

**FOURTH UNECE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

GENEVA, 1-2 December 2009

Agenda item 10. Cross-cutting issues, interlinkages and implementation of CSD-17 decisions

Intervention by the One Earth Initiative Society¹

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair,

I would like to raise a point that is of grave concern for many NGOs, and I am doing so in the spirit of dialogue.

The idea of “sustainable growth” is an example of cognitive dissonance, and putting the word “sustainable” in front of “growth” does not suddenly make it sustainable. The limits to growth have been acknowledged a number of times in this conference, so how can growth also be sustainable on a finite planet?

Growth, by definition, means “more”—more consumption and more production, and this inevitably leads to more resource use, and as we know, absolute decoupling is not taking place. In the UNECE Region, we already have 3 – 4 planet lifestyles, so we need “sustainable development”, which is about getting “better”.

Thank you.

Emmanuel Prinot
Executive Director
One Earth Initiative Society

¹ On behalf of the Citizens Network for Sustainable Development (CITNET). The text is presented as received from the author.