



**International Labour Organization**

Promoting decent work for all

# **Environmental governance Green Jobs**

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# Outline

- Social Dialogue and the ILO
- Selected experiences: Belgium, Brazil, Mercosur, South Africa
- Conclusions
- Enabling conditions for Social Dialogue

# Social Dialogue

- ILO Definition: SD includes all types of negotiation, consultation between, or among, representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest.
- The main goal of social dialogue itself is to promote consensus building and democratic involvement among the main stakeholders in the world of work.
- Informal or institutionalised, often it is a combination of the two.

# Social Dialogue

- It can take place at the national, regional or at enterprise level, inter-professional, sectoral or a combination.
- As a tripartite process or as bipartite relations only between labour and management (or trade unions and employers' organisations)
- With or without indirect government involvement.
- Successful social dialogue structures and processes have the potential to resolve important economic and social issues, encourage good governance, advance social and industrial peace and stability and boost economic progress.

# Role of State in Social Dialogue

- For social dialogue to work, the State cannot be passive even if it is not a direct actor in the process.
- It is responsible for creating a stable political and civil climate which enables autonomous employers' and workers' organizations to operate freely, without fear of reprisal.
- Even when the dominant relationships are formally bipartite, the State has a role in providing essential support for the process through the establishment of the legal, institutional and other frameworks which enable the parties to engage effectively.

# Social Dialogue and the ILO

- Adoption of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, by the International Labour Conference in June 2008
- It stresses that “all Members of the Organization must pursue policies based on the strategic objectives – employment, social protection, social dialogue, and rights at work
- It recognizes that these objectives are “inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive”.

# Global Jobs Pact, SD and Green Economy

- In June 2009 the International Labour Conference, unanimously adopted a "Global Jobs Pact".
- This global policy instrument addresses the social and employment impact of the international financial and economic crisis.
- It promotes a productive recovery centred on investments, employment and social protection, through social dialogue and collective bargaining and recognizes the green economy as a key area to be pursued.

# Some considerations

- Social Dialogue in the labour framework is a relatively established tradition.
- Undertaken in bipartite or tripartite fashion;
- On the other hand, environmental policies have been traditionally discussed among different stakeholders.
- However, env. policies have not been always understood as important in socio-economic terms, therefore unions and employers have not been involved and consulted in general
- This is changing...

# Selected experiences: Belgium

- Belgium: Sustainable Development Federal Council
  - National level; Institutionalized
  - Trade unions, employers' organizations and stakeholders (NGOs, academia, regional govern.);
  - Scope: climate change, energy, sustainable dev.;
  - Goal: define and review of the Sustainable Development Federal Plan through a participatory process;
  - The council also develops recommendations about strategic topics requested by the parliament or the federal government;

# Selected experiences: Belgium

- Recommendations have been agreed to:
  - COP15 (UNFCCC Copenhagen Conference)
  - Environmental tax system in the framework of sustainable development
  - Elimination of asbestos
  - Tax system in order to improve the energy efficiency performance in buildings
  - Sustainable management forestry
  - Electricity supply 2008-2017
  - National Action Plan on Environmental Health 08-13
  - National Climate Plan

# Selected experiences: Brazil

- Brazil: National Conference on Environment
  - National level;
  - Governments 20%, employers' organizations 30% trade unions and stakeholders (NGOs, academia, indigenous people) 50%;
  - Scope: environment, climate change
  - Recommendations to be considered by relevant ministries; 70% translated into policies, measures or programs;
  - Background: Agenda 21 (1997) which defined the main areas and priorities of the national environmental policy, in a participatory process.

# Selected experiences: Brazil

- 2003 1st Conference; 2005 2nd Conference.  
Both organized by the environmental ministry.  
Local and federal preparation meetings (150,000 participants)
- 2008 3rd Conference: preparatory meetings at local, regional, municipal, and state level (120,000 participants).
- Subject: climate change. Mitigation (forestry, agriculture, energy, construction, transport, industry), Adaptation (water supply, health, coastal areas, human settlements, ecosystems), R+D and education and awareness raising.  
Result: National Plan on CC

# Selected experiences: Brazil

- Information sharing platform on main concerns and priorities for the society
- Valid mechanism to collectively assess the implementation of public policies on environment
- Challenge: fully integrate decisions into national policies, not only environmental policies.

# Selected experiences: Mercosur

- Mercosur: Social Summit
  - Supra-national level;
  - Consultative forum on economic and social issues: employers' organization, trade unions, consumers' organizations) and different stakeholders;
  - Scope: integration of economic, social and environmental policies at the regional level through the participation of the society;
  - Space for discussion about strategic priorities for the region. Participation of regional and national groups;
  - Recommendations and proposals for implementation to be considered by the country holding the presidency. Non-binding;

# Selected experiences: Mercosur

- Mercosur: Recommendations include:
  - Strengthening social participation towards an integrated management of transboundary basins;
  - Organizing a regional conference on environment and natural resources in Mercosur (following the Brazil model);
  - Broadening the civil society participation in the working group on environment;
  - Follow-up and assessment of environmental dimension of regional integration initiatives;

# Selected experiences: Mercosur

- Recognition of the social summit as valuable place to discuss and share information among different key groups of the society;
- Socio-economic stakeholders dealing with environmental issues;
- Challenge: too linked to the national agenda of the country holding the presidency and level of engagement of stakeholders in the country;
- Weak participation of social groups on environmental areas;

# Selected experiences: South Africa

- South Africa: Long term mitigation scenarios
  - National level;
  - Local, regional and national government, employers' organization, trade unions and different stakeholders;
  - Scope: climate change and employment;
  - Background: The National committee for Climate Change, under the environment and tourism ministry, was established to advise the government on the position of the country in the UNFCCC conference;
  - Starting 2006: national participative process to define the potential mitigation scenarios;

# Selected experiences: South Africa

- South Africa: Long term mitigation scenarios. 3 objectives:
  - Involving main civil society groups on the definition of ambitious and realistic mitigation policies;
  - Advising the SA delegation to the UNFCCC
  - Advising on national climate change policies
  - As a result labour dimension is a cross-cutting issue of the proposal;
  - Valuable process in terms of information sharing, awareness raising, enhancing communication among groups and policies with broader support.

# Selected experiences

- Interesting experiences:
  - Germany: Sustainable Development Council and Climate change Council
  - Australia: Primer Minister's Council on Climate Change
  - Austria: Sustainable Austria Forum
  - Bolivia: Electrification committees
  - Brazil: Brazilian Forum on Climate Change and Agenda 21
  - Chile: Climate Change Council and agriculture
  - Colombia: National dialogue on poverty reduction and climate change adaptation

# Selected experiences

- Interesting experiences:
  - Ecuador: National Climate Committee
  - Sustainable Development Council in Slovakia, Estonia, Finland, Greek, Hong Kong, Ireland, Latvia, Mexico, Portugal
  - Spain: Social Dialogue Tables on the Kyoto Protocol and National Climate Council
  - Europe: Climate Change Conference and Social Tripartite Summit
  - India: Prime minister's Council on climate change
  - Mexico: Consultative Council on climate change
  - France: Grenelle de l'Environment

# Conclusions: Enabling conditions

- In order for SD to take place the following must exist:
  - Strong, independent workers' and employers' organizations with the technical capacity and the access to relevant information to participate in social dialogue;
  - Political will and commitment to engage in social dialogue on the part of all the parties;
  - Respect to the fundamental rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining;
  - Appropriate institutional support.

# Conclusions

- Main international environmental policies recognize participation as key elements and explicitly establish consultative mechanisms with stakeholders (Major groups- UN conference on Environment and Development (1992); Agenda 21);
- Following these guidelines, many countries have developed SD strategies under participatory processes (Europe);
- Consultative role in the beginning broaden to coordination role in some cases;

# Conclusions

- Different approach per region depending on historical, political social and cultural reasons, including the evolution of the importance of environmental policies and social dialogue.
  - Europe: traditionally decisions are taken in more participatory fashion;
  - Latin America: growing importance of environmental policies. Stakeholders and communities usually involved in decision-taking process;
  - Africa and Asia: in the starting point with only few examples;
  - In general, environment is increasingly present in agendas and priorities of social actors and labour ministries;