



## FOURTH UNECE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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### KEYNOTE ADDRESS

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Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to assist in the opening of this Fourth RIM for the UNECE, preparing regional inputs for the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Sessions of CSD. The main themes of this CSD cycle - **Transport, Waste, Chemicals, Mining, and the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns** – are critical for sustainable development, and for the construction of a Green Economy. They are also at the core of UNEP's mandate.

I am also pleased to see that the cooperation between UNECE and UNEP continues and has been strengthened through various joint projects and initiatives beyond the collaboration on the RIM and the CSD. To quote only few, Energy Efficiency (EE 21), Environment and Security initiative (including Assessments), and the partnership on Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THEPEP), and the Astana process (Environment for Europe, 2011). I take this opportunity to thank my colleagues from UNECE for their work and cooperation in these joint efforts.

My main expectations for this meeting is to hear from countries in the UNECE region, what you consider are the priority issues that need to be addressed. Also what the most appropriate policies and useful forms of partnership and capacity building to be applied in these four sectors and on the cross-sectoral theme of Sustainable Consumption and Production. I would like to offer some insights and practical examples from our work in these areas, and some suggestions on overcoming barriers and constraints to achieving SCP in these sectors, and the ultimate goal of sustainable development.

**Decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation**, by enhancing the efficiency of resource use and protecting ecosystems, is the key for sustainable development - it requires modifying unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. As a concrete recognition of this, UNEP –together with UNDESA - has been leading the **Marrakech Process** since 2003. We have also set up **the International Panel on Sustainable Resource Management** focusing on scientific assessment from an environmental point of view. Most recently UNEP has launched the **Green Economy Initiative**, which is promoting the reshaping and refocusing of policies and investments in a range of sectors, including those of transport and waste management, but also extending to clean technologies, renewable energies, water services, building and construction, tourism, agriculture and forestry.



We are now developing the synergies between this work on the Green Economy and UNEP's long-standing work programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production. This includes our efforts through the Marrakech Process, to help construct the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on SCP that is one of the five foci of CSD 18 and 19. We believe that this 10 YFP will provide crucial support, delivered at regional and national levels, for the design of policies that achieve this decoupling of economic growth from environmental degradation, thus contributing to human welfare and social development.

Practical experience shows that a shift to SCP can deliver important social, environmental and economic benefits, enabling countries, companies and communities to “**do more and better, with less**”. Cleaner and more resource efficient production processes are less costly and more competitive, consuming less of our resource base and “ecological space”. Growing demand from consumers for more sustainable products is also creating new markets that “first movers” on SCP can turn into new jobs and revenue streams. For example, the European environmental industries lead the way with their technologies on the world market – in 2008 they generated sales of 2.2 percent of the EU's GDP and employ 3.4 million people.<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday we had a meeting with some European SCP experts, we discussed the issues of SCP and the 10YFP. Some examples of elements of the 10 YFP that could be critical for the UNECE region (*frame as actions to overcome “barriers and constraints”*) are: ...

From UNEP's point of view, the 10YFP could include elements such as:

- mainstreaming SCP in development strategies or design and implementation of national SCP action plans;
- specific examples of activities focusing on policy design, implementation and capacity building and training activities in resource intensive sectors, such as agriculture/food, building and construction, transport, tourism and industrial manufacturing;
- guidelines on design and implementation and capacity building and training activities to help shape key policies – eg sustainable procurement;
- activities influencing market forces, voluntary action by business and consumer choice, including the use of economic instruments, public and private procurement, corporate environmental and social responsibility.

In the course of the Marrakech Process, UNEP and UNDESA have developed a ‘mapping tool’ to help stakeholders identify the key programmes, policies and means of implementation that each region would like to see reflected in the 10YFP. The African and West Asia regions have already used this mapping tool. We hope you will consider using this harmonized, draft structure to frame your input to the design of the 10 YFP. The content is entirely up to you – the mapping tool will simply help us deliver a more comprehensive and coherent 10 YFP for the discussions at CSD 18 and 19.

## Transport

The main challenge is to develop a **comprehensive, holistic approach** to transport in a low carbon/green economy that combines different programmes and initiatives. We need comprehensive strategy that should combine policies and measures to:



- **avoid** transport (for example through better urban design, with people living closer to their work);
- **shift** to cleaner modes of transport (for example from cars to public or non motorised transport); and
- **clean** the different transport modes (for example cleaner cars and buses).

For example, the UNECE and UNEP joint project on Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) addresses key challenges to achieve sustainable transport patterns. It encourages national and local Governments to pursue an integrated approach to policymaking and put sustainable mobility at the top of the international agenda.

The Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles<sup>2</sup> and the Global Fuel Economy Initiative have made good progress in promoting technology and knowledge exchange for cleaner fleets in developing and transition countries. A global consensus seems to be emerging on **fuel economy and cleaner vehicles**, and most developed countries and some developing countries have set **targets** in the range of a 50% efficiency improvement by 2050, in line with IPCC recommendations. However, to reach this target we need to work as well on changing the increasing demand for transport and move towards sustainable modes of transport such as multi-modal transportation systems.

## Chemicals

In the area of chemicals there is an urgent need to reinforce the capacities of all countries in managing risks posed by chemicals and hazardous waste. It is also urgent to make available coherent international **tools and guidance** relating to chemical risk assessment and management, to chemical accident prevention and preparedness, and reflect the environmental perspective. Assessment tools and methodologies developed need to be **adapted** to the national environmental, ecological and socio-economic conditions that influence chemicals management decisions in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

Providing the **scientific, technical and policy responses** for the sound management of harmful substances related to **emerging issues** (such as nanomaterials, chemicals in products, lead in paint, and electronic waste) should also be supported, including through the SAICM processes.

## Waste

Unsustainable patterns of production and consumption are resulting in an increase in both quantity and variety of waste, which has become a growing problem for national and local governments. This ineffective and inefficient waste management results in green house gas (GHG) and toxic emissions and loss of precious materials and resources.

Moreover, rapidly growing waste streams such as electronic waste, waste plastics, and used oils and chemicals require special attention, aiming for higher material recovery rates worldwide. Therefore, an **assessment of the quantities and characteristics** of these waste streams needs to be carried out so as to identify programmes and appropriate environmentally sound technologies to promote material and energy recovery.

There is broad consensus among experts that the **quality of global data** needs to be improved, not only on the current amount of different types of waste generated, but also on the



expected future amounts, in order to develop projections which will allow adequate planning for resource recovery and substitution of virgin materials. The International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management has started work on estimating the benefits of metal recycling now and in the future, as the basis for more efficient urban mining practices. Under the Green Economy Initiative, an extensive research on waste recycling has been launched and the results will be disseminated to decision-makers, in particular in developing countries and countries in transition.

## Mining

While the availability of a rich mineral resource base provides unique development opportunities, the expansion of the sector in most mineral-rich developing nations has led to sub-optimal economic outcomes and underutilization of this sector's potential contribution to sustainable development. This is mainly due to the undervaluation of resources, the ineffective redistribution of benefits between the companies, the states and the local communities, and the weak economic interlinkages of the mining sector with the broader national economy.

The main challenge is to develop a **comprehensive, global approach** to mining in a low carbon/green economy that combines:

- (i) a **macro-economic case** for investments in sustainable mining, focusing on elements such as impact on employment, poverty alleviation, health, GDP growth and resource efficiency
- (ii) advice on how to address challenges and opportunities to mining such as **efficient energy and resource use, management of toxic substances, protection of ecosystems, labor conditions and relationships with communities**, among others; and
- (iii) demand-side pressure, business self-regulation, and green supply chain management through the application and development of good practices for the improvement of local economic, social and environmental conditions including through **Corporate Environmental and Social Responsibility**.

## Conclusion

I look forward to hearing your suggestions for prioritizing policies, capacity building activities and other forms of support to contribute to the sustainable development of these four sectors and the achievement of SCP.

I am particularly interested in hear from you what would be the key SCP objectives and themes to be considered when designing the 10-Year Framework Programme from pan-European and North American perspectives. And also learning what subregional SCP programmes could be established, with strong local ownership and scaled up funding.

Thank you all for your presence and involvement. I wish you a successful and fruitful meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> The Economist, 26<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Original source comes from the EC.