

## SUMMARY OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UN CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: 7-8 MARCH 2011

The second session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom II) for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio 2012) convened from 7-8 March 2011 at UN Headquarters in New York. During the meeting, delegates discussed: securing renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assessing the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges; a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and the institutional framework for sustainable development. Late in the afternoon of the second day, delegates adopted by consensus a decision on the process for the preparation of the draft outcome document for the UNCSD.

Co-Chair Park, in closing the meeting, said the next steps include: making a Co-Chairs' summary of PrepCom II available by 18 March, the Bureau's preparation of a zero draft outcome document, five regional preparatory meetings, and events organized by more than 10 countries. As delegates left the North Lawn Building on Tuesday night, they admitted that the road is getting shorter, but they now have a road map to get to Rio for the Conference from 4-6 June 2012.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF UN ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCES

On 24 December 2009, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 64/236 agreeing to convene the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio 2012) in 2012 in Brazil. The UNCSD will mark the 40th anniversary of the first major international political conference specifically having the word "environment" in its title, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which took place in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972. The UNCSD will also mark the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

The UNCSD will seek to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assess the progress

and implementation gaps in meeting previously-agreed commitments, and address new and emerging challenges. The focus of the Conference includes the following themes to be discussed and refined during the preparatory process: a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and the institutional framework for sustainable development. Resolution 64/236 also called for holding three Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meetings prior to the UNCSD.

On 14 May 2010, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Sha Zukang as Secretary-General for the Conference. The UN Secretary-General subsequently appointed Brice Lalonde (France) and Elizabeth Thompson (Barbados) as executive coordinators.

**UNCHE:** The UN Conference on the Human Environment was held in Stockholm, Sweden, from 5-16 June 1972, and produced three major sets of decisions. The first decision was the Stockholm Declaration. The second was the Stockholm Action Plan, made up of 109 recommendations on international

### IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of UN Environmental Conferences . . . . .	1
Prepcom II Report . . . . .	2
Securing Renewed Political Commitment for Sustainable Development, Assessing the Progress to Date and the Remaining Gaps in the Implementation of the Outcomes of the Major Summits on Sustainable Development and Addressing New and Emerging Challenges . . . . .	3
Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication . . . . .	3
Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development . . . . .	4
Closing Plenary . . . . .	5
A Brief Analysis of Prepcom II . . . . .	6
Upcoming Meetings . . . . .	7
Glossary . . . . .	9

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Jennifer Covert, Faye Leone, Tanya Rosen and Lynn Wagner, Ph.D. The Editor is Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the Government of the United States of America (through the Department of State Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs), the Government of Canada (through CIDA), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), the European Commission (DG-ENV), and the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea. General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2011 is provided by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Australia, the Ministry of Environment of Sweden, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, SWAN International, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES), the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (through the Global Industrial and Social Progress Research Institute - GISPRI) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Funding for translation of the *Bulletin* into French has been provided by the Government of France, the Belgium Walloon Region, the Province of Québec, and the International Organization of the Francophone (OIF and IEPF). The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11D, New York, NY 10022, United States of America.

measures against environmental degradation for governments and international organizations. The third set of decisions was a group of five resolutions calling for: a ban on nuclear weapons tests; the creation of an international databank on environmental data; addressing actions linked to development and environment; creation of an environment fund; and establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the central node for global environmental cooperation and treaty-making.

**WORLD COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT:** In 1983, the UN General Assembly decided to establish an independent commission to formulate a long-term agenda for action. Over the next three years the Commission—more commonly known as the Brundtland Commission after its chair, Gro Harlem Brundtland—held public hearings and studied the issues. Its report, *Our Common Future*, which was published in 1987, stressed the need for development strategies in all countries that recognized the limits of the ecosystem's ability to regenerate itself and absorb waste products. The Commission emphasized the link between economic development and environmental issues, and identified poverty eradication as a necessary and fundamental requirement for environmentally sustainable development.

**UN CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT:** UNCED, also known as the “Earth Summit,” was held from 3-14 June 1992, and involved over 100 Heads of State and Government, representatives from 178 countries, and some 17,000 participants. The principal outputs of UNCED were the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 (a 40-chapter programme of action), and the Statement of Forest Principles. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity were also opened for signature during the Earth Summit.

Chapter 38 of Agenda 21 called for the creation of a Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to: ensure effective follow-up to UNCED; enhance international cooperation and rationalize intergovernmental decision making; and examine progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at all levels. In 1992, the 47th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) set out, in resolution 47/191, the CSD's terms of reference, composition, guidelines for NGO participation, organization of work, relationship with other UN bodies, and Secretariat arrangements. The CSD held its first meeting in June 1993 and has met annually since.

**UNGASS-19:** Also at its 47th session in 1992, the UNGA adopted Resolution 47/190, which called for a Special Session of the UNGA (UNGASS) to review implementation of Agenda 21 five years after UNCED. The 19th Special Session of the UNGA for the Overall Review and Appraisal of Agenda 21 (23-27 June 1997, New York) adopted the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (A/RES/S-19/2). It assessed progress since UNCED, examined implementation, and established the CSD's work programme for the period 1998-2002.

**WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) met from 26 August – 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The WSSD's goal, according to UNGA resolution 55/199, was to hold a ten-year review of UNCED at the Summit level to reinvigorate the

global commitment to sustainable development. The WSSD gathered over 21,000 participants from 191 governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, civil society, academia and the scientific community. The WSSD negotiated and adopted two main documents: the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development.

The JPOI is designed as a framework for action to implement the commitments originally agreed at UNCED and includes eleven chapters: an introduction; poverty eradication; consumption and production; the natural resource base; health; small island developing states (SIDS); Africa; other regional initiatives; means of implementation; and institutional framework. The Johannesburg Declaration outlines the path taken from UNCED to the WSSD, highlights challenges, expresses a commitment to sustainable development, underscores the importance of multilateralism and emphasizes the need for implementation.

**UNCSD PREPCOM I:** The first session of the PrepCom for the UNCSD was held from 17-19 May 2010, at UN Headquarters in New York. The PrepCom took up both substantive and procedural matters. On the substantive side, delegates assessed progress to date and the remaining gaps in implementing outcomes of major summits on sustainable development. They also discussed new and emerging challenges, a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the institutional framework for sustainable development. On the procedural side, participants met in contact groups to organize their work in the lead up to 2012, and to consider the UNCSD's rules of procedure.

**FIRST INTERSESSIONAL MEETING FOR THE UNCSD:** The first Intersessional Meeting for the UNCSD convened from 10-11 January 2011, at UN Headquarters in New York. During the meeting, delegates listened to: a summary of the findings of the Synthesis Report on securing renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assessing the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges; and panels on green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the institutional framework for sustainable development. Delegates then engaged in interactive discussions with the panelists.

## PREPCOM II REPORT

Amb. John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda), Co-Chair of the Preparatory Committee of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, opened PrepCom II on Monday, 7 March 2011. He noted that discussions would be framed by questions prepared by the Bureau and that sessions would not include expert panels, in a departure from previous meetings.

UNCSD Secretary-General Sha Zukang updated delegates on the UN Secretary-General's report to PrepCom II, on Objectives and Themes of UNCSD (A/CONF.216/PC/7). He also introduced the revised Synthesis Report (A/CONF.216/PC/8), calling attention to an updated “Way Forward” section that reflects emerging areas of convergence, as well as areas of disagreement that require further discussion.

Brazil announced that the UNCSA would be held from 4-6 June 2012, and PrepCom III would take place from 28-30 May 2012.

**OPENING STATEMENTS:** Argentina, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), underscored that Rio 2012 preparations would benefit from an early consideration of a draft outcome document. Hungary, on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member states, emphasized that Rio 2012 provides an opportunity to orient global economies and markets towards a more sustainable path as well as promote a stronger governance structure. Fiji, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), stressed the need for a “blue economy” that prioritizes fisheries and oceans. Nauru, on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), echoed AOSIS’s view that a green economy must be a “blue economy.”

Nepal, on behalf of the Least Developed Countries, noted that a green economy should not be interpreted as a conditionality, or constrain the policy space of each country to pursue its own way of development. In its national capacity, Nepal encouraged a separate programme of work for mountains in the UNCSA process. Chile, on behalf of the Rio Group, noted the lack of a clear, agreed definition of “green economy.”

***SECURING RENEWED POLITICAL COMMITMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, ASSESSING THE PROGRESS TO DATE AND THE REMAINING GAPS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE MAJOR SUMMITS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ADDRESSING NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES***

On Monday, Co-Chair Ashe opened the interactive discussion by asking seven questions: in what sectors has national political commitment to achieve sustainable development goals been especially strong; which emerging issues and challenges pose serious threats to sustainable development in a country; how can the link between science, education, and policy be strengthened to address the new and emerging challenges; what can UNCSA achieve in strengthening international cooperation in support for sustainable development; what have been the major factors contributing to the gaps in implementation of sustainable development initiatives and how are these best addressed; what are the main difficulties experienced in promoting integrated planning and decision-making at the country level; and what are the risks to sustained progress towards convergence among the three pillars of sustainable development.

The EU stated that a transition to green economy is imperative, and the Rio 2012 outcome should be a road map detailing concrete steps towards securing such a transition. The G-77/China said many gaps in international commitments result from a lack of mutually coherent policies and that the preparatory process should reflect on where and why mistakes have been made. Palau, on behalf of the Pacific Region, echoed AOSIS and the PSIDS that a green economy be a “blue economy.” Spain, on behalf of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC/GMEF) Presidency, said participation and inclusiveness must be fundamental principles of the UNCSA.

Australia emphasized challenges related to: sustainable development of aquatic and marine resources, and water availability, quality and management; biodiversity loss; and increasing urbanization, including pressures on transportation and waste issues. Bolivia called on the UN to address water

issues comprehensively and with dedicated offices. Ecuador said there have been advances on legal aspects of environmental management and creation of institutions, but there has been little articulation of sustainable development objectives across sectors. Peru emphasized: cost-benefit analyses; competitiveness; results-based management; legal security; and consistent improvement.

Japan recalled its pledge to fund action on climate change and biodiversity and emphasized the theme of human security. China supported drafting of an early outcome document and announced its contribution to the trust fund for experts and developing country participation.

Switzerland said there should be a full analysis of the financial structure and legal implications of the recommendations in the document from the UNEP Consultative Group on international environmental governance (IEG) (Nairobi-Helsinki outcome).

Norway suggested that UNCSA emphasize the need to approach the three pillars of sustainable development as inseparable goals. Brazil noted the risk of isolating the environmental pillar and called for technical and financial support for developing countries to approach the three pillars at once. Canada said renewed political commitments would not flow from new governance models but from commitments to balanced, sustainable economic recovery and a toolkit of measures and practices on green growth and the Millennium Development Goals.

Indonesia said fragmented implementation of commitments was not helpful to natural-disaster-prone countries. Algeria expressed hope that the UNCSA would result in a concrete programme of action with time-bound measures, specified funding sources, and a follow-up mechanism.

Pakistan noted risks to sustained progress towards convergence among the three pillars: a “one size fits all approach,” green protectionism, and the absence of means of implementation.

Women emphasized including women and adopting a rights-based framework. Business and Industry said the “Business Action for Sustainable Development 2012” alliance was recently created, and encouraged open trade and markets and the rule of law. The Scientific and Technical community said UNCSA outcomes should include commitments to building developing countries’ capacities in science, research, and technology.

***GREEN ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ERADICATION***

On Monday, PrepCom Co-Chair Amb. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea) started the discussions by asking seven questions for delegates to consider: what specific investments should a government prioritize as part of a green economy strategy; what tax policy can best promote a green economy that stimulates job creation; how best to scale up successful local models of green economy; what do businesses need to do differently to promote a green economy; what are the likely costs of the transition to a green economy; what are key elements of a supportive international framework for an equitable green economy vis-à-vis trade, development assistance and investment; and what decisions could the UNCSA take to support a green economy that advances poverty eradication and sustainable development in all countries.

Spain, on behalf of the UNEP GC/GMEF Presidency, highlighted that: a green economy is not a substitute for

sustainable development; opinions diverge on the specific instruments of a green economy; sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and the 10-year framework of programmes on SCP would be essential in the transition; and civil society and women will be key in planning the transition.

The EU highlighted that the green economy can help deliver growth and decent jobs and that active engagement of a broad range of actors is crucial. He proposed a road map with a menu of actions, timeline for implementation, targets, objectives and indicators.

The G-77/China, supported by Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Chile and Barbados, on behalf of Caribbean Community (CARICOM), noted that in framing a green economy policy, the following elements need to be considered: the concept of a green economy must be developed in accordance with the Rio Principles and Agenda 21; poverty eradication must be the priority; policies must be flexible; country-level policy space must be reaffirmed; and impacts of transition must be researched. Mexico said technology and infrastructure can provide the tools for reducing global energy consumption, as long as they are accessible to developing countries.

Cuba expressed concern that the proposal did not consider all stages of development, nor explain how true change would be achieved, and that it would undermine the sustainable development paradigm. Ecuador said a green economy should incorporate the concept of an “ecological footprint.”

Bolivia said some aspects of a green economy could be harmful to ecosystems. Nicaragua said a green economy should not be used to justify trade barriers to developing countries’ products, nor as a condition for cooperation, loans and debt relief.

Cambodia said priorities include increasing market access in developed countries for green products, and enhancing agricultural productivity following green economy principles.

Tanzania said developing countries see green economy as having opportunities as well as risks. Kenya called to avoid an abrupt end to current economic models. South Africa and Morocco said the green economy approach should promote job creation. Tunisia said the recent revolution in his country showed that youth care about decent jobs and social justice, and he called for promoting global justice and decent employment as the main focus of Rio 2012.

Monaco said oceans and waters are essential to a green economy and announced that it will host an experts’ conference to elaborate the relationship between oceans and the Rio 2012 themes. Iceland emphasized: marine environment; energy efficiency and energy access for all, including with renewable energy options like geothermal resources; land degradation; and gender considerations.

The United States highlighted actions related to a green economy, including the elimination of fossil fuel subsidies, and suggested identifying a tool kit or range of options. Italy proposed exploring public investment and tax incentives that promote a green economy. Norway suggested preparing information on the building blocks of a green economy. The Holy See said humans in their “full humanity” should be viewed as the ultimate goal for development.

Brazil suggested learning about local models and experiences, and tackling abusive subsidies and trade-restrictive measures.

The Republic of Korea suggested reforming tax systems to reflect the cost of pollution and strengthen carbon tax measures.

Egypt said a green economy should prioritize investment in national plans and creation of jobs, and avoid using environmental standards as a pretext to limit trading opportunities for developing countries. China expressed readiness to exchange best practices on a green economy’s links to employment and other aspects.

UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner said Least Developed Countries risked being left behind in the green economy transition without human and other resources to use in place of fossil fuels.

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) underlined women’s importance in sustainable development, and called for policy making to involve scientists, decision-makers and society.

The UNESCO International Oceanographic Commission (IOC) said the “blue-green” economy should reaffirm oceans’ ecosystems services and role in all aspects of the economy. She noted SIDS’ need for assistance in building resilience to natural disasters. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) stressed that agriculture, forestry and fisheries should be considered part of a green economy.

UN-HABITAT said governments should prioritize investment in sustainable urban development. Trade Unions expressed their hope for an outcome that creates work and decent jobs. The International Labor Organization stressed the need to cushion vulnerable groups from temporary effects of the transition to a green economy.

Co-Chair Park summarized that some speakers had suggested: a UNCSD outcome could include the development of a green economy road map, tool box or compilation of best practices; and further action could include capacity building, development of innovative resources and technologies or an international agreement against speculation in oil and food. He said upcoming country- and organization-led forums will discuss UNCSD-related topics.

### **INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

On Tuesday morning, Co-Chair Ashe opened the session stating that the institutional framework should be flexible in order to address new and emerging issues, while simultaneously balanced and inclusive of the three pillars of sustainable development.

Spain, on behalf of the UNEP GC/GMEF Presidency, invited the PrepCom to call for a complete analysis of UNEP’s Nairobi-Helsinki outcome options.

The G-77/China said input from all stakeholders would enhance cooperation and coordination to ensure implementation of commitments across different forums.

The EU identified three objectives: international environmental governance (IEG), broader sustainable development architecture, and multilevel governance. The EU supported upgrading UNEP to a specialized agency, and said that this upgrade, as opposed to a new institution, would better address growing challenges. Germany advocated upgrading UNEP and expressed interest in the proposal to develop a better framework within the UN for sustainable development. France supported a specialized environment agency that reinstated political visibility with innovative solutions.

Kenya outlined a proposal for transforming UNEP into a decentralized, specialized agency headquartered in Nairobi. Italy said UNEP should be transformed into a specialized agency, with IEG linked to the framework on sustainable development.

The Russian Federation said implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation could not be reduced to reforming UNEP and must include exploring the potential of other existing mechanisms, including the 2002 Monterrey outcome on financing for development.

China called for: an enhanced role for UNEP and realizing a reinforced CSD; improved coordination among current mechanisms; and coordination among the World Trade Organization (WTO), development banks and UN agencies, ensuring favorable terms for environmentally friendly technologies, and supplementing official development assistance for sustainable development with innovative financing.

Brazil outlined its vision for an “umbrella” structure within the UN system, focused on promoting sustainable development and implementing existing multilateral commitments, as well as UNEP’s pivotal role as an implementing body, and support to countries through capacity building and scientific advice. She also announced that on 22 August 2011, Brazil would host informal consultations on issues relating to Rio 2012.

Switzerland said: a full analysis of the structure and options included in the UNEP Nairobi-Helsinki outcome should be conducted and made available prior to the second intersessional meeting of the PrepCom. New Zealand supported an analysis of the Nairobi-Helsinki outcome.

Canada said a new mechanism should not be created, and suggested extending the concept of “One UN” to sustainable development, possibly through a troika of regional commissions, UNEP and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), periodically bringing issues to the international community through the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) or a reformed CSD. Bolivia said the CSD should ensure participation by all stakeholders. Indonesia supported empowering and strengthening UN components such as ECOSOC and the CSD. Australia said reform proposals should go beyond UNEP and consider other actors, including the CSD.

The Republic of Korea welcomed enhancing the CSD and ECOSOC and strengthening UNEP. Pakistan outlined the institutional challenges as: fragmentation; inadequate resources and compliance mechanisms; and a need to focus on how the CSD could be reconfigured and UNEP upgraded between now and PrepCom III.

India said that ECOSOC should take charge and coordinate its functional commissions. Several other countries, including Japan and Saudi Arabia, called for strengthening the CSD.

Cuba said the basic goal of an institutional framework for sustainable development should be greater coherence among institutions. Guatemala called for strengthening UNEP while avoiding creation of new institutions. Thailand welcomed ongoing reform of the international financial institutions to allow for greater representation of developing countries.

The US highlighted that creation of a new multilateral institution does not create political will, and called attention to, *inter alia*, the UN Environment Management Group’s work on environmental safeguards. The Czech Republic called for agreement on how the sustainable development framework will respond to crosscutting and new and emerging challenges.

Norway and UNESCO called for increased coherence on the sustainable development agenda across the UN system.

UNEP said IEG is an integral part of the sustainable development framework, and the three pillars of sustainable development should be considered as a system. The WTO said trade and sustainable development go hand in hand. The UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction reminded participants of the third session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Indigenous People of Brazil asked how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can best contribute their views and participate in the process. Children and Youth suggested elevating the CSD to report directly to the UN General Assembly and strengthening UNEP. Local Authorities proposed that the CSD and ECOSOC be raised to a higher level with universal membership.

The IOC said a new global mechanism is needed to ensure a participative, holistic approach to ocean governance.

### CLOSING PLENARY

On Tuesday afternoon, Co-Chair Park opened the final session, directing the discussion to follow two main questions: “What do we expect out of this conference?” and “How should the outcome document look in terms of structure and content?” The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, on behalf the five UN Regional Commissions, discussed their work on a joint report on countries’ implementation of the two themes of Rio 2012.

Switzerland said the outcome should be for a green economy road map reflecting progress at the policy and operational level. Bolivia said the outcome document should include a strategic action plan to fill gaps and address world governance for sustainable development. Brazil stated the desire to see renewed political commitment, a framework of initiatives, and means of implementation addressed in a cross-cutting manner, among others.

China said the consultations on the outcome document should be open and transparent. Japan called for the outcome document to contain concrete proposals. The EU stressed that countries’ commitment should be accompanied by a road map.

**DISCUSSION OF DRAFT DECISION SUBMITTED BY THE BUREAU:** Co-Chair Park introduced a draft decision on the process for the preparation of the draft outcome document for Rio 2012, which had been circulated as an English-only informal paper. The draft outlined the process through which the Bureau would prepare a draft outcome document, and the process through which it would be negotiated. On the latter, it proposed holding a three-day meeting in January 2012 to have initial discussions on the “zero-draft” of the outcome document, and set aside one full week for “informal informal” negotiations in each of the months of February, March and April 2012.

The G-77/China and Cuba said it was unfortunate that the draft indicates that meetings on the zero draft would take place “within existing resources,” but, on the understanding that this language would be revisited by the General Assembly’s Fifth Committee, the Group said it would not block consensus. The Dominican Republic noted the absence from the draft of national and regional consultations, which he said could endanger the success of Rio 2012. Venezuela said it could not support a decision that does not guarantee the full participation of developing countries.

The draft decision was adopted by consensus.

**Final Decision:** In the decision, PrepCom II:

- Requests the Bureau to initiate an open, transparent and inclusive process led by member states to prepare in a timely manner a draft text based upon all preparatory inputs to serve as a basis for an outcome document of the Conference;
- Invites all member states and relevant stakeholders to provide inputs by 1 November 2011 for inclusion in a compilation document to serve as basis for the preparation of “zero-draft” of the outcome document;
- Requests the Bureau to present the compilation text at the second intersessional meeting to be held in mid-December 2011;
- Calls upon the Co-Chairs to present the “zero-draft” no later than January 2012; and
- Recommends that the Bureau convene a three-day meeting in January 2012 to discuss the “zero-draft” and hold week-long “informal informals” to be accommodated within existing resources during the months of February, March and April 2012.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING:**

Tania Raguž (Croatia), rapporteur, presented the draft report of the session (A/CONF.216/PC/L.3). The report was adopted by consensus.

**CLOSING STATEMENTS:** The EU highlighted the connections between green economy and sustainable energy and oceans and marine resources, among others, and encouraged making Rio 2012 “a success that will resound across the world.”

Barbados, for CARICOM, called for support to regional and interregional preparations by SIDS. Maldives, for AOSIS, said Rio 2012 should meet the needs of SIDS and focus on a blue economy. Guatemala underscored that developing countries should be represented in “informal informals,” and requested a Co-Chairs’ summary of PrepCom II.

The UN Industrial Development Organization called attention to the importance of industrialization in the context of green growth in developing countries. Representatives from each Major Group were invited to make closing remarks. Many stressed the need to be included in the “informal informals” and the need for the outcome to be based on sound science. Women said a better financing mechanism should be agreed and any new government structure must have a scientific component. Youth called for broad participation of Major Groups to ensure the global community is engaged. Business and Industry said there should be institutional coherence and institutions should be strategically aligned. Farmers said there should be security of tenure for women with appropriate land reforms. Indigenous peoples said they will be consulting within their communities and will present the results to the Rio 2012 process.

Secretary-General Sha Zukang noted the need for resources for the process leading to Rio in June 2012, and said Major Groups are important partners and have the right to full participation in the preparations for Rio 2012. Co-Chair Park said the next steps include making the Co-Chairs’ summary available by the end of next week, the Bureau’s preparation of a zero draft outcome document, five regional preparatory meetings, and events organized by more than 10 countries. He gavelled the meeting to a close at 6:41 pm.

## **A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PREPCOM II**

The road to Rio 2012 is getting shorter, but, after PrepCom II, the end is coming into view. As participants raised more questions about green economy and sustainable development governance and searched for elusive answers, after two days of meetings, some delegates conceded that “we are a bit behind, but nevertheless on track.” In the coming months, country-led initiatives and workshops hosted by the UN family of organizations will address specific topics related to the Rio 2012 themes and objectives. Research on the implications of governance options and employment implications of a shift to a green economy may help delegates identify preferred options. Then, as called for in the decision adopted at the end of PrepCom II, a draft outcome document will be prepared by January 2012 and a series of “informal informal” negotiations will hammer out the issues and determine the international community’s approach to sustainable development for the next few decades. This brief analysis reflects on the progress made on the two themes of the Conference and the emerging issue of a “blue economy.”

### **GREEN ECONOMY: DEFINING THE ELEMENTS**

Despite lingering worries about trade barriers and green protectionism, delegates at PrepCom II made some progress in developing and understanding the concept of a green economy. With help from the message that emerged from the February 2011 UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Nairobi, there is a slowly emerging consensus that maybe a green economy can bring balance and better coherence to the three pillars of sustainable development. Many speakers focused on what elements a green economy policy should include, and formulated questions as they searched to learn how a green economy might affect growth and employment. While some degree of skepticism and concerns still remain, and some doubt that a green economy can stimulate environmentally- and socially-friendly growth and seek “guarantees” that it will not disguise protectionism, others recognize that there is a role for international agreement to develop a menu of options that will reflect the nuances and needs of individual countries.

“The greening of economies is not generally a drag on growth, but a new engine of growth,” concluded the recent UNEP report, *Towards a Green Economy*. While developed countries seem to fully support the green economy paradigm, there are examples of benefits of green growth from developing countries themselves, including China, Uganda and Rwanda. The key for winning the support of skeptical developing countries—and perhaps to put to rest the continuing call for a consensus definition—is to focus on practical actions going forward that ensure environmentally sustainable economic and social development.

### **KEEPING THE GREEN ECONOMY BLUE**

The reality is quite grim: 60% of all coral reefs are at risk of destruction, populations of fish and freshwater vertebrates have declined by nearly 50%, and 40% of ocean fish stocks are over-exploited compared to 20% in 1992. These numbers more than anything else show that states have failed to live up to the provisions of 1992’s Rio Declaration and Agenda 21.

At the first UNCSD Intersessional meeting in January 2011, UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner spoke passionately about the role of subsidies in fisheries and how a green economy approach could help remove them and improve fisheries and the livelihoods that depend on them. The call for a green economy

that is beneficial to oceans also echoed in the halls during the UNEP GC/GMEF in February, where the Solomon Islands, in closing remarks, called on delegates to “keep the green economy blue.”

Now, two weeks later at PrepCom II, oceans and ocean-related issues resonated strongly with many speakers, including several who stressed the importance of economic choices in protecting marine ecosystems, and particularly coalitions of small island developing states, who called for Rio 2012 to address the “blue economy.”

Just as economic incentives and trade are critical to finding ways to reduce pressures on marine resources, governance gaps also present a pressing issue for marine conservation. The high seas legal regime is complex and, according to some, fragmented and incomplete. In the corridors, several delegates suggested that discussions about international environmental governance reform are particularly relevant to oceans. They called for Rio 2012 to also address ocean governance gaps, institutional failures and problems in the implementation of global and regional conservation measures, as well as harness the expertise of scientific institutions in outlining options for solutions. For high seas fisheries, for example, one delegate recommended relying on best practices within successful Regional Fisheries Management Organizations in order to strengthen not only fisheries management practices, but also broader efforts towards biodiversity conservation.

To what extent Rio 2012 will provide a catalyst for renewing political commitment towards sweeping changes in the marine infrastructure is still uncertain, but these deliberations could send a strong message to ongoing processes, like the United Nations *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, as well as encourage more stringent domestic enforcement measures to tackle illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing.

### FROM NAIROBI WITH LOVE

At the first UNCSO Intersessional meeting, discussions on the international framework for sustainable development barely scratched the surface. Many questions remain unanswered at this PrepCom as the environmental pillar of sustainable development and the reform of IEG—just one facet of sustainable development governance reform—is receiving the most focus in the UNCSO process.

One of the explanations for the greater attention to IEG reform is that the UNEP Governing Council asked the UNCSO Bureau to carry out a deep analysis of all the implications of the various reform options from the Nairobi-Helsinki Consultative Group outcome, a decision that was welcomed by some delegates with mixed feelings. Those delegates suggested that it should be up to the GMEF to complete a full analysis, citing concerns about the resources potentially required and the fact that the political process exploring IEG reform originally was initiated by UNEP and should thus be completed there.

Another explanation is that strengthening the global environmental governance pillar is part of a comprehensive overhaul of the sustainable development framework. Citing increasing evidence that decisions about the environment affect people’s livelihoods and income, many delegates noted the role of strengthened environmental governance in combating poverty.

But achieving consensus around these issues is still not within reach, as some argued that the impetus to reform and strengthen the environmental pillar may still lack the necessary leadership and political will. Between struggles to emerge from an economic recession and social and political unrest, which are changing the political makeup of many countries, the environment is taking a back seat to other domestic priorities. The challenge for policy makers is to show that a strengthened environmental governance framework is critical to economic growth and improving livelihoods.

Amidst statements on UNEP’s “pivotal role in implementation” and calls to revisit the relationship between UNEP and ECOSOC as part of reforming UNEP in the context of the wider sustainable development architecture, delegates raised a number of other options. They expressed interest in the implications of an “umbrella” structure, proposed by Brazil. In articulating her “vision,” Brazil explained that such structure would build on existing institutions by providing political guidance, coherence and efficiency and increased ability to implement the Rio commitments and tackle emerging issues. Reforms to the Commission on Sustainable Development and ECOSOC were mentioned as well. Delegates also discussed the identification of best practices and national reporting options. These and other ideas will require further elaboration, as questions of duplication and lessons learned are explored in the coming months. Among the questions put forward outside the conference hall were how the peer review mechanism many speakers proposed would be different from ECOSOC’s Annual Ministerial Review, and whether the multilateral environmental agreements’ experience with national reporting and clearing-house mechanisms offer lessons for this discussion.

### WHAT’S NEXT?

As delegates left UN Headquarters on Tuesday night, they expressed some optimism, including satisfaction that they reached agreement on a timetable for producing the outcome document and codifying the views of countries on the objectives and themes of the Conference. While not minimizing the significant differences that exist on the elements of the Conference themes, many expressed hope that the UN family of organizations would provide critical input and noted that the availability of a zero draft of the outcome document in January 2012 and the one week-long “informal informals” in each of the months of February, March and April would provide sufficient time to prepare for Rio 2012 and hammer out major differences. The road to Rio is still meandering, but the countries travelling on it now have a GPS to guide them.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**UN General Assembly Interactive Dialogue with the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability:** The informal interactive dialogue with the Co-Chairs of the Panel (President Jacob Zuma of South Africa and President Tarja Halonen of Finland) will take place on 16 March 2011. It is being organized by the President of the UN General Assembly, Joseph Deiss (Switzerland). **date:** 16 March 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Ms. Hyun Sung, Office of the President of the General Assembly **email:** [sungh@un.org](mailto:sungh@un.org) **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/65/initiatives/gsp.shtml>

**Workshop 2 on Green Economy:** This workshop is the second of three jointly organized by the Missions of 10 UN member states on the initiative of the President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly, Joseph Deiss (Switzerland). The initiative, known as the Group of Friends on Green Economy, includes the Governments of Egypt, Gabon, Grenada, Hungary, Indonesia, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Sweden and Switzerland. This workshop will address “Green Economy Opportunities and Concerns.” **date:** 23 March 2011 **location:** New York, US. **contact:** Marco Rossi **phone:** +1-212-286-1540 **e-mail:** marco.rossi@eda.admin.ch **www:** <http://docs.wri.org/share/greeneconomy/>

**LDC-IV Preparatory Committee:** This meeting is the second session of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV). **dates:** 4-8 April 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Margherita Musollino-Berg, OHRLLS **phone:** +1-212-963-4844 **email:** musollino@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/ldc/home>

**2011 Business and Industry Global Dialogue: The Road to Rio+20:** This meeting will focus on strengthening the role of the private sector in the transition to a resource-efficient and green economy. It is being convened by UNEP and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). **dates:** 11-12 April 2011 **location:** Paris, France **contact:** Garrette Clark **phone:** +33-1-44-37-1420 **fax:** +33-1-44-37-1474 **e-mail:** garrette.clark@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.fr/scp/business/dialogue/2011/index.htm>

**Workshop 3 on Green Economy:** This is the final of three workshops to be jointly organized by the Missions of 10 UN member states on the initiative of the President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly, Joseph Deiss (Switzerland). This workshop will address “Green Economy Pathways.” **date:** 19 April 2011 **location:** New York, US **contact:** Marco Rossi **phone:** +1-212-286-1540 **e-mail:** marco.rossi@eda.admin.ch **www:** <http://docs.wri.org/share/greeneconomy/>

**CSD 19:** This policy-year session will negotiate policy options related to the thematic cluster for the CSD 18-19 cycle: transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production. **dates:** 2-13 May 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd\\_csd19.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd19.shtml)

**UN/ISDR Third Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Reduction:** Based on lessons emerging from the Mid-Term Review of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), this meeting will discuss what the disaster risk reduction framework will look like post-2015. **dates:** 8-13 May 2011 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **phone:** +41-22-917-8908 **fax:** +41-22-917-8964 **email:** isdr@un.org **www:** <http://www.unisdr.org/>

**Fourth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV):** This conference aims to assess the results of the 10-year action plan adopted at the third UN Conference on LDCs and to adopt new measures and strategies for their sustainable development. **dates:** 9-13 May 2011 **location:** Istanbul, Turkey **contact:** Cinthya Marquez **phone:** +1-917-367-6006 **e-mail:** marquez1@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/ldc/home>

**GSP 3:** The third meeting of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability (GSP 3) will meet in May. **dates:** 16-18 May 2011 **location:** Helsinki, Finland **contact:** GSP Secretariat **phone:** +1-917-367-4207 **email:** gsp-secretariat@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/pages/gsp>

**Informal Thematic Debate of the General Assembly on Green Economy:** This dialogue is organized by the President of the UN General Assembly and will address questions such as: What are the characteristics of green economy? What are the barriers to achieving a green economy? Based on lessons learned from case examples, how can a country transition to a green economy? How can green economy serve as a pathway to sustainable development? **date:** 2 June 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Ms. Hyun Sung, Office of the President of the UN General Assembly **email:** sungh@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/65/initiatives/index.shtml>

**64th Annual UN DPI/NGO Conference: Sustainable Societies; Responsive Citizens:** The 64th Annual Conference of NGOs and the UN Department of Public Information (DPI), will seek to highlight effective ways in which civil society can contribute to creating and maintaining sustainable societies. The Conference will seek to contribute to civil society preparations for the UNCSD. **dates:** 3-5 September 2011 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** NGO Relations Center, DPI **phone:** +1-212-963-6842 **fax:** +1-212-963-6914 **email:** dpingo@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/annual-conf.asp>

**Vienna Energy Conference 2011 (VEC 2011):** This Conference, organized by the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), will convene under the banner “Energy for All: Time for Action.” Core themes to be addressed will include: agreeing on a common understanding of energy access; agreeing on a strategy to ensure universal access to modern energy services and increase energy efficiency by reducing energy intensity by 40% until 2030; identifying indicative targets and policies in support of these objectives; and prioritizing key national and regional actions on energy access and energy efficiency. **dates:** 21-23 June 2011 **location:** Vienna, Austria **contact:** UN Energy, UNIDO **email:** energy@unido.org **www:** <http://www.unido.org/index.php?id=1001185>

**ECOSOC Substantive Session 2011:** The annual substantive session of the Economic and Social Council will meet in July. **dates:** 4-28 July 2011 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Nikhil Seth, ECOSOC Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-1811 **fax:** +1-212-963-1712 **email:** ecosocinfo@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc>

**GSP 4:** The fourth meeting of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability (GSP 4) will take place on the margins of the 66th session of the UN General Assembly **dates:** 18-19 September 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** GSP Secretariat **phone:** +1-917-367-4207 **email:** gsp-secretariat@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/climatechange/pages/gsp>

**UNGA High-Level Event on Desertification:** This event will address desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, in order to help raise awareness at the highest level, reaffirm the fulfillment of all commitments to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and its 10-year strategic plan and

framework (2008-2018), and ensure a higher priority for desertification, land degradation and drought at the UNCCSD. **date:** 20 September 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters New York **contact:** Melchiade Bukuru **phone:** +1-917-367-4081 **e-mail:** bukuru@un.org **www:** [http://www.unccd.int/media/newsflash/newsflash\\_001\\_2011.php](http://www.unccd.int/media/newsflash/newsflash_001_2011.php)

**Meeting of Experts to focus on ways to promote the sustainable use of oceans:** As a contribution to the Rio 2012 process, the Principality of Monaco will convene a meeting of experts to focus on ways to promote the sustainable use of oceans. **dates:** 28-30 November 2011 **location:** Principality of Monaco **contact:** Permanent Mission to the UN of the Principality of Monaco **email:** Monaco@un.int **www:** <http://www.unccd2012.org/>

**Bonn 2011 Conference:** The theme for this conference is “The water, energy and food security nexus – water resources in the green economy.” It is organized under the auspices of Germany’s Federal Development Ministry (BMZ) and Federal Environment Ministry (BMU), to contribute to the run-up to the UNCCSD. **dates:** 16-18 November 2011 **location:** Bonn, Germany **contact:** Bonn 2011 Conference Secretariat **phone:** +49-6196 79-1547 **email:** bonn.conference2011@giz.de **www:** <http://www.water-energy-food.org/en/home.html>

**Second Intersessional Meeting for the UNCCSD:** As called for at the first PrepCom of the UNCCSD, three intersessional meetings will be convened, in addition to three PrepComs, to prepare for the UNCCSD event. The aim of the meeting is to hold “focused substantive discussions to advance the subject matter of the Conference.” **dates:** mid-December 2011 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCCSD Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-1267 **email:** unccd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.unccd2012.org/>

**Eye on Earth Summit:** The purpose of the Summit is to focus attention of the areas of environmental information networking and information access through multistakeholder collaboration in order to keep the world environmental situation under review. **dates:** 12-15 December 2011 **location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates **contact:** Gerard Cunningham, UNEP **email:** gerard.cunningham@unep.org or eoe@ead.ae **www:** [http://hqweb.unep.org/civil-society/Portals/59/Documents/Greenroom/events/Eye\\_On\\_Earth\\_Summit\\_GC-26\\_Briefing.pdf](http://hqweb.unep.org/civil-society/Portals/59/Documents/Greenroom/events/Eye_On_Earth_Summit_GC-26_Briefing.pdf)

**January 2012 meeting for initial discussion on zero draft for UNCCSD:** The aim of the meeting is to discuss the zero draft of the outcome document for the UNCCSD. **dates:** January 2012 (tentative) **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCCSD Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-1267 **email:** unccd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.unccd2012.org/>

**Informal-Informals for UNCCSD:** PrepCom II called for three informal-informal meetings to be held for one week in each of the months of February, March and April 2012 to prepare the outcome document for the UNCCSD. **dates:** February, March and April 2012 (exact dates to be determined) **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCCSD Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-1267 **email:** unccd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.unccd2012.org/>

**GCCS-12/GMEF:** The 12th special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum will take place in 2012. **dates:** 20-22 February 2012 **location:** to

be determined **contact:** Secretary, UNEP Governing Council **phone:** +254-20-762-3431 **fax:** +254-20-762-3929 **email:** jamil.ahmad@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/>

**Sixth Global Oceans Conference:** The Sixth Global Oceans Conference will seek to provide input into the UNCCSD process. **dates:** 20-24 February 2012 (tentative) **contact:** Miriam C. Balgos **phone:** +1-302-831-8086 **fax:** +1-302-831-3668 **email:** mbalgos@udel.edu **www:** <http://www.globaloceans.org/>

**Third Intersessional Meeting for UNCCSD:** This meeting was called for by the first PrepCom of the UNCCSD to prepare for the UNCCSD event. The aim of the meeting is to hold “focused substantive discussions to advance the subject matter of the Conference.” **dates:** 5-7 March 2012 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UNCCSD Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-1267 **email:** unccd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.unccd2012.org/>

**UNCCSD PrepCom III:** This meeting will take place in 2012 immediately prior to UNCCSD in Brazil. **dates:** 28-30 May 2012 **location:** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil **contact:** UNCCSD Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-1267 **email:** unccd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.unccd2012.org/>

**UN Conference on Sustainable Development:** The UNCCSD will take place in Brazil in 2012. The Conference will include the following themes: a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and the institutional framework for sustainable development. **dates:** 4-6 June 2012 **location:** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil **contact:** UNCCSD Secretariat **phone:** +1-212-963-1267 **email:** unccd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.unccd2012.org/>

## GLOSSARY

AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CSD	UN Commission on Sustainable Development
GC/GMEF	UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum
IEG	International Environmental Governance
IOC	UNESCO International Oceanographic Commission
PrepCom	Preparatory Committee
PSIDS	Pacific small island developing states
Rio 2012	UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCCSD)
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SIDS	Small island developing states
UNCED	UN Conference on Environment and Development
UNCCSD	UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio 2012)
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA	UN General Assembly
WTO	World Trade Organization

Visit the Sustainable Development Policy & Practice knowledgebase - <http://uncsd.iisd.org/>



## Sustainable Development Policy & Practice

A Knowledgebase of International Activities Preparing for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development



Announcement from Friday, 14 January 2011

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is pleased to announce the launch of

### Sustainable Development Policy & Practice:

A Knowledgebase of International Activities Preparing for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development

[UNCSD.iisd.org](http://uncsd.iisd.org)

**Sustainable Development Policy & Practice** is a knowledge management project tracking intergovernmental and other international activities on sustainable development. It is managed by the [International Institute for Sustainable Development](http://www.iisd.org/) [http://www.iisd.org/] (IISD) [Reporting Services](http://www.iisd.ca/) [http://www.iisd.ca/].

The launch of **Sustainable Development Policy & Practice** comes as the UN, governments, academics, NGOs, businesses, and the media undertake preparations for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, also known as Rio+20), set to take place in Brazil in 2012. The UNCSD will convene 20 years after the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, also known as the Rio Earth Summit), and will seek to assess implementation of previous commitments while addressing new and emerging challenges to sustainable development.

Information on United Nations activities is provided in cooperation with the UN system agencies, funds and programmes through the [United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination](http://www.unsystemceb.org/) [http://www.unsystemceb.org/] (CEB) Secretariat.

All news articles on **Sustainable Development Policy & Practice** are researched and produced by our [team of thematic experts](http://uncsd.iisd.org/about-sustainable-development-policy-and-practice-team/). [http://uncsd.iisd.org/about-sustainable-development-policy-and-practice-team/] resulting in all original content.

Features of the website include:

- A knowledgebase of summaries of activities (publications, meetings, statements or projects) by a range of actors, with the option to search by several categories (region, actor, action and issue);
- An archive of all posts on the site, organized by date posted;
- A clickable world map, enabling you to view the latest sustainable development policy news by region (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America & the Caribbean, Near East, Northern America, and South West Pacific);
- A link to subscribe to UNCSD-L, a moderated community announcement list for policy-makers and practitioners involved with UNCSD preparations;
- A link to the most recent "UNCSD Update," a periodic feed of recent posts to the Sustainable Development Policy & Practice knowledgebase;
- A Calendar of upcoming international events related to the UNCSD;
- A link to our Sustainable Development iCalendar, which automatically updates your own calendar program with upcoming UNCSD-related events; and
- A link to our RSS feed.

We invite you to visit Sustainable Development Policy & Practice, at <http://uncsd.iisd.org/>.

Funding for Sustainable Development Policy & Practice has been provided by [Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety](#) (BMU) and [France's Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing](#) (Directorate for European and International Affairs Department of Climate Change and Sustainable Development).

For further information on this initiative or to provide us with information about your sustainable development-related activity, please contact Faye Leone, Content Editor, at [faye@iisd.org](mailto:faye@iisd.org).

The Sustainable Development Policy & Practice Team  
IISD Reporting Services

