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Speaking Points on Interlinkages and Cross Cutting Issues

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The CSD16/17 themes are highly interrelated and their interlinkages as well as cross-cutting issues identified at CSD11 are at the core of sustainable development. The EU understands the RIM as a unique opportunity to address and review them in an open forum and to improve the knowledge base which is needed to strive after sustainable development objectives, both to eradicate poverty and to improve the environment globally, particularly in Africa. The RIM can raise the ambition of this integrated approach. To foster this approach, the EU proposes to focus on three priorities:

1. The interlinkages between agriculture, land management, and the natural resource base, with a focus on water, climate change and biodiversity.
2. The cross-cutting goal of changing unsustainable consumption patterns, with a focus on food consumption.
3. The promotion of policy coherence, including coherence in capacity building, participatory approach to national SD strategies, in particular in research policies and education.

Water, climate change and biodiversity as interlinkages between the themes of CSD16/17

- Biodiversity provides benefits, assets and values for present and future generations, and is vital for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Ecosystem services include provisioning, supporting, regulation and cultural services that represent an essential set of priorities for the quality of life.
- However strong interlinkages between agriculture, land-management and the natural resource base have not always been taken into account properly, resulting in degradation of this base as an impact of climate change - water/drought/floods – and loss of biodiversity, thus impacting on the quality of ecosystem services. We need to contribute to the overall understanding that global warming might additionally affect local and regional biodiversity to a dramatic extent and might increase the frequency of extreme events such as floods and droughts.
- The EU supports initiatives that are pursuing the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and highlights, in particular, the need for mitigation and adaptation measures to be further implemented and integrated within the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) plans and strategies. This would sustain life and human development, including the provision of sustainable drinking water and sanitation services. In this respect, the European Community water policy, based on the Water Framework Directive constitutes a major step forward. We should further promote and support the development of IWRM plans and strategies, at national and basin levels.
- Traditional knowledge is an important contribution as regards the protection of the natural resource base. The EU endeavors to reintegrate this knowledge, where appropriate, into the land and agricultural planning processes. Indigenous and local communities as traditional knowledge holders therefore have vital role and their rights need to be protected.

Sustainable consumption and production (SCP)

- The EU is fully aware that the increased stress on natural resources caused by unsustainable production patterns overexploits the planet's natural resource reserves, and combined to ever increasing unsustainable consumption habits continue to galvanize environmental hazards. Growing consumption appears to outstrip the environmental improvements achieved by means of environmental technologies.
- Food supply has increased substantially and the world now produces much more food than is required to provide everyone with the adequate diet that many lack. However, the greatest challenge in relation to food is to address regional food security problems and the *diet transition* needed to reduce the high health and environmental impacts of the *double burden of diet related disease* of hunger and overconsumption of food, according to the MEA¹.
- Greening of all policies and decoupling economic growth and environmental degradation lie at the core sustainable development strategies in the EU. The EU increases research on lifecycle impacts of products and services in order to promote eco-design as well as on the role of advertising and media as creators and directors of consumption habits. It is also crucial to reflect environmental costs in prices and to improve and widely implement the sustainability oriented labeling standards for products and services.
- Responsible marketing and healthy lifestyles can improve the nutritional quality of foodstuffs and change consumption and production patterns. The EU actively promotes the Marrakech Process (e.g. the development of a 10-year framework of programs on SCP taking the JPOI commitment forward), especially through the contributions of its voluntary Task Forces. This requires closer corporation along the whole life cycle and genuine consideration of all gender aspects.

Policy coherence

- To achieve progress in all of these interrelated areas, the EU supports the full implementation of national sustainable development planning processes and strategies that combine social, economic and environmental considerations and foster policy coherence among all policy sectors. Isolated sector-specific commitments can undermine the achievement of other policies.
- The promotion of cross-sectoral coherence in national sustainable development planning processes and strategies still remains a considerable challenge, including coherence with the CSD16/17 thematic cluster issues. To reduce the implementation deficit of the JPOI commitments, it is necessary to deploy targeted policies that help to overcome sector-oriented policy-making and to mainstream gender equality in all policies.
- The EU fully supports the view that early and sustained engagement with a broad range of stakeholders in all policy areas will increase overall policy coherence. Moreover we believe that synergies should be created between the CSD process and the UN ECE program on education for sustainable development.
- The complex issue of sustainable agriculture is highly interwoven with numerous other policy areas, including trade and development related aspects. The EU believes that coherent and consistent policy-making at all levels regarding trade, agricultural and development cooperation

¹ Millennium Ecosystem Assessment – 8.4.1.1.5. *Diet transition: The simultaneous challenge of **significant incidence** of acute, communicable disease in undernourished populations and **increasing incidence** of chronic diseases associated with the overweight and obese.*

policies is crucial to foster broad-based sustainable development in both developed and developing countries.

- The impact of climate change on agricultural policies, in particular with regard to food security and sustainable livelihoods, is of much concern. Coordinated management and adaptation in view of a high degree of still largely unpredictable developments remains a particular challenge.
- The insertion of the climate variable into multiple policy areas, the assessment of its potential impacts and its policy coordination requires new and innovative policy-thinking and approaches, integrated management of multiple policy areas - such as agriculture and land use and management - in both rural and urban areas. The EU has started to deal with these interrelated challenges, inter alia, through its new green paper on “adaptation to climate change in Europe - options for EU action” and through the Community Lisbon Program 2008-2010.