engaged at global level need to be recognised as valid interlocutors in their field of expertise.
79. **How to strengthen the management and coordination of UN operational activities in the field of sustainable development at national and regional level?**
- a. Key sustainable development topics such as water and sanitation require a visible decentralised head in the UN system. This coordination body should be open to regional discussions and to the inclusion of innovative water supply options;
  - b. The UN Water & Sanitation coordinating body should facilitate consultations with donors to define NGO thematic cooperation strategies;
  - c. It should facilitate joint programme formulation, inform on ongoing programmes in the field and permit the access of new national and local partners with UN consultative status to collaborate with UN agencies;
  - d. To improve the UN administrative slow procedures, the establishment of decentralised “thematic” dialogue platforms (to formulate work plans and rapid procedures) are needed; and
  - e. To improve the accountability and the impact of joint UN agencies and NGOs collaboration in the field of Sustainable Development, (starting with the Gender & Water and Sanitation programmes), a transparent review of objectives and results need to be presented to NGOs, both in Development Cooperation and in Humanitarian Aid investments.

### **IUCN-World Conservation Union**

80. Both the High Level Panel on System Wide Coherence and the UN General Assembly consultations on environment are exploring ways to improve the operational and normative performance of the international environmental governance system. IUCN offers a framework of six principal functions of international environmental governance, with specific recommendations to enhance each function.

81. **Mainstreaming:**
- a. Mainstream environmental sustainability into all national poverty reduction and development strategies and donor frameworks; and
  - b. Develop comprehensive, UN-system wide social and environmental safeguard and mainstreaming policies to apply to all UN operational agencies.
82. **Coordination:**
- a. Strengthen the coordination role of UNEP as the lead agency on the environment in the UN system through a more focused and longer term plan of action;
  - b. Restructure the UN's inter-agency coordination mechanisms to better integrate environment and development by merging the Environmental Management Group and the UN Development Group;
  - c. Enhance coordination between the UN bodies and environmental treaties around specific issues or clusters, following the successful experience with chemicals;
  - d. Ensure effective technical support on the field of environment to UN operations, rather than establish UNEP operational capacity.
83. **Science:** Strengthen UNEP's role as a convener and catalyst of authoritative knowledge and science on environmental issues at global level.
84. **Capacity:** Implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building with adequate resources and with the coordinated participation of relevant UN agencies
85. **Finance:**
- a. Enhance the availability and effectiveness of funding for environmental activities throughout the UN system; and
  - b. Further strengthen existing development assistance for environmental funding.
86. **Policy:**
- a. Integrate the Commission on Sustainable Development into ECOSOC's deliberations on development and the follow up to UN Conferences and Summits. • Strengthen the UNEP Governing Council / Global Ministerial Environment Forum as the unique venue for environment ministers to meet and provide guidance;
  - b. Facilitate streamlining of MEA reporting requirements and scientific assessment needs; and
  - c. Rationalize the meetings of MEAs and subsidiary bodies.

#### **International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives**

87. UNACLA should be reformed to be more inclusive of local government professionals and service organizations. We see UNACLA as a positive mechanism for consultation but it needs to increase the dialogue from consultation with a strategic mostly political representation to a system similar to how the UN operates in other for a with national governments i.e. Technicians debate and develop positions and the political leadership are brought in towards the end of the discussion to ratify and take the final decisions on process.
88. We further recommend that a UNACLA, a kind of "greater UNACLA", type process should be encouraged throughout UN agencies especially those agencies dealing with water supply, sanitation and hygiene.
89. We note that local governments once had to register for UN events as NGO's, thankfully progress has been made in this regard and local governments now register as local authorities. The CSD has been a positive mechanism to allow local governments a voice in the national debate. However, local governments, as an important sphere of governments have a more important role to play than

the one minute or so interventions that they have been allowed. In this regard, local governments have been encouraging national governments to include local government officials in their delegations.

90. Financing for local government delegations and consultations is difficult to find. The international community needs to recognize the value that local governments can bring to the discussion table. Particularly where implementation issues are being discussed. Directing the majority of international support to multi lateral and national institutions adds a second tier to achieving results on the ground. More consideration needs to be given to getting those who are in the end tasked with doing the work to come to the table.

### **Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future**

91. The need for a bold transformation of the UN's sustainable development framework, and particularly the role of the CSD, should be one of the highest priorities of the Panel and related UN reform processes. As Pieter Van Geel, the Dutch Minister of the State Secretary for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, has said "we must guard against 'management by re-labelling'."
92. Stakeholder Forum (SF) proposes the following reforms that aim to strengthen the UN system's ability to address the three pillars of sustainable development. The reform scenario proposes strengthening the role, mandate and function of the 'pillar' institutions of sustainable development- the UN Environment Programme, the UN Conference on Trade and Development, the UN Development Programme, the Commission on Sustainable Development, and the UN General Assembly. The reforms would also address new mandates and functions for the UN Environment Management Group, and other inter-agency bodies.
93. The scenario proposes transforming the CSD into a **subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, renaming it the Council on Sustainable Development**, including assuming responsibilities of the sustainable development decision making functions of the Second Committee. The Council would be mandated to address the poorly constructed relationship between the Council, treaty bodies and governing councils and include the authority to address coherence and gaps in international decision-making related to sustainable development. The Council would thus be empowered by the General Assembly to address the lack of coherence in the normative approach to sustainable development across UN decision making bodies. A key feature of the new Council would be a **strengthened knowledge and leadership base**, which could include the mandate to establish Open-Ended Consultative Groups, creating ministerial-led time-limited Council Panels, and establishing expert scientific and technical bodies.
94. A more robust Council would be situated with the context of a **more tightly managed UN system at the intergovernmental decision making level**, and concurrently with a **revised UN system-wide approach to sustainable development at the operative level**. The new Council on Sustainable Development would be based on a **new relationship with an enhanced economic pillar for sustainable development**. In the short to medium term, the scenario proposes enhancing the role of UNCTAD, ILO and WIPO as the key pillar organisations. It also proposes that the existing CSD and DSD activities regarding sustainable consumption and production should be transferred to the UN Industrial Development Organisation and UNCTAD. Of immediate concerns is the lack of a political agreeable forum to discuss the relationship between trade and sustainable development, particularly as it relates to multilateral environmental agreements, the UN system and the World Trade Organisation. Given this situation, the Council would provide a high level space to address options and common approaches for addressing system-wide coherence. Issues regarding trade and sustainable development would be addressed by an Open-ended Consultative Group. Similarly, a key element of the economic pillar is the need to address the relationship between the UN system and the Bretton Woods Institutions, including proposing that the Council establish an Open-ended Consultative Group on Financing for Sustainable Development.

95. Regarding proposals to **strengthen then social pillar of sustainable development**, the scenario identifies the need for UN Development Programme needs to develop a more coherent and coordinated approach to mainstreaming the environment and sustainable development elements within poverty eradication programmes; addressing agriculture and sustainable development, advancing gender equality, including developing an effective gender mainstreaming strategy, addressing the links between human rights and three pillars of sustainable development, and progressing on the important relationship between health and sustainable development.
96. On strengthening the **environment pillar of sustainable development**, the scenario envisages a strengthened role for UNEP's Regional Offices; addressing the specialised agency proposal by building on the Cartagena Package on international environmental governance, addressing the relationship between the MEAs and the broader UN System on sustainable development, and a new role and mandate for the Environmental Management Group.
97. As a key element of **system-wide coherence** the scenario introduces the idea of the Council conducting a triennial assessment of the UN's sustainable development work, in conjunction with similar reviews for the environment, social and economic pillars. The scenario also envisages the strengthening of the environment and economic pillars at the country-level, in particular addressing the environment and sustainable development work of the UN's country and regional operational presence.
98. While several of the ideas proposed in the scenario require further elaboration and consideration, other proposals are within the immediate scope of the current UN reform process and thus actionable by the General Assembly. However to address many of the systemic issues a more detailed assessment of the UN's work in the area of sustainable development is required. As immediate short-term measures, the Panel should consider recommending that the General Assembly and related governing bodies and decision making fora:
  - a. Initiate Mandate Reviews on the CSD, UNEP, and other pillar organisations;
  - b. Initiate a Mandate Assessment of UN Agency programmes on the three pillars of sustainable development; and
  - c. Hold high-level roundtable discussions on the reform of the UN's sustainable development and initiate a detailed reform process as part of the five year anniversary of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

**SECTION III:  
INSTITUTIONAL IMPACT AND/OR FUTURE INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE**

**Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and the Development**

99. **Institutional framework:** A better cooperation and coherence has to be put in place not only among the MEAs but also among all programs and projects that deal with the environment, development and human rights, in order to maximise the available resources and minimising administrative cost. The UN regional commissions have to be strengthened so as to support the discussions and organise regional preparation meetings, such as the Regional Implementation Meetings for CSD. The role of the CSD itself has to be improved so that it can better play its integrative function. An enhanced UNEP will make the environmental dimension of the CSD stronger. Other relevant organisations and agencies dealing with IEG have also to be strengthened, together with the institutions dealing with economic and social affairs, and the institutions working with the integration of environment and development.
100. **Financial mechanisms:** When discussing IEG it is important to consider the reform of the international financial system and link it to the overall goals of sustainable development.
101. **Umbrella structure for MEAs:** Discussion on a centralised umbrella structure for MEAs: The same geographical location of program secretaries such as UNEP and UN-Habitat in Nairobi, Kenya, is an interesting option. The parallel organisation of various Conferences of the Parties may save travel costs and promote synergy in discussions and decision-making. However, with more financial and human resources in the North, there is a risk that centralisation will be dominated by the stronger Northern countries.

**Centro De Estudios Ambientales**

102. Although of course quite difficult, a more streamlined but cohesive structure that tends to duplicate efforts less and coordinate policies more can arise out of a general administrative and policy re – structuring. Therefore, as in all sizeable institutions change is not easy and a propensity to change is small, the impact can be quite positive and sizeable. Not only in the institution itself but in the positive impact that has on equitable and human – oriented sustainable development. And this is after all one of the main aims that the UN system has.

**Local Government International Bureau**

103. **International local voice:** Establish clear policy and programme dialogue with UN Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (UNACLA) and establish full observer status for the UNACLA throughout the UN – not only UN Habitat.
104. **International approach:** Apply the “Guidelines on decentralisation and the strengthening of local authorities” throughout UN programmes – not only UN Habitat.
105. **National coherence:** Establish a single national UN umbrella organisation within each country to bring together the activities of separate UN agencies and programmes in a coherent fashion. This body should engage with local government actors as standard practice through consultation and partnership with national and regional local government associations, as well as individual authorities.

### **Greenpeace International**

- 106. A strengthened UNCTAD.
- 107. Better enforcement and liability mechanisms of global environmental agreements.
- 108. Dispute settlement on sustainable development outside of the WTO.

### **The Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development**

- 109. It is a wrong approach to start top-down to outline a future institutional structure of the central UN institutions. A new structure might be the result of a better coordination on the country level, also taking into account that a strengthened UN on the country level could have the implication of reducing the big UN bureaucracies of the headquarters. Still it is very important not to weaken UN as the most important institution to resist the global power of the rich countries and the institutions they govern.
- 110. To strengthen the environmental work of UN, UNEP should be upgraded to a World Environmental Organisation or a UN Environmental Organisation.
- 111. A reformed UN has to put more focus on women issues and the situation of the younger generation. In addition to integrate women issues into all UN bodies, there is a need to strengthen UNIFEM. To strengthen the UN work with youth, the World Program of Action on Youth should be implemented, and the Youth Section of UN should be given more resources.

### **International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance**

- 112. A new UN decentralised body with a mandate to coordinate a variety of MDG initiatives such as water and sanitation- would include specialised NGO in its directive board and in the coordination of regional and national investments.
- 113. New York based UNDESA should be strengthened in the regions and Social Affairs should become a central core area of all development & humanitarian aid programmes. Otherwise, it has no raison d'être in HQ!
- 114. An evaluation of results of the micro-credit year should illustrate the real commitment of corporate social responsibility and private sector (Global compact is really useful for development investment?)
- 115. The ILO should renew its last century mandate to be inclusive of informal workers and NGOs. It has lost its credibility in the field and has no real impact in local economic development initiatives.
- 116. UNEP HQ in Nairobi and Regional offices should rotate their staff to other regions as long-term staff acquires the vices of inefficient bureaucracy with no real impact and credibility. Project implementation and relations with NGO are poor.
- 117. WTO in Geneva needs structural changes to open wider to NGO interaction and consultations.
- 118. Nairobi UN HQ seems to inspire the same administrative slow routine as UN New York HQ. This is preventing the UN system to show a fresh & dynamic intention for sustainable Development, Human Rights and humanitarian interventions. A growing gap between civil society and the privileged UN system is evident and fundamental changes deserve political attention.

### **International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives**

119. If a sufficient number of local government officials were part of national delegations this would ensure that local governments would not necessarily have to be present as a separate stakeholder group in the CSD. This could also reduce the amount of separate consultations necessary within the proposed “greater UNACLA” process suggested earlier in this submission.

## SECTION IV: FURTHER RESOURCES

### **Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and the Development**

Panel Discussion on UN Reform and the Environment, New York, USA, May 9<sup>th</sup>  
[http://www.unep.org/dpdl/civil\\_society/features/csd\\_newyork2006.asp](http://www.unep.org/dpdl/civil_society/features/csd_newyork2006.asp)

Global Civil Society Forum during MOP3 and COP8 on the Convention on Biological Diversity in Curitiba, Brazil. [www.fboms.org.br](http://www.fboms.org.br)

### **Local Government International Bureau**

The Art Initiative – Support to territorial and thematic networks for human development. UNDP UNESCO, UNIFEM, WHO and UNOPS. <http://www.yorku.ca/ishd/undp/ARTBROCHURE.pdf>

OECD (2004) Lessons learned on Donor Support to decentralisation and local governance  
<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/46/60/30395116.pdf>

UN CDF (2005) Delivering the Goods - Building Local Government Capacity to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals. A Practitioner's Guide from UNCDF Experience in Least Developed Countries, October 2005

UNDP (2005) Toolkit for localising the MDGs. Capacity 2015  
<http://www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Library&page=Document&DocumentID=5669>

UN Habitat Draft guidelines on decentralisation and the strengthening of local authorities  
[www.cities-localgovernments.org/ucfg/upload/template/templatedocs/ENG\\_Annex1\\_Guidelines\\_on\\_Decentralization\\_revised\\_version.pdf](http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/ucfg/upload/template/templatedocs/ENG_Annex1_Guidelines_on_Decentralization_revised_version.pdf)

UK Local Government Alliance for International Development (2004) Decentralisation and poverty reduction: A contribution by the UK Local Government Alliance for International Development to the UN MDG Action Plan, November 2004. [http://www.lgib.gov.uk/lg-alliance/documents/LG\\_decentralisation\\_sub.pdf](http://www.lgib.gov.uk/lg-alliance/documents/LG_decentralisation_sub.pdf)

### **Greenpeace International**

Adelphi Research, Friends of the Earth Europe, Greenpeace International, Is the WTO the only way?  
<http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/international/press/reports/is-the-wto-the-only-way.pdf>

Sustainable Impact Assessment of the Forestry Sector:  
[http://www.sia-trade.org/wto/ForestDraftFinalReport\\_v1\\_2\\_270205.pdf](http://www.sia-trade.org/wto/ForestDraftFinalReport_v1_2_270205.pdf)

Greenpeace International, Trading away our last ancient forests,  
<http://www.greenpeace.org/raw/content/international/press/reports/Tradingawayancientforests.pdf>

### **World Information Transfer**

1998 Technet Consultation of WHO/EPI in Copenhagen, 16-20 March 1998.  
<http://www.uneptie.org/ozonaction/library/pressrel/who.html>

Children in the New Millennium: Environmental Impact on Health— book compiled by UNEP, WHO, UNICEF,  
<http://www.unep.org/ceh/>

Health and Environment Linkages Initiative <http://www.who.int/heli/en/>

Climate Change and Human Health – Risks and Responses” launched at the 9th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Milan, Italy. WHO authored the book together with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the

World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), with the support of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).  
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2003/pr91/en/>

### **Stakeholder Forum**

Dodds, F. *et al.* 2002. Post Johannesburg: The Future of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development; Stakeholder Forum for Our Common Future; internet:  
<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/governance/csda.pdf>

Dodds, F. 2002. Future of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, UNED Forum; internet:  
<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/governance/ReformPaper7BridgingCSD12and13.pdf>

Stakeholder Forum. 2006. Strengthening the Johannesburg Implementation Track; internet:  
<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/CSDAprilReport.pdf>

Stakeholder Forum. 2006. UNEP: Changing Times; internet:  
<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/governance/unepreportfinal.pdf>

Stakeholder Forum. 2005. Preparing for the Future; internet:  
<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/CSDWorkshopFinalReport.pdf>

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<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/governance/ReformPaper4CSDCrisisinGlobalGovernanceReportApril2004.pdf>

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Stakeholder Forum. 2001. Inter-linkages among Multilateral Environmental Agreements; internet:  
<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/governance/mea.pdf>

Stakeholder Forum. 2001. International Environmental Governance: A Briefing Paper; internet:  
<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/publications/reports/IEG-SFpaper.pdf>

Stakeholder Forum. 2001. international Environmental Governance: The Role of UNEP, Report of a workshop on 2nd May 2001, Co-supported by LEAD International, World Federalist Movement, World Humanity Action Trust and UNED Forum. Hosted by the Baha’i International Community; internet:  
<http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/issues/Governance/IEGworkshop.PDF>

**SECTION V:  
CONTACT DETAILS**

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## Annex 1:



### *DISCUSSION PAPER (SUMMARY)*

#### **UN REFORM Integrating Environment and Development by 2015**

This paper<sup>1</sup> examines three areas of UN reform that relate to the environment:

1. Integrating environment in development decision making: this requires the UN to facilitate the operationalization of sustainable development by strengthening the environmental pillar dimension to the level of political weight that is given to the other key issues. The Secretary-General's High Level Panel must take on sustainable development as its primary focus.
2. Strengthening the institutional architecture of the UN's environment-related activities: this requires the creation of a monitoring and review mechanism, and the provision of a feedback system to UN policy and norm making bodies. It also requires greater environmental expertise in the UN's operational activities.
3. Improving coherence within the UN's environmental work: this requires the clustering of the functions and operations of the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) so that synergies are generated, joint work plans are created and implemented, and resources are allocated so that they are put to their most effective uses. UN member states must create incentives for increasing cooperation among MEAs and the scheduling of MEA meetings back-to-back on related issues. The UN environment body also must act as a facilitator by bringing together focal points and expertise in MEAs at the national level.

The UN needs to transform its general practice of using belated and generally ineffective reactive tools to using compelling evidence of damage to anticipate and prevent problems, as well as to integrate solutions into development action. There must be monitoring of progress made in operational activities and the review of progress in the UN's norm and policy making body for the environment to examine results on the ground and provide swift, direct and effective responses to emerging challenges. Such a monitoring and review mechanism should retain decision making power in countries and create an international system that is responsive to country needs and global problems. The information generated through this independent process would be used to set international policies, incentives, standards, and benchmarks and to facilitate capacity-building efforts. It would ensure that countries and donors assess development proposals for social and ecosystem impacts, using the monitoring and review mechanism as a starting point.

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<sup>1</sup> The work of the consortium is made possible with financial support from the Ministry for the Environment and Territory, Italy, the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), United Kingdom and the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway.

The present reform must ensure that the Rio Principles are kept intact and that principle is given a central role in policy, research and implementation.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Integrating Environment into Development Decision Making***

**By 2008**, UN Member States must fully finance and effectively implement UNEP's Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building (making sure UNEP is allowed to develop and strengthen a sound scientific basis). Institutions such as UNEP, UNDP and UNCTAD must provide technical assistance to developing countries in meeting their 2005 World Summit commitment to produce new, MDG-consistent national development strategies.

**By 2010**, Member States must create direct and effective channels of communication between environment-related norm and policy setting and operational activities to monitor environment and development trends and to facilitate implementation of norms and policies on the ground and establish sufficient regulatory incentives, both nationally and internationally, to correct market shortcomings and to recognize and account for environmental services in development policy.

**By 2015**, there must be full integration of sustainable development principles in all UN development policy-making and operational activities. Standards, benchmarks and models that include environmental considerations must ensure implementation throughout UN and IFI policies and implementation.

### ***The Institutional Framework for the UN System's Environment Activities***

**By 2008**, UN Member States must establish a sustainable funding mechanism providing increased, stable and predictable long-term funding to UN bodies dealing with the environment, and expand the work of UN regional offices in facilitating capacity building, technology transfer, information exchange, assessment and monitoring.

**By 2010**, UN Member States and UN country offices must have the capacity to access sufficient expertise from MEAs, and those with environment and development specialisation. UN Member States should create direct channels of communication with minimal layers between the UN environmental norm and policy setting body and operational activities to facilitate implementation, and establish a swift, direct and effective reporting mechanism to review progress in implementation of environmental policies through operational activities

**By 2015**, UN Member States must have in place a UN system for integrating environment and development that is responsive to country needs for achieving sustainable development and includes a function of a monitoring and review mechanism to assist, monitor, review, follow-up and report on progress of the implementation and renewal of UN environmental norms, agreements and policies on sustainable development.

### ***Coherence in the Normative Work in the field of Environment***

**By 2008**, UN Member States could create incentives for increasing cooperation among MEAs and the scheduling of back-to-back MEA meetings on related issues. Any new UN sustainable development system must act as a facilitator by bringing together focal points and expertise in MEAs at the national level.

**By 2010**, UN Member States should ensure: the clustering of MEA Secretariats where there is considerable overlap in expertise and mandate which in turn has hindered implementation; increased coherence among UN entities on cross-cutting issues concerning, among others, trade, and transnational environment-related crime; and the adoption of MEAs in areas where there are presently no international agreements, such as on protecting important biomes including the deep sea and the global commons.

**By 2015**, UN Member States must ensure the creation of a strong norm and policy setting UN body for the environment, which can effectively coordinate the full spectrum of UN environmental normative and policy work and direct its implementation.

## **1. Integrating Environment into Development Decision Making**

There must be an immediate shift in emphasis in UN development work from 'development' to 'sustainable development' and to protecting the delivery of environmental services. This goes beyond a focus on national policy making and implementation. The policies of UN bodies, international financial institutions (IFIs), international trade organs and others must undergo significant appraisals as to whether they address the environmental challenges that the Earth faces today and will face in the near future. Many of these institutions currently contribute to the problems, and this situation cannot continue.

Efforts must be made to encourage full cost accounting of impacts of development on the environment, to develop approaches to adequately measure the sustainability of economic development and to put in place mechanisms that sustain our environment and social and economic security. There should be incentive structures established for institutional personnel to integrate environmental, social, human rights and gender equity aspects into policies and programmes. Existing incentive structures must be changed to reward sustainable development programming, integrate environment strongly into projects and consider the impacts on the poor and on the environment from development assistance. Efforts with a strong emphasis on public education regarding the principles of sustainable development and on public participation are necessary elements for the integration of environment in development decision making. UN policies on public participation, environmental accounting and social equity must be made mandatory and integration of such policies in country can be reported internationally in order to assess uptake.

### **International Financial Institutions (IFIs)**

UN environmental norm and policy making must not be separated from implementation activities that are coordinated through the IFIs. Some IFIs have mechanisms for considering the environmental, social, human rights and gender equity aspects of their policies and programmes, but most of these are largely confined to the periphery of decision-making and programme evaluation and have few impacts on programme implementation. IFIs must explore mechanisms with the essential elements of identifying the social and environmental consequences of current policies and practice, and adopting necessary remedies and amending policy and practice in the light of these experiences. IFIs should integrate sustainable development criteria into core economic models by strengthening upstream social and environmental impact assessments of both policy-based and project lending and incorporating the findings in programme implementation. They must also put in place incentive structures for institutional staff to integrate environmental, social, human rights and gender equity aspects into policies and programmes. The performance of IFIs on these measures must be subject to UN scrutiny.

### **Trade**

In terms of international trade, the World Trade Organization (WTO) is increasingly acting as a global governance organisation, and has extended its work programme to new areas of competence, thereby frustrating bodies that possess more appropriate expertise, including some MEAs. The development and enforcement of existing and new environmental legislation relating to MEAs should not be hindered by subordinating these policies to free trade and competition rules. It is critical that legislation to ensure sustainable development is not overruled by trade experts or international trade panels working in isolation from other concerns. Governments must grant the UN environment body and MEAs with trade-related provisions, objectives, or obligations, observer status and must make it clear that the WTO does not have a mandate to set rules or criteria that might in any way define or restrict the use or national implementation of any trade measures agreed to in MEAs. Ultimately, it should fall to an independent forum outside the WTO to examine the WTO-MEA relationship, as part of a coherent approach to addressing global challenges. The WTO agreements contain review clauses that should be used to analyse whether existing rules support and promote the development of sustainable societies, and conform with existing international law and obligations. National independent sustainability impact assessments are crucial in this regard.

The Secretary-General's High Level Panel on System Wide Coherence must not only address sustainable development; it must make it the overarching focus of the Panel's report. In turn, the General Assembly in

its consultations on international environmental governance must agree to mechanisms that will greatly strengthen UN environment-related policy and norm setting and implementation so that it can address the depth of the crisis that we face and level out the political strengths of the three pillars of sustainable development.

## **2. The Institutional Framework for the UN System's Environment Activities**

Institutional change is immensely difficult and is not to be undertaken lightly - but it is essential. UNEP has made commendable efforts in integrating environment and development; however, a stronger, better financed, and more operationally focused UN system for integrating environment and development and ensuring environmental sustainability is needed. Whether such a body is a specialized agency or a UN sustainable development programme or other system, a key requirement is that it has stable, predictable and sustainable funding at a considerably greater level than UNEP currently receives. It must also be sufficiently linked to and integrated with development work so that while the importance of addressing environmental problems is raised, the links between environment, economic development and social development are not lost.

The UN Secretary General's 'In Larger Freedom' report states that 'environmental activities at the country level should benefit from improved synergies, on both normative and operational aspects, between United Nations agencies, making optimal use of their comparative advantages'. In other words, the institutional architecture must include strong links between normative and operational activities in the environment and development fields.

Operational activities must be coordinated and efficient at the country level; but, they must also be able to make effective use of necessary expertise, including direct inputs and technical advice from a norm and policy focused UN environment body. At the country level there should be strong environment expertise within UN country offices to assist in the identification, assessment, mainstreaming and implementation of environment issues in development and poverty reduction activities. These activities should be financed through innovative financing mechanisms, including international levies on international activities, such as high-seas fishing or airplane flights that harm the global commons. Moreover, the challenges of globalization require a network of UN institutions that provides such responses through coordinated decision-making hierarchies and processes that have the fewest number of decision-making layers in order for them to provide fast, targeted and effective assistance. As noted above, a structure at the country level with immediate and direct links to expertise on environment issues is mandatory.

The UN needs to transform its general practice of using belated and generally ineffective reactive tools to using compelling evidence of damage to anticipate and prevent problems and integrate solutions into development action. There must be monitoring of progress made in operational activities and the review of progress in the UN's norm and policy making body for the environment to examine results on the ground and provide swift, direct and effective responses to emerging challenges. Such a monitoring and review mechanism would retain decision making power in countries and create an international system that is responsive to country needs and global problems. The information generated through this independent process would be used to set international policies, incentives, standards, and benchmarks and to facilitate capacity-building efforts. It would ensure that countries and donors assess development proposals for social and ecosystem impacts, using the monitoring and review mechanism as a starting point.

Any UN system responsible for integrating environment and development should review, assess and monitor progress in achieving environment and development goals at the national level, regional level and within international bodies including the IFIs and UN institutions. It would inform the international community of any role that a particular body is playing in worsening social and environmental conditions. It would use a monitoring and review mechanism and provide feedback to the bodies involved as well as to the lead UN development and environment bodies and the UN Secretary-General, each of which would then be required to publicly report on why benchmarks were not met and describe efforts (such as

capacity building, information giving, funding or resource assistance) that are being taken to address deficiencies. Information from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment could be used as a basis for setting benchmarks for development from an ecoregion perspective in order to ensure new development proposals were sustainable.

### **3. Coherence in the Normative Work in the field of Environment**

In a large part, the basis for doing what has to be done already exists. There are hundreds of MEAs agreeing on frameworks, language, targets, timetables and benchmarks; however, coherence among the bodies that run these instruments is seriously lacking. Duplicative processes and actions that detract resources away from solving environmental problems must be avoided, while substantive work must not be simplified to the degree that it is made ineffective. Some coherence building activities have started, for example MoUs between UNEP and UNDP, the adoption of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and the creation of a single head of the Rotterdam Convention on Prior Informed Consent and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. This latter example of the clustering of MEAs by combining the work of bodies according to their comparative advantages is an important means to produce stronger results than those achieved through small, fragmented and competing bodies.

#### **Civil society stakeholders**

Wider input into the reform process should be sought from civil society including NGOs and scientists from various regions, both to ensure a wider ownership from “we, the peoples” as well as bringing the reform process in tune with the demands of the peoples living in this century. Sufficient time should be allotted to the reform process, even if this means extending the mandate of the panel.

A proper, functional and permanent position for civil society, including NGOs must be found within a reformed system, and consideration of the special concerns of civil society must be ensured, including accountability, participation and transparency. Moreover, concerns expressed by particular sectors of society, such as Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, workers, should be given special attention.

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## **Annex 2:**

### **High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence Submission made by Business & Industry represented by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)**

#### **Consultations to be held in Geneva on 2 July 2006 on Topic IV**

### **Introduction**

A strong, efficient and effective United Nations (UN) is in the interest of business, because business cannot succeed in societies that fail. The ongoing process of UN reform should recognize business' contribution to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and other governmental commitments by building wealth, generating entrepreneurship, creating employment and paying taxes.

Since 1946, business has engaged in a broad range of activities with the UN and has been supportively involved in almost every part of the UN system. Business understands the critical importance of the UN to global development, economic growth, human rights and environmental protection and attaches the highest importance to preserving and improving interaction with the UN. Progress in these areas is of direct benefit to the business community and its employees, investors, customers and other stakeholders.

Business leaders and senior UN officials headed by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan met in New York in 1998 to review the scope for closer cooperation between the UN and the private sector in two main areas: establishing global rules for global markets, and raising the productive potential of the least developed countries by building up the private sector and encouraging inward private investment. The ICC and the WBCSD have also worked with UNDP, UNEP, UNCTAD, the Global Compact and various UN bodies, to promote the positive role of business in society and to find solutions to the world's key sustainable development challenges. Finally ICC and the WBCSD are organizing partners of the Business & Industry Major Group at the UNCTAD, and have cooperated in Business Action initiatives on Sustainable Development, Water and Energy.

To attain the Millennium Development Goals, Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and other sustainable development objectives, civil society organizations, including the business community, need to be actively engaged. Across the board, companies of all sectors, sizes and nationalities are critical implementation partners in a wide range of UN endeavours and are making real contributions. The diversity of the business community – in terms of nationality, sector, size, expertise, experience and viewpoint – is a resource of innovation for the UN. Business organizations should be broadly invited to engage in UN consultations and initiatives in order to make that “talent pool” available in support of successful and effective outcomes in the UN's work.

### **Mainstreaming Sustainable Development at the UN**

A balanced approach to economic, social and environmental issues is more important than ever in light of the Millennium Declaration, Monterrey Consensus and WSSD - all ambitious multi-disciplinary efforts to tackle poverty and promote sustainable development.

The UN and its relevant agencies and programmes are the recognized global institutions for promoting human rights and raising environmental and labour standards – the core values advocated by the UN Secretary-General in his Global Compact with business. History has shown that improvements in human rights and in labour and environmental standards are more readily attainable in conditions of rising prosperity, produced by the interaction of the market economy and good governance.

Strong commitment to open markets and the effective treatment of these issues are mutually reinforcing and should go hand in hand. Environmental and trade disciplines need not clash; rather they should each be formulated and implemented with due awareness of their respective rules and procedures.

World business recognizes the need for the UN to have sufficient resources and authority to tackle the complex and often inter-related global problems of today, while urging further streamlining as part of UN institutional reforms to improve efficiency, reduce overlaps and duplication of tasks, and increase the UN's effectiveness in coordinating international activities. The UN should ensure that greater coordination of UN programmes and activities takes place at the national level and help governments implementing strong national development agendas. UN reform should also emphasize efforts to identify and inform cost effective, science- and risk-based policies to address agreed priorities.

### **Role of Business in Civil Society and Engagement of Stakeholders**

As recognized by the UNGA, WSSD, Agenda 21 and the Millennium Declaration, business is a fundamental and unique component of society, and should have access and engagement in UN discussions and consultations, commensurate with its role in society, expertise, resources and inter-disciplinary knowledge and impact. For business to make substantive contributions in UN discussions and consultations, it must be allowed to have an early seat at the table.

Business welcomes the growing openness of UN processes and efforts made to include business expertise and views. The UN must recognize and give priority to stakeholders that bring expertise, resources and capacity to address issues and make progress. We are concerned that there is a proliferation of multistakeholder dialogues and forums that could crowd out substantive interactions and deplete limited institutional resources. Indiscriminately including more groups, or putting all groups on an equal footing, regardless of their size and constituency, will likely lead to important views being curtailed or lost altogether.

Business is increasingly engaged with the UN at local level and encourages the UN to more fully recognize and seize on business' local expertise and knowledge to promote sustainable development for all.

### **Deployment of UN expertise and best practice for Implementation**

In parallel to the multilateral institutions and intergovernmental cooperation to address transboundary and global issues, UN reform should strengthen national resources and capacity building for implementation, taking into account the necessary flexibility needed to reflect different country circumstances and priorities. Business operates well under sound and predictable long-term enabling frameworks and the UN should promote such frameworks through transparency, impartiality and arbitration. The UN should also continue its efforts to encourage concepts of accountability, good governance, transparent tendering and adequate incentives at country-level. It should assist governments to set local strategies and economic, environmental and poverty reduction priorities, coherent with agreed international objectives. Finally it should encourage voluntary approaches and partnerships as helpful supplements to governmental commitments and actions.

### **The Role of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD)**

As organizing partners of the Business & Industry Major Group at the CSD, ICC and the WBCSD believe that, in order to make progress, the Commission must be strengthened, with clear priorities, long-term frameworks and accountability to deliver results. The CSD must obtain the mandate and resources within the UN to ensure that its policy recommendations are fully integrated into other UN programmes and activities and in individual national policies. It should also strike a fair balance between the three pillars of sustainable development and hence be supported not only by environmental ministers, but also those concerned with finance, habitat and development cooperation.

A committed Chair and Bureau are required to ensure that the outcomes are focused and pragmatic. Calls for input of the Bureau to all stakeholders on the currently discussed sustainable development topics would increase the understanding of the participants of the issues, barriers and problems leading to better informed discussions. The majority of discussions should be held in small working groups or task forces, which report their findings back to the Bureau or plenary rather than having large sessions with the reading of various statements. Examples of these practices are the meetings of the UNFCCC. Business needs to be engaged in the sessions including those associated with investment, access and technologies. A transparent and consultative process with the major group organizing partners needs to be undertaken in the selection of speakers/panellists.

### **Efficiency and Integration**

Business welcomes simplification of entry points into the UN and strong coordinating units at the UN (for ex on water), greater integration of UN standard-setting and operational activities and coherence among UN entities, Bretton Woods institutions other intergovernmental bodies including the various MEA secretariats. We believe that development and environment considerations should be more fully integrated in the UN's work, particularly on matters relating to economics and commercial activity.

Using resources more efficiently and bringing new financing into UN activities are both important. Business has consistently emphasized the importance of mobilization of domestic resources and encouragement of local entrepreneurship; foreign direct investment and other private capital flows; good governance; overseas development assistance; and bringing the informal economy into the formal economy – UN reform should strive to enable and facilitate these important financing sources working in concert.

We are concerned about the overlap between this process and that arising from para 169 of the World Summit Outcome Document. Few organizations have the resources to seriously tackle two sets of consultations at the same time and on similar topics and it would be helpful if the consultations, which take place July 2, would be integrated with the para 169 consultations.

### **Conclusion**

The contribution of the business community to the economic, social and environment aspects of sustainable development is heavily dependent on the existence of framework conditions that encourage trade, investment and enterprise, respects human dignity and individual freedom, protects property rights and does not tolerate corruption. UN reform should improve the organization's effectiveness in achieving these objectives.

### **Annex 3: IUCN-World Conservation Union**

#### **Comprehensive UN Environment Reform: Recommendations for the High Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence and the UNGA Consultations on Environment Informal consultations of the plenary on environment June 27, 2006**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Both the High Level Panel on System Wide Coherence and the UN General Assembly consultations on environment are exploring ways to improve the operational and normative performance of the international environmental governance system. IUCN offers a framework of six principal functions of international environmental governance, with specific recommendations to enhance each function.

##### **Mainstreaming:**

- Mainstream environmental sustainability into all national poverty reduction and development strategies and donor frameworks.
- Develop comprehensive, UN-system wide social and environmental safeguard and mainstreaming policies to apply to all UN operational agencies.

##### **Coordination:**

- Strengthen the coordination role of UNEP as the lead agency on the environment in the UN system through a more focused and longer term plan of action.
- Restructure the UN's inter-agency coordination mechanisms to better integrate environment and development by merging the Environmental Management Group and the UN Development Group.
- Enhance coordination between the UN bodies and environmental treaties around specific issues or clusters, following the successful experience with chemicals.
- Ensure effective technical support on the field of environment to UN operations, rather than establish UNEP operational capacity.

##### **Science:**

- Strengthen UNEP's role as a convener and catalyst of authoritative knowledge and science on environmental issues at global level.

##### **Capacity:**

- Implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building with adequate resources and with the coordinated participation of relevant UN agencies.

##### **Finance:**

- Enhance the availability and effectiveness of funding for environmental activities throughout the UN system.
- Further strengthen existing development assistance for environmental funding.

##### **Policy:**

- Integrate the Commission on Sustainable Development into ECOSOC's deliberations on development and the follow up to UN Conferences and Summits.
- Strengthen the UNEP Governing Council / Global Ministerial Environment Forum as the unique venue for environment ministers to meet and provide guidance.
- Facilitate streamlining of MEA reporting requirements and scientific assessment needs.
- Rationalize the meetings of MEAs and subsidiary bodies.

## INTRODUCTION

The UN is currently undertaking two inter-related reform processes that are examining the effectiveness and efficiency of international environmental governance. These are the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence (SWC) and the UN General Assembly's (UNGA) consultations on environment. Both processes find their origins in paragraph 169 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. The former process is looking at ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN operational activities in the humanitarian, development and environmental fields. The panel also includes two specific items related to the environment in its terms of reference: a) in the normative area, a full assessment of how the UN can best provide more comprehensive and coherent management and monitoring of MEAs (including the development of stronger scientific and analytical capacity in monitoring, assessing and reporting on environmental trends and b) the need to better integration of the environmental perspective with the broad principle of sustainable development in UN country-level activities, in particular capacity building and technology support. The latter process is looking specifically at the processes and structures within the environmental field. From a sustainable development perspective, these processes can be seen as complimentary – one looking at how to strengthen the environmental pillar of sustainable development and the other looking at how to improve the operational linkages between the three pillars. Thus, the two processes are closely linked and necessarily feed off one another. For that reason, IUCN is presenting a single position paper which addresses both processes in order to present a comprehensive and coherent set of recommendations.

IUCN's premise is that the ultimate goal of the international environmental governance (IEG) system should be to ensure that the environmental goods and services upon which human wellbeing and development depend are provided in a sustainable and equitable manner. The standard of measure of the utility of any set of proposed reforms and resulting arrangements should thus be the extent to which they succeed in mainstreaming environmental sustainability throughout their own operations and, most importantly, throughout those of other institutions. This premise is derived from the UN General Assembly decision declaring sustainable development to be part of the overarching framework of the UN's activities. The biggest conceptual challenge that both processes face, then, is how to deal with the issue of environmental mainstreaming. In the case of the Panel, there is a danger of marginalizing environmental issues by focusing too narrowly on development and humanitarian issues and leaving environmental issues solely to the UNGA process. In the spirit of Rio, it is important to avoid seeing environment and development as a discordant relationship, but rather to stress the mutually reinforcing role of the two in achieving sustainable development. Also, IEG should not be constrained to the UNEP context but consider ways to improve IEG beyond the current institutions of the system. Both processes need to focus on the bigger picture of how to mainstream sustainability across other sectors. It is important in this context, to address the relationship with the Bretton Woods Institutions in the UNGA process and to expand the consideration of these institutions in the SWC process, beyond the development discussions. Both processes need to guard against any potential separation of environment and development issues and to address the very real potential that these processes offer to more fully mainstream sustainable development across all UN operational activities and all UN agencies and to improve coherence within and outside of the IEG regime.

It is also essential that these processes draw on the experience of civil society group both in terms of their thinking about ways to enhance the IEG system but also in terms of their role as part of the system. The two processes are thus encouraged to reach out to civil society organizations more systematically.

In order to realize the full potential of these two processes to improve the performance of the international environmental governance system, IUCN offers a framework of six principal

functions of international environmental governance with recommendations to enhance each function. From IUCN's perspective, the principal functions of the IEG system are:

- **MAINSTREAMING:** Mainstream environmental sustainability across the UN operational agencies and outside of environmental institutions.
- **COORDINATION:** Promote coordination of UN actors and agencies within the environmental regime including with Multilateral Environmental Agreement (MEAs).
- **SCIENCE:** Monitor environmental conditions and trends and making available synthesized and authoritative scientific knowledge for better decision making and policy formulation.
- **CAPACITY:** Build capacity in developing countries for the implementation of international commitments for environment and sustainable development.
- **FINANCE:** Mobilize new financial resources for sustainable development, including from the private sector.
- **POLICY:** Set environmental agendas and provide for environmental norm development and enhanced compliance.

### **1. MAINSTREAMING: Mainstream environmental sustainability across the UN operational agencies and outside of environmental institutions.**

The record of mainstreaming environmental sustainability with the UN system is mixed at best. At the normative level, the UN Conference on Environment and Development established a model of sustainable development that was meant to ensure that all policies would seek to recognize, respect and balance social, environmental and economic benefits and costs. However, this paradigm has not been applied in intergovernmental and national policies and actions, including in the UN system. Instead, there are indications that the discourse has evolved to essentially understand the term “sustainable development” to be synonymous with the term “environment” and to see it as a marginal issue within a larger development context. The clearest indication of this is the fact that the Millennium Development Goals of 2000, the UN Conference on Financing for Development and the “development round” of the WTO negotiations launched at Doha are about “development” and not “sustainable development”, despite the fact that several of these events took place within months of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This conceptual confusion has also transpired in initial consultations of the High Level Panel with the UN General Assembly.

At the operational level, the track record of the UN agencies is also mixed and outside of the UN system, the track record is less encouraging. Analyses of poverty reduction strategies consistently demonstrate a lack of environmental mainstreaming, even in countries where the natural resource sector is a critical source of livelihoods for the extremely poor or where it plays a significant role in the overall macro economy. Bilateral funding has been increasingly directed to poverty alleviation but without due consideration of the contributions that investments in the environmental field have on sustainable livelihoods. The work of the Poverty-Environment Partnership is a notable exception in this regard. Against this backdrop, far more effort is needed within the UN system to ensure that environmental sustainability is indeed mainstreamed across the full range of UN operational agencies. Providing the capacity and expertise to facilitate this kind of mainstreaming should be a principal function of UN agency for the environment. This does not mean, however, that a strong operational role is required. Rather, it means that the environmental institution needs to be able to add value to the work of other operational agencies such that they are able to internalize environmental considerations into their core business. IUCN recommends:

- *Mainstream environmental sustainability into all national poverty reduction and development strategies and donor frameworks, through technical advice and capacity support from the environmental agency of the UN to other organizations involved in the development and implementation of these strategies.*

- *Develop comprehensive, UN-system wide social and environmental safeguard and mainstreaming policies to apply to all UN operational agencies.* Multilateral development banks use safeguard policies to ensure that their operations “do no harm” to livelihoods and to the environment. Best practice among these institutions now also includes a set of proactive mainstreaming policies which are designed to ensure that even their non-environmental operations “do good” for livelihoods and the environment. This framework provides a model to integrate environmental activities across the UN system. Special consideration needs to be given to the need to ensure that these measures do not constraint, but rather support, sustainable development of developing countries.

## **2. COORDINATION: Promote coordination of UN actors and agencies within the environmental regime including with MEAs.**

Promoting coordination among the variety of UN agencies that address environment issues, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions, is notoriously difficult. Despite the fact that this mandate was one of UNEP’s *raison d’être* when it was established in 1972, it has had a difficult time keeping up with the proliferation of multilateral environmental agreement and of institutions taking on environmental roles. In a sense, the system is a victim of the successes that have taken place in environmental treaty development and the expansion of environmental issues and linkages over the last 35 years. Indeed, international environmental law has been one of the most rapidly expanding and innovative areas of international law over the last few decades, so the basic architecture that was designed in the early 1970s needs to be updated to respond to the current context.

Besides the institutional arrangements, another area of continual discussion for coherence and consistency is the relationship among the various Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and between them and UNEP. Hundreds of multilateral agreements touch on environmental issues, many of them negotiated since the establishment of UNEP. The proliferation of MEAs, some up which are administratively under UNEP’s umbrella, many of which are not, has resulted in fragmentation and incoherence in the IEG system. The issue now is how to more closely align these various regimes in order to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. The burden on countries to participate in, monitor, report on, and implement the commitments of MEA can be staggering.

Proposals to consolidate treaties within an overarching legal framework have legal and political limitations. Instead, the IEG system should focus on the operational aspects of the conventions and look for opportunities where synergies can be found. There are promising recent examples, in the form of joint work programmes and joint strategic plans (e.g. the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management - SAICM) as well as the dual appointment of heads of related secretariats (e.g. Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, again both related to chemicals), joint development of reporting and assessment processes (e.g. on forests under the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, led by FAO and the creation of platforms for coordination such as in the case of ocean’s governance with the UN open-ended Informal Consultative Process ( UNICPOLOS)). These functional “clustering” processes, which focus on finding synergies at the programmatic and operational levels rather than at the level of legal commitments, have promise and should be further explored, with due consideration of transactions costs involved. IUCN recommends:

- *Strengthen the coordination role of UNEP as the lead agency on the environment in the UN system through a more focused and longer term plan of action.* UNEP also needs an adequate and predictable funding base. In the short term, governments should increase the use of the voluntary indicative scale of contributions and voluntary states should lengthen the period of time for their contributions.

- *Restructure the UN's inter-agency coordination mechanisms to better integrate environment and development.* To promote better system-wide coordination and streamline coordination mechanisms, the Environmental Management Group (EMG) and the UN Development Group (UNDG) should be merged into a single coordination body, which could be known as the UN Sustainable Development Group, and which could be co-chaired by the UNDP Administrator and the UNEP Executive Director.
- *Enhance coordination between the UN bodies and environmental treaties around specific issues or clusters, following the successful experience with chemicals.* Issue-based clusters (for example, around biodiversity, chemicals, and marine sectors) should develop coordinated strategies and programmes of work. More synergistic operations could also be envisaged including co-location of the secretariats and dual appointment of heads of Secretariats as has recently been done with the Stockholm and Rotterdam conventions.
- *Ensure effective technical support on the field of environment to UN operations, rather than establish UNEP operational capacity.* We recommend that UNEP further develop its capacity at regional level in order to mainstream environment into UN country programmes, including through technical support to and partnerships with other UN operational agencies at the regional and country levels and presence of environmental expertise in country teams.

### **3. SCIENCE: Monitor environmental conditions and trends and make available synthesized and authoritative scientific knowledge for better decision making and policy formulation.**

Credible environmental policy making rests on credible knowledge. Scientific monitoring, assessment and reporting functions have been part of UNEP's core mandate since its creation. UNEP itself participates or co-convenes the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Ozone Assessment Panels, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, the Global Environmental Outlook report and the World Resources Report, as well as managing the World Conservation Monitoring Centre. Improving the scientific information base has been readily identified in several previous processes looking at IEG, most recently the Cartagena process. Moving forward from what has gone before requires the IEG system to clarify what type of information is needed so that the various scientific assessment processes can respond with policy-relevant information. The information needs to be relevant and user-friendly for policy-makers, and its dissemination needs to be linked to a policy process that can effectively respond to it. The ozone and climate change assessment processes, as well as the monitoring network for air pollution in Europe, are excellent models. A good departure point for further development would be a clear articulation of what it would mean to achieve MDG7 on environmental sustainability, how to measure progress, and what policy options are available to get there. An effective and strategic GMEF has a clear role to play in this regard. It is also necessary to strengthen the capacity of the environmental agency of the UN in this regard

- *Strengthen UNEP's role as a convener and catalyst of authoritative knowledge and science on environmental issues at global level.* We recommend that this function be strengthened in the following areas: regular integrated assessments of status and trends on the basis of GEO and drawing on the experience of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment; development of frameworks and indicators to measure progress, including in the context of the Millennium Development Goals; outreach to the broader scientific community to get up-to-date comprehensive data (e.g. in the case of biodiversity some of the best information on endangered species and protected areas is held by non-state actors such as IUCN); capacity building in monitoring and assessment in the context of the Bali plan; and enhanced cooperation among agreements and bodies with assessment functions in the issue-based clusters mentioned above (e.g. the Global Marine Assessment process).

#### **4. CAPACITY: Build capacity in developing countries for the implementation of international commitments for environment and sustainable development.**

An effective IEG system requires that all countries can implement international commitments in the context of their national conditions and priorities. It is clear that this requires effective support from the system to developing countries. The Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building provides a comprehensive framework that needs to be implemented as a matter of urgency. It is important to reflect on how this support is to be provided in an effective way, building on the comparative advantages of the different UN institutions while avoiding duplications. The environmental agency of the UN does not necessarily need to be present in all countries and could rather focus on facilitating environmental capacity development within UN operational agencies with field presence, especially the UN Development Program (UNDP), consistent with a mainstreaming approach and with a restructured UN Resident Coordinator system. There is also a major role for the environmental agency to play in capacity development at the regional level, especially in the context of existing regional and sub-regional bodies, where UNEP's convening power, networking capacity and information sharing role is a major asset. This could also contribute to supporting regional agreements and processes which are critical in the IEG system. IUCN recommends:

- *Implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building with adequate resources and with the coordinated participation of relevant UN agencies.* Investment and support is urgently needed to facilitate compliance and implementation of international commitments at country level. The Bali plan provides an agreed and comprehensive framework that could catalyze under a coordinated approach the efforts of the various UN organizations engaged in capacity building on the environmental field. Its implementation would require the reinforcement of UNEP's regional offices and technical advice to and partnerships with agencies with presence in the field, such as UNDP.

#### **5. FINANCE: Mobilize new financial resources for sustainable development, including from the private sector.**

A rough assessment of OECD data suggests that from 1-3% annually of ODA since Rio has gone specifically for environment and natural resource management. At the moment, the overall ODA window is increasing, but since most of the increase is driven by debt write-offs and reconstruction in post-conflict situations, the percentage of ODA for the environment is actually decreasing. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has just had its fourth replenishment at a level of roughly \$3 billion, a 10% decrease in real terms relative to the previous replenishment. As the financial mechanism for select MEAs, even a full replenishment would still be woefully inadequate to meet the needs of the global environment. The task for the IEG regime, and the institutions that comprise it, is to continue to make the case that short term development gains will be undermined by long term environmental degradation and that only development that is sustainable will be effective.

Of course, ODA flows are not the only source of finance for the global environment. A variety of private sector mechanisms are developing which hold promise, such as debt or nature swaps, certification, payment for ecosystem services, the flexible mechanisms from Kyoto, etc. A small percentage of capital market investments in OECD countries, particularly from institutional investors, are screened by some kind of social and environmental criteria, but still very little in the overall scheme of private sector transactions for trade or investment. IUCN recommends:

- *Enhance the availability and effectiveness of funding for environmental activities throughout the UN system, in accordance with countries' needs and the guidance provided in international commitments such as the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the decisions of the governing bodies of MEAs.*

- *Further strengthen existing official aid channels for environmental funding.* Given the state of the world's environment, the current replenishment of the Global Environment Facility appears to be heading for a ten percent cut in real terms relative to previous replenishment. Far greater official funds are needed through the full range of official channels, including special funds like the GEF and the Montreal Protocol Fund, bilateral agencies' programmes, and lending from multilateral institutions.

## **6. POLICY: Set environmental agendas and provide for environmental norm development and enhanced compliance.**

A final function of the international environmental governance system is to provide space for policy dialogue to enable environmental policy agenda setting and enhance national level implementation of international commitments. Each Conference of Parties (CoP) to each MEA and governing body of concerned specialized agencies provide such a forum within its specific treaty domain. UNEP's Governing Council, functioning as a Global Ministers of Environment Forum (GMEF), provides a more universal forum which could be the exclusive place where meet to review the whole IEG system as well as to develop those areas of IEG where UNEP has a unique value added, such as in the provision of scientific knowledge and assessments. To differentiate the functions of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), the latter could therefore be the place where environment ministers could conduct inter-ministerial dialogues in order to promote sustainable development and better mainstream environment across other sectors and institutions. To that end, the CSD could be rolled into an expanded and reformed ECOSOC session, whereby ECOSOC would become the "one stop shop" for policy discourse on sustainable development encompassing all three pillars – social, environment and economic. Further refinement is possible among the policy development, implementation and compliance procedures of the MEAs as well, to the extent that cooperation is facilitated through an issues-based clustering approach. IUCN recommends:

- *Integrate Sustainable Development into ECOSOC's deliberations on development and the follow up to UN Conferences and Summits.* In the long term, the CSD could be merged into a segment of a reformed ECOSOC, with the high-level segment being a venue for environment, development and finance ministers to meet and dialogue. This would provide opportunities to engage other institutions, particularly the Bretton Woods institutions, in discussions on environmental sustainability.
- *Strengthen the UNEP Governing Council / Global Ministerial Environment Forum as the unique venue for environment ministers to meet amongst themselves to set a more coherent environment agenda, define norms, review compliance with multilateral environmental agreements, and explore ways to cluster and synergize MEAs.*
- *Facilitate streamlining of MEA reporting requirements and scientific assessment needs and make them implementation focused.* We recommend that reporting be harmonized under the work of the issue-based clusters mentioned above, and that MEAs be invited to report on their efforts for streamlining to the GC/GMEF to share lessons and best practice.
- *Rationalize the meetings of MEAs and subsidiary bodies* by identifying opportunities to organize back-to-back meetings among treaties under an issue-based cluster while simultaneously reducing the length of individual meetings.

## Annexe 4:

### INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU)

#### UN High-level Panel on UN System-Wide Coherence

In the areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Environment

Consultation with Civil Society Organisations

Geneva, 2 July, 2006

1. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) welcomes the opportunity to provide its views for improving and revitalising UN system-wide coherence as it relates to the themes of **sustainable development, human rights and gender**, as well as to strengthening of ECOSOC. It is imperative that this process serves to reinforce the UN as a universal multilateral framework for promoting democratic decision-making with respect to these themes, and to this end, civil society organisations, including trade unions, can contribute invaluable energy, expertise and direction.

#### Topic I – Improving UN system-wide coherence: opportunities and challenges

2. There must be clarity that the overall objective in seeking coherence is to fulfil UN commitments to integrate the three pillars of sustainable development whilst streamlining effectiveness of implementation across a number of themes. Coherence must begin at the national level and energised, active civil society organisations, including strong worker organisations, are a key to achieving this goal.

3. Groundwork for system-wide coherence at the United Nations has already been provided by a number of meetings, foremost amongst which was the 2005 UN World Summit 14–16 September 2005 which pointed the way to integrated action in such key areas as decent work, health care, human rights, democracy and rule of law.

4. One route to a coherent approach by the UN to development lies in strengthening ties with the *International Labour Organisation (ILO)*, the competent agency in the UN family with primary responsibility for social issues, and in particular, for engaging workplace actors in decision-making with governments. In this regard, account should be taken of the findings of the *World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation* and the work of the ILO linked to the activities of the UNDP, UNICEF and other bodies that address social issues.

5. The United Nations must renew its commitment to the primacy of standard-setting and enforcement at the national level as a means of implementing policies and measures. The role of voluntary measures must be placed within a standard-setting framework and current trends at the UN to promote voluntary approaches, linked to concrete application of authoritative instruments and measures to oversee and evaluate them. International standards established by the ILO and the OECD must be promoted as the key to coherence in this regard, and must form the basis for national rules for all issues subject to this *Panel's* review. Moreover current programmes to promote the promotion and ratification of UN Instruments through technical cooperation and financial assistance need to be given higher priority.

6. Since the UN's influence for directing change in a coherent manner is derived through the ratification by its members of its Conventions, instruments and measures, international processes and institutions, including international financial flows, aid and other global funds or investment schemes should serve to promote respect for observance of these measures.

Regional development banks, bilateral aid and the activities of the international economic institutions must assist to promote these purposes in a direct fashion, and with direct implications for agencies such as the international financial institutions.

7. Given the increasingly important role of international trade, more direct linkage between UN agencies and the activities of the WTO has become imperative. Its policies must be consistent with the MDG's and broader development goals, particularly as its actions have an impact on vital human services.

8. The various causes of current incoherencies between governmental actions in different UN fora must be analysed and addressed separately, with particular attention to the role of national governments which project their own lack of coherence at the international level. Examples of such incoherencies abound, with governments at certain UN meetings apparently abandoning agreements they have adopted in other fora. One solution to national incoherence lies in enhanced engagement of relevant actors and oversight at the national level, particularly with the involvement of Major Groups in *National Sustainable Development Strategies* (NSDS), linked to poverty reduction. National governments should be encouraged to set up national frameworks for sustainable development, all of which contribute to a single process (see Topic IV discussion) as a platform for improving coherence in international decision-making, as well as with domestic implementation.

9. Structural and policy issues in the UN itself may contribute to such lack of coherence. Streamlining and placing a higher priority on the target-setting, monitoring and reporting obligations of governments could be a first step toward addressing this problem, as it would serve to identify duplication, inconsistencies and contradictions. Policy development within these settings must inter-relate with such processes; for example, reporting on public health indicators by a government to the CSD should be consistent with its reports to the WHO or UNEP on similar issues. Similarly, ILO compliance reporting on chemicals should be consistent for both UNEP or FAO requirements, and should, moreover, serve to provide measurable criteria for policy debates and decisions.

10. A key challenge to a coherent role for the UN at the country level is to link implementation of international and national sustainable development goals with the activities at the local level, as linked to local production and consumption patterns. There can be no coherence without concrete linkage to the workplace, the world of work and the joint involvement in implementing change by workers and their employers, through joint target-setting, monitoring and reporting. As such, the focus of this Review must be on both substantive and process issues. Workplaces must not only be recognised as prime areas of development, with the ideal of decent work incorporated in all development discussions; as well, workers and their representative organisations have to be involved in policy-making and implementation.

11. Strengthening of connections to the world of work must serve as a guiding principle for a coherent approach to both sustainable development and to the development of more effective coherence at the UN itself. Workplace approaches to environmental protection, for example, can improve the use of resources, deal with environmental pollution and improve the quality of life for communities, by linking occupational and public health. They can also play a significant role in addressing social distributional issues, since the world of work brings into scope the promotion of *Decent Work*<sup>2</sup>, as the key to meeting MDG and poverty goals. Strengthening the capacity of

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<sup>2</sup> **Decent work is essential.** Decent work is defined by rights, employment, social protection and social dialogue. The 2005 UN World Summit strongly endorsed (para. 47) the promotion of decent work by all governments. The 2003 Report to the International Labour Conference, "*Working Out of Poverty*", concluded that decent work is both an end in itself, and a means to achieving the goal of poverty reduction.

workers to contribute through their representative organisations remains a basic imperative, especially with respect to the implementation of MEA's and other instruments relating to sustainable development, including environmental protection and social standards. In this regard, the special role of the ILO as the only UN body engaged in formal tripartite (government, employers and trade unions) decision-making must be recognised and strengthened. This *Panel* should constitute a significant step in placing decent work for all at the centre of global governance, as a universal goal throughout the UN system, including the IMF and the World Bank, and other international institutions such as the WTO.

12. The UN Economic and Social Council provides a potential coordinating point for improved coherence and cooperation, with the authority to guide both UN agencies and institutions such as the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank on the issue. This would take a reformed and strengthened UN – not least a stronger ECOSOC – with greater financial resources and an enhanced ability to address questions of economic and social concern. Ideally, ECOSOC should therefore be transformed into an Economic, Social and Environmental Security Council, which would have the highest international authority on economic and social issues. In general ECOSOC's capacity to coordinate global policies in the economic and social fields should be strengthened, among other ways by upgrading its level of representation. The UN General Assembly should proclaim a Decade for Full Employment and Decent Work for All, in order to focus international and national efforts on achieving this objective in policies and in programmes.

## **Topic II – Gender Equality: mainstreaming and institutional architecture**

13. There is widespread agreement on the need for a more strategic approach to country level efforts to achieve gender equality. However, policy and implementation suffer from a lack of overall UN coherence, as noted above. Furthermore, it must be recognised that many of the roots of gender inequality and discrimination can be found in the world of work, and efforts must therefore begin with a focus on working environments that not only prohibit discrimination but furthermore promote positive equity measures in employment and other aspects of life.

14. The trade union movement fully supports the Declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session stating that “*the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration*”. We welcome paragraphs 20-21 of the draft Outcome Document which reaffirm the Beijing Platform for Action as the policy framework for achieving gender equality, including equal access to labour markets.

15. This *Panel* should seek to strengthen implementation of the goals of the *Beijing Declaration* and recommend that current UN Instruments be promoted toward their fulfilment, i.e. the UN Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination and the ILO Convention for Maternity Protection (No. 163), ILO Convention for Equal Remuneration (No. 100), and the UN Protocol for Human Trafficking. The direct ties which these instruments have to the world of work and therefore to the goals of Decent Work must be recognised.

16. The UN reform must place a high priority on setting political and resource strategies to turn the tide on the position of women, with respect to human rights, gender equality and women's

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To break the cycle of poverty, there is a need to address the root causes of social injustice which lie in policies and rules that fail to distribute wealth fairly. What is needed is a “fair globalisation” with robust wealth and income distributive mechanisms. The decent work agenda provides a set of such mechanisms because it focuses not just on economic growth but on employment and pro-poor growth, and on resource transfers to the poor through social protections and promotion of basic rights, including collective bargaining that can enable the poor to attain adequate incomes. Therefore, a much enhanced focus is needed on the strategies, targets and indicators needed to implement the decent work agenda.

empowerment. Gender-specific distributional effects must be linked to economic policy and standard-setting for sustainable development. It is well-documented that gender mainstreaming within the UN itself has not been achieved or implemented systematically and effectively<sup>3</sup>. Gender mainstreaming processes are not adequately resourced, current leadership has not been held accountable and those charged with mainstreaming do not exercise sufficient authority to implement the policies or engage in proper training. The UN system must therefore take leadership in this regard by committing to an effective gender mainstreaming strategy to provide for gender equity in the UN.

17. Strong, woman-specific machinery in all operational and policy-making spheres overseen by the UN requires a major up-scaling of influence, authority, and resources dedicated to women's human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment. There is a need to for this *Panel* to discuss how the UN can best do this<sup>4</sup>.

### **Topic III – Human Rights: Coherence, mainstreaming, effectiveness**

18. Human rights and principles must be seen as a basic element of the UN review process, of which an essential sub-set is worker and trade union rights. Towards this end, cooperation should be sought from the ILO in view of its recognised competence for capacity-building in the area of industrial relations. Machinery on special rapporteurs in the human rights field should be strengthened, including for human rights defenders who can address issues arising in the world of work. In this respect, trade unionists should be recognised as human rights defenders and come under human rights protection programmes as recommended by the special rapporteur, particularly in countries with records of gross violations of human and trade union rights.

19. Coherence requires the treatment of worker and trade union rights by this *Panel* to take place within a framework which seeks to promote a strong and sustainable democracy, as freedom of association constitutes a defense and a building-block for the maintenance of respect for human rights in general. In similar fashion, there is need for increased ratification and application of the international labour conventions of the ILO, as highlighted by the 2005 UN Summit, with particular priority to the ILO core labour standards.

20. The new Human Rights Council should be made to promote the mainstreaming of human and trade union rights throughout the UN system. It should build upon the work of the Human Rights Commission, including through the special procedures, rapporteurs and sub-commissions. Current arrangements for representation of civil society organisations in the work of the Human Rights Commission should be strengthened and formalised.

21. Towards this end, human rights must be seen as referring to more than political rights, and requires the integration of social-economic-cultural rights, as established in the 1966 *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, which were further elaborated in the 18 *Limburg Principles on the Implementation of the 1987 International Covenant on*

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<sup>3</sup> **UNIFEM Assessment:** A/60/62 – E2005/10; UNDP Evaluation of Gender mainstreaming, available at [http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/EO\\_GenderMainstreaming.pdf](http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/EO_GenderMainstreaming.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Currently, several under-resourced agencies focus exclusively on women's issues dominate the scene: the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Gender Issues (OSAGI), and the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)). Other larger agencies, including UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNESCO, the High Commissioners for human rights and refugees and others do important work on gender equality but it is only a part of their mandate, and often receives low priority. Proposals to merge women's agencies (UNIFEM, INSTRAW, DAW and OSAGI) are viewed as further marginalizing women's concerns. Proposals for creating an autonomous body charged with a mandate for mainstreaming gender issues have resource implications but show great potential.

*Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*. Coherence and effectiveness in this area requires that workers' rights not be regarded as a separate and distinct stream of 'human rights', in order to develop a coherent and integrated approach towards life, decent work, food, lodging, water, sanitation, health care, etc.

22. Finally, for the purposes of this *Panel's* work, human and trade union rights must be understood as falling within the social pillar of sustainable development. This relates to social and individual justice issues, but also has practical benefits, in that it is the medium through which the participation of workers and trade unions for implementing sustainable development will be fostered and protected, especially in the world's workplaces.

#### **Topic IV – Mainstreaming sustainable development in the UN System through an institutional framework that provides normative to operational links**

23. In previous Sections we discussed sustainable development issues as applied to overall UN issues or to specific themes. Here we address sustainable development as a particular focus. For this purpose, we draw attention to the importance of incorporating and integrating sustainable development in the *Panel's* work as a holistic concept embodying the economic, environmental and social dimension, as noted in Topic I.

24. Towards this end, we draw attention to the first world *Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment*, organised in Kenya in January 2006 with the ILO, UNEP and WHO, which was attended by 168 delegates from all parts of the world<sup>5</sup>. The Assembly provided the basis for a new and broader platform for action by the global trade union movement on the environment and sustainable development, which has direct implications for this UN Review. Participants agreed on the need:

“To strengthen the link between poverty reduction, environmental protection and decent work. Decent and secure jobs are essential for people to have a sustainable livelihood. Creating decent and secure jobs is only possible, however, if environmental sustainability is attained: hence the need to embrace the poverty reduction and sustainable development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation through the promotion of decent employment and environmental responsibility. This must also include the mainstreaming of gender issues.”

25. The Review should take note of the manner in which the Trade Union Assembly brought together labour and environmental concerns in favour of sustainable development and promoted a common platform between the ILO, WHO and UNEP. It provides a model for this Panel to place priority in better integrating the activities of the ILO, WHO and UNEP, with respect to the full implementation of the three pillars of sustainable development.

26. A United Nations system which mainstreams sustainable development will provide effective frameworks for democratic governance which reinforce the role of national public authorities, establishes rules necessary to govern global markets and enterprises, and ensures accountability and compliance to law, regulation and public policy. Such frameworks must also promote corporate accountability along the lines expressed in the ILO Declaration of Principles Concerning MNE's and Social Policy and seek to translate such policy in tangible ways, through the

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<sup>5</sup> **The Resolution of the Trade Union Assembly is available at:**

English: [http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO\\_6d.EN.pdf](http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO_6d.EN.pdf)

Français: [http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO\\_6d.FR.pdf](http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO_6d.FR.pdf)

Español: [http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO\\_6d.SP.pdf](http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO_6d.SP.pdf)

development and strengthening of effective tools, such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

27. Environmental issues must be addressed by this *Panel* within a sustainable development framework, avoiding the temptation to deal with it as a separate area. Moreover, it must seek to clarify existing UN measures that relate to each dimension of sustainable development; e.g., current discussions about MEA's that rarely incorporate the ILO environment-relevant measures,<sup>6</sup> or discussions about the social dimension that omit ILO measures and instruments<sup>7</sup>. A complete inventory of UN measures is required to facilitate their grouping and linkages to sustainable development. Such an inventory could be a basis for streamlining the target setting discussed in paragraph # 9, and would provide concrete tools for bringing coherence into overall policy discussions.

28. A mainstreaming of sustainable development in the UN would necessitate concrete change at the national level through the identification of policy synergies and avoidance of contradictory practices, both within and across national boundaries. Towards this end, trade unions have developed country-by-country profiles on sustainable development that could feed into such a process<sup>8</sup>.

29. Comparable national processes from one country to the next (not necessarily institutional entities) are required to provide the oversight that is a prerequisite to coherence and effective implementation of international agreements and an effective UN system. We believe that the CSD's National *Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS)*, which currently serve a limited purpose, could provide the basis from which to extract the necessary elements that could serve such a purpose.

30. At the same time, a number of other measures could form part of such national processes and also serve the objectives of the UN Review:

- Feedback to national governments about sustainable development implementation,
- Ensure stakeholder consultation on a broad range of implementation issues, including national policy,
- Strengthen the link between the UN and national activities,
- Ensure policy and action relating to gender equality and to pro-poor implementation of programmes,

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<sup>6</sup> **ILO measures of relevance to the environment:** Convention 174 Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents, Convention 139 Occupational Cancer, Convention 148 Hazards due to Air Pollution, Convention 155 Occupational Health, Convention 161 Occupational Health Services, Convention 162 Safety In the Use of Asbestos, Convention 167 Safety and Health in Construction, Convention 170 On Chemicals and Convention 184 Safety and Health in Agriculture.

<sup>7</sup> **ILO measures of particular relevance to development:** Convention 29 Forced Labour, Convention 87 Freedom of Association, Convention 98 Right to Organise, Convention 100 Equal Remuneration, Convention 111 Employment Discrimination, Convention 121 Employment Injury, Convention 122 Employment Policy, Convention 132 Maternal Protection, Convention 138 Minimum Age, Convention 182 Worst Forms of Child Labour, and the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

<sup>8</sup> The most recent version of the trade union country by country profiles were prepared for the 2005 UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and are available at:

English: [http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO\\_1e.EN.pdf](http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO_1e.EN.pdf)

French: [http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO\\_1e.FR.pdf](http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO_1e.FR.pdf)

Spanish: [http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO\\_1e.SP.pdf](http://www.global-unions.org/pdf/ohsewpO_1e.SP.pdf)

- Create channels between norms and policy settings and operational activities to monitor environmental, social and labour impacts of these activities,
- Create synergies among National Adaptation Programmes on Climate Change, National Poverty Reduction Plans and others such as the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and capacity building and promoting south-south cooperation,
- Integration of Sustainable Development criteria such as respect to core labour standards and environmental protection into the recommendations and economic models utilised by the Bretton Woods institutions.

31. The vital role of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) within the current system could make it an effective linking agency between the UN and national governments for the purposes of mainstreaming sustainable development. This would require a radical transformation of the current Commission into one that could guide national action, at the same time as it ensures coherence within the UN system and in its relations with national governments.

32. Trade unions recognise and appreciate the role that UNEP plays in the area of environmental protection and promotion and believe that this role must be strengthened to allow it to contribute to a coherent system in which sustainable development is mainstreamed. In general, we favour environmental policy implementation at the international level through one single environmental authority, which may require the creation of a new environmental agency. We would therefore support the consolidation of environmental implementation, within the context of sustainable development, through one agency that would avoid duplication and promote harmony.

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