

**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 Swedish Presidency of the European Union¹



se2009.eu

**Swedish Presidency
of the European Union**

The themes of this CSD cycle are highly interrelated and are key to sustainable development. Mining, sustainable consumption and production, and waste management are major stages in the lifecycle of materials and areas which may have potential impacts on human health, decent work, and the environment. Sustainable transport plays an important role in ensuring effective communications, trade and migration, while having the lowest possible impact on the environment. The safe production and use of chemicals is key to protecting human health and worker safety.

Each of the themes has strong links with the crosscutting issues identified at CSD11. In particular the key roles of education and gender equality to promote safe and sustainable practices in each of the areas are vital. Not only in developing countries, Africa, and the SIDS, but also in developed countries.

This CSD cycle will cover a period when important global agreements will be made. The UNFCCC will agree to an ambitious deal on climate change. The Convention on Biological Diversity will agree on a vision and targets beyond 2010 for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and a high level review of the Millennium Development Goals will begin. It will be important that CSD remains aware of the key agreements made during the two year cycle and is able to maintain coherence with these processes and highlight the connections they have to sustainability.

The RIM is an important part of the process as it provides a venue for sharing lessons learned, identifying best practices and highlighting gaps to be filled. We believe the following messages should be conveyed to the CSD session in May 2010.

First, to highlight that human health, decent work, climate change and biodiversity are key interlinkages between the themes of CSD18/19:

- A healthy population is fundamental to prosperity, security and stability. It provides a cornerstone of economic growth and social development. The potential human health impacts of all of the themes covered in this CSD cycle are clear: from workplace hazards of miners or those that work with chemicals, to public health exposures, to poorly managed chemicals, waste, inefficient transport or degraded ecosystems. All too often health considerations are developed as separate policies whereas they should be an integral part of national strategies and international action.

- Decent work is crucial to realize the MDGs and is a key element of sustainable production in all sectors. The decent work agenda includes health and safety issues and is thus closely linked to problems caused in the mining or chemical sector.

- The ecosystem provides benefits, assets and values for present and future generations. However current patterns of resource use, production, consumption and waste generation contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, and the degradation of ecosystems and biodiversity. The EU considers the evaluation of services provided by biodiversity and terrestrial and marine ecosystems is essential to support policy decisions to prevent loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems.

Second, to highlight the importance of improving education, of all societal sectors, including major groups to address the CSD topics:

The themes of this CSD cycle are closely related to all the cross-cutting issues identified at CSD-11 and many are addressed under the theme of sustainable consumption and production. However we should also highlight the role that education, including vocational training plays. Many of the topics we are addressing: mining, waste management and chemicals for example, are hazardous activities. However through the promotion of education and training policies for sustainable development, they can be carried out in such a way as to maximise their benefits and minimise potential problems.

Education must cover a range of activities including awareness raising, sharing of information and highlighting the costs of inaction. Education must equip people with knowledge of and skills in sustainable development, making them more competent and confident and increasing their opportunities for acting. Education policies must combine social, economic and environmental considerations, and encourage and empower gender equality, stakeholder ownership and rural communities particularly in the frame of natural resources and ecosystem services, and harness indigenous knowledge.

Third, to promote policy coherence:

The interlinkages between the CSD themes and human health, decent work, climate change, and biodiversity are recognised. It is therefore important that policy coherence is maintained and these themes are incorporated into national or regional sustainable development strategies, country poverty reduction strategies or aid assistance programmes.

Policy coherence is also important to ensure sustainable growth with focus on sustainable use of natural resources and sustainable consumption and production. This will improve the well-being of all citizens while at the same time reducing the use of energy and natural resources and protecting health and the environment. It is important to use employment and education policies and measures to reduce current skills gaps for eco-efficiency and facilitate worker's employability in higher growth sectors. Examples of this are eco-efficient construction and housing, sustainable transport, renewable energy and recycling.

At the international level we should also be seeking further co-operation and co-ordination among the international institutions. Synergies among global initiatives and agreements that are pursuing the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, as well as mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change are required in order to reduce poverty.

We would encourage CSD to take note of the outcomes of the climate conference in Copenhagen, CBD COP 10 in October 2010, and the high level review of the MDGs, to build upon agreements there. We should also ensure that the Rio Conventions are more closely linked in order to see to it that co-benefits for climate change and natural resources are realised.

We should build upon, and even strengthen, initiatives such as the UN 'Delivering as One' to encourage co-ordination within capitals, regions and internationally, and support and strengthen the on-going processes of reform of International Environmental Governance (IEG).