

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

GENEVA, 1-2 December 2009

**Agenda item 9. The 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and
Production Patterns**

Intervention by Poland¹

Poland considers it of key importance that the close linkage between actions to change consumption and production patterns and the goals of the economic and social development strategies be appreciated. Where the strengthening of synergies between environmental protection and economic growth is concerned, it remains particularly important that prudent use be made of environmental resources. Of particular importance in this context is support for scientific research and the diffusion into industry of environmental technologies, these being capable of strengthening the existing position of the EU as a leader in the market for environmentally friendly goods and services. It is also crucial that every effort be made to ensure that the environment is perceived by enterprises (especially SMEs) as, not merely an obligation, but an opportunity for the building of a firm's success.

What would also seem to be of importance is the further dissemination among Europe's enterprises (SMEs in particular) of the idea that voluntary commitments in the field of environmental protection and social inclusion should be taken on and met (via Corporate Social Responsibility). The measures should nevertheless take account of the stage of market development reached by each of the Pan-European region countries, as well as the management culture therein.

In Poland's view, direct action on sustainable consumption and production should be paralleled by efforts to raise society's environmental awareness. Education at all levels in such areas as the sustainable use of environmental resources, transport and building, but also in health and lifestyle sustainability, should give rise, not only to environmental benefits, but also to an enhancement of social cohesion.

At the same time, notwithstanding consumers' greater readiness to pay higher prices for environmentally friendly products and services than for other kinds, it is price that continues to represent the main barrier for most consumers. This first and foremost reflects the passing on to the consumer of the additional costs associated with limiting the negative influence on the environment of sustainable products.

Poland also backs the efforts to support retailers (including commercial chains) over the implementation of sustainable management policy. It is also showing interest in the idea of the eco-labelling system being expanded to include an environmental commitment sign, whose awardees would be retailers striving for greater sustainability.

¹ The text is presented as received from the author.