

Dear all,

this is the first of the two introductory statements made by the NGO Major Group at the opening of the second session of the multistakeholder dialogue, wednesday 30 January, UN, New York.

The MSD takes place in two parallel sessions today:

Discussion group 1 contains a multistakeholder dialogue on the topic "Progress achieved in applying integrated approaches to sectoral objectives of sustainable development"

Discussion group 2 contains a multistakeholder dialogue on the topic "Progress achieved in enabling multi-stakeholder participation in sustainable development institutions and mechanisms".

The statement was produced by an open working group consisting of NGO representatives participating in the PrepCom, on the basis of the NGO Major Group document delivered to the UN before the PrepCom (available at www.johannesburgsummit.org or www.rio10.dk).

This copy of the introductory statement for the second MSD session, working group 1, is distributed as widely as possible, in accordance with the expressed wish of the NGOs participating in the MSD at PrepCom II. All the NGO statements of the PrepCom will also be available at the website www.rio10.dk

The MSD will wrap up tomorrow, with a final plenary session: "General discussion on opportunities for new implementation initiatives that respond to the identified hotspots, constraints and participatory needs".

Please note that this distribution of NGO material is for the sake of spreading information. If you have any comments, criticisms etc., report them to your NGO representative at the prepCom or through other relevant channels.

Regards,

Rasmus Reinvang,
The Danish 92 Group
(Facilitating organisation of the MSD together with TWN and ELCI)

PS:

The text is enclosed as well as attached

NGO STATEMENT

Multistakeholder Dialogue on the
Application of Integrated Approaches to Sectoral and Cross-Sectoral Areas of
Sustainable Development
WSSD PrepCom II, January 30, 2002

The last ten years have seen a process of rapid economic and ecological

globalisation, resulting in the need for a new set of global rules to govern an increasingly smaller world. However, an integrated approach that takes on board social, ecological and economic concerns has been lacking in the global policymaking process, where the economic concerns of a powerful minority have largely dominated. The concerns of the poor and marginalized, and calls for a sustainable paradigm of development, have been ignored. Radical changes are needed to ensure that these social and ecological concerns are taken seriously.

NGOs will focus on some key areas that are by no means a summary of the challenges we face, but are merely representative. These include

- Governance based on principles and rights
- Poverty and impoverishment
- Finance and technology
- Production and consumption patterns
- Water
- Energy, and
- Agriculture

In addition, there are many other important issues, such as forests, climate change, oceans, biodiversity, toxics, mining etc, which we will not have time to raise in this statement, but we hope will come up in the discussion that follows.

Good governance

First and foremost, we call upon the governments of the world to establish a fair framework for an integrated approach to global environmental governance, based on the principles of democracy, equity and social justice; and on a clearly defined set of rights – not governance improvised to benefit corporations by freeing markets. In particular, we call for the establishment of institutional mechanisms at the global, national and local levels to ensure that all human beings have

- the right to a safe and healthy environment
- the right to effectively participate in the governance of their environment, and determine their own path to development
- the right to information, and
- the right to redress and environmental justice.

Any such global governance framework will also need to establish democratic mechanisms to ensure compliance with global environmental rules, which are applicable to rich and poor nations alike. The current tools of trade and aid are available only for the rich nations to use against the poor. Frameworks have to be enforced to combat corruption.

Address poverty

Three fourths of the world's poor live in rural areas, and rely on their immediate environment for their food, water, shelter and energy needs. They are potentially the best stewards of the environment. Global and national government should recognise the positive role the poor can play in ecological regeneration through forest regeneration, grassland restoration, soil and water management and in situ conservation of genetic resources. They should be suitably empowered to do so. At the same time,

- sustainable livelihoods should be rewarded through the global trading system,

with equitable mechanisms for payment for environmental services

- trade distortions that make the poor undervalue their natural resources should be rectified
- international financial institutions should stop imposing a Western model of development that is unsuited to the economic and ecological needs of developing countries

Multilateral agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification are powerful tools to address poverty. We call on developed country governments to show commitment and support to these conventions, and call on developing country governments to implement their commitments.

Provide finance and technology

If developing countries have to follow an alternate model of development than the polluting model followed by industrialised countries to achieve economic growth, they will need finance and technology to allow them to leapfrog to sustainable technologies. Industrialised countries should keep up their part of the bargain by providing these funds, and by investing in sustainable technologies. Because the developing countries will be taking an alternate path in the interests of the global community, such technologies should be in the public domain and be made easily accessible.

We call on the UN secretariat to assess how alternative financing mechanisms can be applied to achieve sustainable development. We further call on governments to establish a system of international levies, such as the Tobin tax, to fund sustainable development.

Address production and consumption

A mere 30 per cent of the world's population consumes 70 per cent of the world's resources. The rich purchase and consume products that are not created in their immediate environment, or even within their country. While the consumers are not immediately affected by their unsustainable habits, their consumption patterns wreak havoc on the habitat of the poorest. Globalisation and free trade further remove rich consumers from the ecological consequences of their consumption.

Little progress has been achieved in changing unsustainable production and consumption patterns. Among the main obstacles responsible for this lack of progress include resistance by governments in developing national policy frameworks, the continued promotion of consumerism by the mass media and advertising, and the erosion of accountability by corporate producers, not to mention the political influence of industries whose profits depend on unsustainable consumption. Furthermore, lack of understanding of forces driving unsustainable production and consumption – i.e. irresponsible investment and marketing – contributes to this lack of progress.

We call upon governments to support and actively develop, implement and monitor national policy frameworks and plans of action to achieve sustainable production and consumption in partnership with civil society. The starting point for this should be the implementation of the UN Guidelines for Consumer

Protection, with special emphasis on confronting barriers to change.

Water

Another area which illustrates the interlinkages between the social, environmental and economic pillars of sustainable development is water. This calls for the exclusion of water from trade, investment, credit and other agreements including those between governments and international institutions such as WTO, WB/ IMF and others. Privatisation of water supply should not be imposed on developing countries as a conditionality for funding, and cost recovery objectives should not be a barrier to poor people's access to water supply and sanitation.

Energy

With regard to energy, we call for the establishment of an international fund to assist countries to promote energy conservation and diversification into renewable forms of energy such as wind and solar. Such a fund will also promote equitable access to sustainable energy, poverty eradication, environmental and social protection, and technological innovation and dissemination. A rapid transition to renewable energy is the most effective way of dealing with climate change, which threatens lives and economies.

Agriculture

There is a growing appreciation that agriculture can have an impact on the natural resource base while enhancing food security and reducing poverty and gender equality. The key to sustainable rural development is to legally secure rights to resources by the landless, farmers and farmworkers, indigenous peoples and women. These assets include land and other resources (water,