

## **RIO+20**

### **UNECE Regional Preparatory Meeting (Geneva, 1-2 December 2011)**

#### **Item 5: Assessment of progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges**

##### **Statement by the Major Group of NGOs**

Thank you mr. Chair,

Let me start by saying that the NGO MG would like to stress that the failure so far to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development that UNEP underlined, is especially relevant to the issue of the Green economy. Because the Green Economy should not only be within the carrying capacity of the earth, but also foster the wellbeing of people and other inhabitants of this planet. We need a fair and just green economy where people are living happy, healthy lives within the natural limits of the planet having left sufficient space for wildlife and wilderness – now and in the future. If we assess the current situation, it becomes clear that large scale actions are needed to enhance wide understanding by all stakeholders of the concept of such a green and equitable economy. For instance in the form of binding roadmaps or sustainable development goals. This will include the development of good governance, a human-rights based approach, international rules for green trade, and empowering local communities.

More specifically we would like to emphasize four vital topics that Rio+20 must establish, emerging issues if you like:

1) the removal of harmful subsidies to fossil fuels and nuclear and introducing progressive global environmental taxes on natural common goods and banning speculation on basic human needs like water, food, land and health care.

2). Policies for sustainable agriculture and fisheries , conducive to people's well being, the welfare of animals and the integrity of the natural resources and ecosystems services. These should be based on the findings of the International Assessment on Agricultural Technology, Knowledge, Science for Development. The ECE region should not only implement sustainable, humane agricultural models but also stop exporting the industrial, unsustainable models to other parts of the world and the land grabbing that goes along. In addition, sustainable fishing practices are essential.

The transformation of agricultural policies and governance is notably urgent with regards to climate change, especially considering livestock farming. After all, tropical rainforest is cut to feed European pigs and chickens. Priority should be given to climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies that build on local knowledge and capacities, and empower local communities with the technologies, financial resources and skills required in order for these strategies to be sustainable.

3. The adoption of an intergovernmental mechanism or instrument to assess the environmental, health and socio-economic impacts of new and emerging technologies, in line with the precautionary principle. We call for the outright ban on technologies that put the planet at grave risk

Last and perhaps most importantly, we need a financial sector and banks that serve the real, green and fair economy, instead of the current situation in which people and even governments have totally lost power.

