
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

in collaboration with
United Nations Environment Programme
Asian Development Bank

The Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference
on Sustainable Development
Seoul, 19–20 October 2011

Report of the Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

I. Matters Calling for Action by the Secretariat or Brought to Its Attention

1. The Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20) adopted the Report of the Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for UNCSD and agreed to provide the Seoul Outcome of the Meeting as an input to the UNCSD.

II. Proceedings of the Meeting

A. Sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: Key challenges and opportunities

2. Under agenda item four on Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, the Secretariat provided an overview of the programme for the Meeting and procedures, followed by reports from a number of subregional, regional and global meetings related to the UNCSD.

a) H.E. Mr. Fa'amoetuloa Taito Faale Tumaalii, Minister of State, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Samoa, presented the outcomes of the Rio+20 Pacific Preparatory Meeting: Joint Ministerial Meeting, held 20–22 July 2011 in Apia, Samoa. His Excellency reported that the Pacific Meeting adopted the “Green economy in a blue world” theme for Rio+20 to reflect that the smallness and isolation of the Pacific population

does not allow sufficient human capacity to build resilience. Thus, capacity-building remains a key issue for sustainable development and the management of the global commons of the world's largest ocean. Small Island Developing Countries need additional and considerable external financing and seek agreements with the international community to improve access to funds.

b) Mr. Kilaparti Ramakrishna, Director of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia, presented the outcome of the Sixteenth Senior Officials Meeting of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC), which was held 1–2 September 2011 in Seoul, Republic of Korea. The Meeting of the North-East Asian countries discussed the need to reinforce political commitment to sustainable development. Countries in North-East Asia expressed the view that the Rio+20 should have a concise political declaration and a focused political document on its two themes that provide meaningful insights to formulating international development goals after 2015 with a vision for sustainable development. The Meeting also heard the views of member States on the issues of “the principle of common but differentiated responsibility”, “human security” and “green protectionism” with regard to the global discussion on a green economy.

c) Mr. Yifan La, Deputy Director-General of the Department of International Organizations and Conferences, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, provided an overview of the High-Level Symposium on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held 8-9 September 2011 in Beijing, China. Mr. La expressed that Rio+20 should be action-oriented and consensus-based and not renegotiate or retract agreed instruments, principles and outcomes of major summits on sustainable development. The international community should make provision for technology, finance and capacity-building for sustainable development. To facilitate this, renewed political commitment is essential for increasing the integration of all three pillars of sustainable development. Mr. La indicated that a green economy could be a good instrument to achieve sustainable development. Strengthened governance in all three pillars as well as improved integration among the three pillars is essential, and the United Nations should continue to play a leading role towards achieving that goal.

d) Mr. Dana Adyana Kartakusuma, Assistant Minister, Economy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environment, Indonesia, presented the highlights of the High-Level Dialogue on an Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development, which was held 19-21 July 2011 in Solo, Indonesia. The Dialogue produced seven messages: (1) the need for renewed political commitment for sustainable development and a translation of this commitment into implementation; (2) the need to ensure that the three pillars of sustainable development work together; (3) at the international level, the need for an organization to enhance the integration of sustainable development; (4) at the national level, the need for more integrated support for national strategies; (5) the need to strengthen the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); (6) the need to review and support sustainable development governance at the local, national and regional levels; and (7) the need for new and additional financing to enable implementation for capacity-building and technology transfer.

e) H.E. Mr. Ruslan Iskanderovich Bultrikov, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Environment Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan, delivered

a presentation on the progress made on the development of the Europe-Asia-Pacific Green Bridge Partnership Programme of the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative. Based on the Initiative, which was welcomed and endorsed as an outcome of sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED-6, in Astana, October 2010), the Green Bridge Partnership Programme was developed with international partners. The Green Bridge Partnership Programme was supported by the seventh Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Astana, September 2011) and proposes simple and practical measures to sustain reforms, create enabling conditions for green technologies, attract private green investment and transfer successful experience to interested countries and organizations. The Green Bridge Partnership Programme is proposed as an effective mechanism for supporting existing programmes, linking with various sectors of the economy and encouraging investment through policies and projects. The list of potential green projects of the Green Bridge Partnership Programme was presented, and all participating countries and organizations were invited to cooperate in these projects.

f) Mr. Rajneesh Dube, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forest, India, presented the outcome of the Delhi Dialogue on Green Economy and Inclusive Growth, which was held 3–4 October 2011 in New Delhi, India. Mr. Dube reported that many in the Dialogue considered the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities to be crucial in the context of reinvigorating Agenda 21; he acknowledged that poverty eradication is an important benchmark for green economy policies. The Dialogue reiterated that there should be recognition of national priorities and conditions that define the nature of the policies and strategies adopted by each country to green their economies. There is the need for creating a sustainable development fund at the global level to enable the transition to a green economy. The Dialogue also called for a green economy road map, with a tool box of flexible policies, instruments and best practices.

g) Mr. Sergio Luis Lebedeff Rocha, Minister-Counsellor of the Embassy of Brazil in Seoul, briefed the Meeting on the status of preparations for the UNCSO in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and expressed his expectation for active participation of all government and major group representatives in the Conference.

3. Key outcomes and recommendations from a number of stakeholder meetings were presented, as follows:

a) Ms. Chee Yoke Ling, Director of Programmes, Third World Network, presented a statement from *The Road to Rio+20: Charting Our Path*, which was held 17–18 October 2011 in Seoul, Republic of Korea. She indicated that although the environmental dimension of sustainable development has remained weak, the economic dimension characterized by market liberalism, privatization and deregulation has resulted in global financial instability. Employment and livelihoods, the rights of women, indigenous peoples, youth and other vulnerable groups have suffered for this. There is concern that the preparatory process has not sufficiently looked into the gaps over the past 20 years. She emphasized that the focus should be on the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development rather than on a green economy or green growth. There is a basic right to natural resources that should be used in a sustainable manner. Regarding the Institutional Framework for Sustainable

Development, the creation of a Sustainable Development Council at the General Assembly is recommended, along with strengthening UNEP and coordinating system-wide reforms.

b) Mr. Bruce McKellar, Chair of the International Council for Science (ICSU) Regional Committee for Asia and the Pacific, provided an overview of issues raised during the ICSU-UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Science and Technology Workshop in Kuala Lumpur in April 2011. The Workshop recognized that the continued use of the Earth's resources and ecosystems in an unsustainable manner will lead to the situation in which the planet will not support us, recognized already by the number of people living in extreme poverty. A green economy coupled with a clear commitment to poverty reduction is a practical way to achieve sustainable development, for which the indicators of sustainable development should be fully utilized. With regard to institutional reform for sustainable development, there is a need to integrate the environment, society, economics, natural and social sciences and technology in a holistic manner.

c) Prof. Hironori Hamanaka, Chair of the Board of Directors, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), summarized the outcomes of the International Forum for Sustainable Asia and the Pacific, which was held in July 2011 in Yokohama, Japan. The messages were: resilience is a key factor for pursuing sustainable development; a green economy is an important interim milestone for shifting towards sustainable development; and a better institutional framework for sustainable development is one of the necessary conditions that supports efforts by all stakeholders at all levels. With regard to the institutional framework, universal membership for UNEP should be realized, and there needs to be a strengthening and coordinating of existing institutions and networks at the regional level.

d) Mr. Paul Lagoy Quintos, Programme Manager, IBON International, reported on the meeting titled "Promoting a Transformative Agenda for Sustainable Development: A Strategy Workshop on Rio+20", which was held in August 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand. The outcome "People's Statement" called upon governments and the United Nations system to deliver on the promises and commitments made at the Rio Summit 20 years ago and asked that they reaffirm and operationalize the Rio Principles. The participants expressed concern that the green economy theme chosen for the Rio+20 does not fully or holistically address the social, economic and ecological challenges of sustainable development today. Instead, the participants requested governments to look at people-centred sustainable development that is supported and promoted by an enabling environment. Regarding the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development, Rio+20 should work towards establishing a broad inclusive multi-stakeholder consultative body or network that is tasked with supporting the promotion and implementation of Agenda 21 and Rio+20 resolutions.

e) Ms. Daphne Dolot Roxas, Executive Director and Co-convenor, Asian Women's Network on Gender and Development, presented the outcome of the Asian Women's Forum on Gender Justice and the Green Economy: Special focus on water, energy and food security, which was held 12–16 September 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand. Key recommendations from this meeting include the need for recognizing gender inequity and an integration of gender perspectives in planning, decision-making processes and implementation of programmes and projects in water, energy and food security. With respect to these three sectors, the participants called for a rights-based approach to

development and women's empowerment and that gender mainstreaming must include sex-disaggregated data, gender analysis, gender action plans, monitoring and evaluation, gender indicators, gender budget audits and support to women's leadership in all levels of decision-making.

4. Statements by representatives of member states, major groups and other organisations covered the topics of a green economy in the context of poverty eradication and sustainable development and the institutional framework for sustainable development and stakeholder perspectives. The highlights of those statements have been compiled in the Chair's Summary, attached as annex I to this report.

B. The Asian and Pacific Regional Outcome on Sustainable Development

5. It was agreed that the "The Seoul Outcome", as attached in annex II would be submitted as an input to the UNCSD.

C. Other matters

6. A number of participants expressed appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Korea for its generosity in hosting this event. Several participants also expressed their appreciation to the organizers and partner organizations for their support in attending the Meeting.

D. Adoption of the report of the Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting

7. The Report of the Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for UNCSD was adopted on 20 October 2011.

III. Organization of the Regional Preparatory Meeting

A. Opening session

8. The opening session included seven statements from distinguished speakers, organizers, partners, the host government and the UNCSD Secretariat.

a) The Secretary-General of the UNCSD Secretariat, Mr. Sha Zukang, opened the session with an overview of Asia and the Pacific, a region that represents more than half of humanity and has much to contribute to a sustainable future, considering its great progress in reducing poverty and protecting ecosystems. Mr. Sha emphasized that Rio+20 must start with a reaffirmation of the Rio principles and the need to renew and reinvigorate political will and commitment. In this connection, he highlighted that a green economy could be a vehicle for integrating the three pillars of sustainable development and a way of reinforcing coherence among economic, environmental and social policies and that the discussion on the institutional framework for sustainable development has been gaining importance and interest.

b) Mr. Nessim Ahmad, Director of the Environment and Social Safeguards Division of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), followed with remarks as a collaborating partner to the Meeting by stating that almost two billion people live without proper safe sanitation in Asia and nearly half of billion have no safe drinking water. Rising food prices place pressure on Asia's poor. Mr. Ahmad indicated that green policy measures and new green market opportunities may increasingly become key drivers for growth in the region.

c) Mr. Young-woo Park, Regional Director and Representative for Asia and the Pacific for UNEP, noted the potential for Rio+20 to contribute to the evolution of sustainable development in a way that recognizes and values Asian and Pacific assets and priorities. Regarding a green economy, he remarked that the concept is an instrument to achieve sustainable development and that a green economy would contribute to income generation, job creation and poverty reduction. He also noted that to achieve sustainable development, all three pillars of the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development—environment, social and economic—must be mutually supportive and reinforcing.

d) H.E. Mr. Henri Djombo, Minister of Sustainable Development, Forest Economics and Environment in the Republic of Congo, presented the perspectives of the African region in the lead up to the UNCSA and stressed that the Asia and Pacific region and Africa share a common destiny in the context of sustainable development, in particular, through Rio+20 and beyond. He said that Rio+20 should present the opportunity to catalyse a paradigm shift in growth in the twenty-first century and strengthen cooperation between industrialized and developing countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

e) Representing the UNCSA Bureau, Ambassador Kim Sook indicated that a green economy has particular relevance to the Asia and Pacific region and can provide an alternative development path for sustainable growth and environmental protection, which will ultimately contribute to eradicating poverty. A transition to a green economy requires strengthening strategic partnerships between developing and industrialized countries and utilizing public-private partnerships where possible. Institutional mechanisms to facilitate financial assistance and technology transfer to developing countries will have a significant impact on the success of Rio+20. In this context, strengthening the mandate of regional commissions should also be examined.

f) Representing the organizers of the Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting, Mr. Shun-ichi Murata, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCAP, highlighted that the region has plenty of home-grown innovative approaches for supporting the development of a green economy, considering it had the foresight to adopt a ministerial declaration that identified the need to shift towards green growth at the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific in 2005. He expressed his expectation that, based on their rich experiences, Asia and the Pacific can embrace this unique opportunity to form an effective and powerful regional voice so that the region can play a key role in the development of a global partnership for a green economy.

g) Finally, in the keynote speech, the host of the event, H.E. Dr. Yoo Young-Sook, Minister for Environment of the Republic of Korea, welcomed the delegates with the perspective that there is a broad consensus that a green

economy can provide an alternative development model by making the economy work for the environment. Her Excellency emphasized that the opportunities and benefits of a green economy must be maximized through effective policies that also promote social equity. She warned that the transition to a green economy will be a huge challenge for the international community, which will need to work together to make country-specific models for building green economies and narrowing the implementation gap.

B. Attendance

9. The Meeting was attended by 39 member and associate member States of ESCAP, specifically: Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Fiji, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam.

10. The non-member States of Brazil and the Republic of Congo were also present.

11. Four members of the UNCSA Secretariat and three of the UNCSA Bureau were also present.

12. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were present: the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Centre for Regional Development, the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the United Nations Office for Project Service, the United Nations University and the World Health Organization.

13. Representatives from the following intergovernmental organizations and other entities also attended: the Asian Development Bank, the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Global Green Growth Institute, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, the International Institute for Sustainable Development, the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

14. The following non-governmental organizations and civil society groups also attended: CropLife Asia, the Global Compact Local Network Korea, the International Chamber of Commerce, the Honam Petrochemical Corporation, Korean Metal Workers' Union, the Asia Pacific Network on Food Sovereignty, the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, the Indonesian Farmers and Fishers Society Organization, the Peasant Movement of the Philippines, the World Farmers' Organisation, the Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education, the Island Sustainability Alliance CIS INC, the City Government of Dipolog in Zamboanga del Norte Province, the Local Governments for Sustainability (South Asia), the International Council for Science (ICSU) Regional Committee for Asia and the Pacific, the ICSU Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, Asian Women's Network on Gender and Development, the Helena Benitez Global Forum, Philippine Women's University, Development Alternatives with

Women for a New Era, the Ecofund, the Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management, the Environmental Challenge Organisation (Singapore), the Freedom from Debt Coalition, the Jubilee South, the Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development, the Project Survival Media, Advocates for Youth, the Tunza Asia Pacific Youth Networks (UNEP), Youth with a Mission (Samoa), the Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration, the Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, the Centre for Environment and Development, the Earth Council Asia-Pacific Inc., the Forum for Nature Protection, the Greeneration Indonesia, the Greenovation Hub, the China Civil Climate Action Network, Greenpeace, the IBON International, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, the International Green Purchasing Network, the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement, the National Institute for Disaster Prevention, the Ole Siosiomaga Society, the Stakeholder Forum for Sustainable Future, the Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia, the World Society for the Protection of Animals, the Third World Network and the World Wildlife Fund International.

15. Nineteen observers from various international organizations, institutes, companies and civil society organizations were also present.

C. Election of officers

16. The Meeting elected the following officers to the Bureau:

a) *Chairperson:*

H.E. Mr. Yoon Jong-soo (Republic of Korea)

b) *Vice-Chairpersons:*

Mr. Yifan La (China)

Ms. Anna Klyukhina (Russian Federation)

H.E. Mr. Vijavat Isarabhakdi (Thailand)

Mr. Dana Adyana Kartakusuma (Indonesia)

Mr. Rajneesh Dube (India)

Mr. Golam Kibria (Bangladesh)

H.E. Mr. Ruslan Iskanderovich Bultrikov (Kazakhstan)

Mr. Sangov Odil (Tajikistan)

Ms. Christine Deborah Schweizer (Australia)

H.E. Mr. Fa'amoetula Taito Faale Tumaalii (Samoa)

Mr. Asif Qayyum Qureshi (Pakistan)

c) *Rapporteur:*

Mr. Atsushi Suginaka (Japan)

D. Agenda

17. The Meeting adopted the agenda EDD/UNCSD/RPM/1, with a slight modification to agenda item five:

1. Opening of the Meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.

4. Sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific: Key challenges and opportunities:
 - (a) Review of the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation) in Asia and the Pacific;
 - (b) Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication;
 - (c) Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development.
5. Asian and Pacific Regional Outcome on Sustainable Development.
6. Other matters.
7. Adoption of the report.
8. Closing of the Meeting.

Annex I

Chair's Summary

The Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
19–20 October 2011, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Almost 300 delegates from 39 countries of the Asian and Pacific region met in Seoul to prepare for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD). This document presents the summary by the Chair of the Regional Preparatory Meeting of the range of views expressed during the Meeting. It does not reflect a consensus on any of the issues discussed.

1. The emerging development challenges were highlighted by many interventions. The need to change development and economic models to respond to these challenges and as a way to improve progress on sustainable development and poverty eradication was noted.
2. At the same time, the diversity of the region's resource endowments, stages of development and capacities preclude a universally applicable model of sustainable development. Many countries in the region are already addressing sustainable development challenges with different national and subregional policies, strategies, initiatives and economic instruments related to the green economy. Several are establishing supportive national institutional frameworks, such as inter-ministerial committees and working groups. The outcomes of the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED-5, March 2005, Seoul), which addressed environmentally sustainable economic growth, or green growth, was a catalyst for many of these initiatives.
3. The shared priorities noted by many delegations included: access to basic needs, food security and sovereignty, equitable income distribution and the provision of opportunities for a better life in an inclusive and sustainable way. In relation to natural resource management, improving the management of marine ecosystems was highlighted. The challenges of climate change and the need for specific support in this regard were noted, especially for Small Island Developing States and for farmers. The priority development areas identified were: harmonizing rapid economic growth with employment generation and environmental sustainability; promoting sustainable urban development and transport; enhancing ecological carrying capacity; improving energy access and resource management for sustainable development; improving water resource management for sustainable development; and enhancing the resilience of socio-economic development to climate change and natural disasters.
4. There is a need to make provisions for the technology, financing and capacity-building that are necessary to support developing countries' efforts to achieve sustainable

development, including through economic transformation. Appropriate technology, technology cooperation and technology transfer need to be strengthened. Industrialized countries should take the lead in changing consumption and production patterns and help developing countries with financial support, technology transfer, capacity-building and market access. Related comments noted that integrated science (natural, social and economic) has a fundamental role to play in expanding the knowledge needed for sustainable development. At the same time, technological solutions alone will not address all the challenges—changes in social values and practices in addition to technical solutions will be required.

5. It was acknowledged that to drive the required changes, there is a need for all stakeholders to be engaged. The international community's support for creating an enabling environment for sustainable development, including through a transition to a green economy, would be required. Support to member States is provided by the Government of Republic of Korea, and among others, through the Global Green Growth Institute, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme.

6. The outcomes of Rio+20 should include practical measures for achieving sustainable development and for supporting a transition to a green economy at the global and national levels. Among the proposals made in this regard were: sustainable development goals that are linked to the Millennium Development Goals; the adoption of poverty-reduction goals that support the development of green economy indicators; and the adoption of sustainable development measures to complement national gross domestic product-boosting measures. Proposals relating to financing included the creation of a Sustainable Development Fund, the creation of a Green Economy Fund and a tax on financial transactions. Other proposals included the establishment of a Green Economy Clearing House and a Global Partnership on Green Growth as a way to support poverty eradication and sustainable development.

7. Other comments related to Rio+20 outcomes noted that the Conference should seek to make progress on food and water security and sustainable energy. A comprehensive approach should be developed to alleviate the short-term impacts of food shortages and excessive price volatility on developing countries. Rio+20 should agree to: increase research on agricultural and marine productivity; improve market access for farmers through greater trade liberalization and better market infrastructure; and to improve the coordination among international food security institutions. Rio+20 should also provide a valuable platform to share sustainable development best practice and encourage effective governance, including on water management and water-use efficiency in food production. In addition, Rio+20 should address access to sustainable energy by seeking to reduce the global energy intensity and expand the level of

renewable energy used in national energy portfolios. It was also noted that knowledge systems and innovations need to be galvanized.

8. An effective reform of the institutional framework for sustainable development would also support a just transition to a green economy. When the establishment of a Sustainable Development Council is discussed, provisions should also be considered for the participation of major groups' representatives.

9. An objective appraisal of the implementation of sustainable development commitments and action plans was urged, including identification of areas for further progress. There were calls for further progress on: strengthening the holistic integration of the environment, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development; strengthening national councils for sustainable development; defining post-Kyoto commitments; implementing the agreed Rio Principles, in particular Rio Principle 10 on access to information; gender equality, democracy and human rights; regulatory frameworks for financial markets; recognizing the importance of peoples' participation; addressing the challenges of the least developed countries and small island States; providing children and youth with education, training and opportunities; and addressing child labour and animal welfare.

10. Other areas where the need for further progress was identified included: a framework for promoting sustainable consumption and production, commitments to workers' rights and decent jobs; promoting rights-based approaches to development; participation of major groups in decision-making processes, particularly in relation to the management of natural resources; the use of gender-disaggregated data; and partnerships between business and industry, governments and the natural science, social science and technology communities.

Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

11. A green economy was identified as one of the means to achieve sustainable development, a vehicle for integrating the three pillars of sustainable development and a way of reinforcing coherence among economic, environmental and social policies. Some delegations further noted that a green economy was essential for achieving sustainable development and promoting economic growth for poverty eradication.

12. Although Rio+20 would consider this important theme, several delegations emphasized the need for Rio+20 to secure a renewed and strengthened political commitment to sustainable development. Potential confusion regarding the introduction of a new term to the international development agenda was noted. It was also emphasized that green economy measures could not substitute for Kyoto protocol commitments.

13. Although it was recognized that there is no consensus on the definition of a green economy, some common themes were identified: low-carbon growth that delivers affordable and sustainable energy supplies to households; sustainable consumption and

production; increased resource efficiency; strengthened measures to manage climate change; sustainable forestry management; sustainable development of mega-cities; the strengthened environmental health of oceans; resilience to natural disasters; and links between environmental degradation and the health of people and ecosystems, among others.

14. A transition to a green economy should follow a people-centred approach and should be clearly linked to poverty-reduction efforts. Comments in this regard included the following: a people-centred approach should address the needs of the disadvantaged and most vulnerable populations; there is a need to recognize human security issues; there is a need to improve social justice; and partnerships should promote sustainable development rather than be exploitative and opportunistic.

15. It was emphasized that member States need the flexibility to select those measures for achieving a green economy that are applicable to their own development contexts and that green economy options should be fair, open, inclusive, equitable and rules-based. Applying the theme of “greening economies” in the “blue world” context of the Pacific small island States and countries with a significant fisheries sector and large numbers of coastal communities requires special focus and attention at Rio+20. This is important not just for their benefit but for the sake of the globe as a whole, which depends significantly on the state of the Pacific Ocean and its resources. The “blue economy” approach reflects the importance of marine resources and ecosystems as a foundation for sustainable development, in particular for the many countries for which they are an important source of food, livelihoods, income and culture.

16. Several interventions emphasized that any transition to a green economy should be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. Some interventions also noted that countries should establish regulatory and market-based measures to facilitate such a transition in a way that mitigates any adverse impacts on the poorest and most vulnerable populations. This would also include the reform of environmentally harmful subsidies, such as fossil fuel and fishing subsidies.

17. Several delegations remarked that support provided to developing countries should be coordinated to promote aid effectiveness and that a transition to a green economy should not involve the imposition of conditionalities on overseas development aid. In the context of aid effectiveness, it was noted that there is a need for simplifying climate change-financing modalities to allow increased access and reduced transaction costs for developing countries.

18. It was proposed that the systematic exchange of knowledge and best practices for promoting a green economy should be supported through appropriate mechanisms that could include establishing knowledge-exchange platforms and centres of excellence in green technologies and global cooperation in priority sector areas, such as water, energy

and the marine environment. This would also include strengthening global observation networks to address climate change and natural disasters.

19. The implementation of a green economy must involve all corners of society, down to the community and individual levels. There were calls for: countries to integrate the concept of sustainable development into national education curricula; public awareness-raising campaigns; and for civil society organizations to be included in decision-making and implementing processes. A role for the private sector in research and development, technological innovation, investment and support through corporate social responsibility programmes was highlighted. There was also a call for the current and potential role of women in achieving sustainable development to be addressed at Rio+20, including encouraging full participation of women in economic and political decision-making processes.

20. The use of unilateral measures that use a green economy and environmental protection as an obstacle to trade must be avoided. It was proposed that support should be provided in the form of capacity development and technology transfer to ensure access to global markets for countries in the region, which is central to achieving a green economy and sustainable development.

21. The interventions of delegations further noted that a green economy would need to:

- Be built on sustainable production and consumption patterns and ensuring all people's well-being;
- Be implemented in a way that fully engages stakeholders to ensure an inclusive transition to more sustainable development pathways, including through equitable access to resources and opportunities for advancement and providing decent work and ensuring the equitable distribution of benefits;
- Ensure that these approaches are developed and maintained in a way that promotes a supportive and open international economic system that would lead to economic growth and sustainable development and does not constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade;
- Secure the necessary investments towards sustainable management of ecosystems, including through joint management and protection frameworks, such as the Coral Triangle Initiative and the Pacific Oceanscape framework; at the same time, the marginalization of communities must be avoided;
- Focus on the development and application of an explicit and supportive programmatic approach for poverty reduction;
- Mobilize financing from domestic sources in addition to international sources of financing, including by reducing or eliminating environmentally and economically damaging subsidies and internalizing environmental costs in market prices;
- Promote technologies that are critical for increasing access to basic services, in particular water, sanitation and energy, in an integrated manner and in addition to eco-efficient resource use.

Institutional framework for sustainable development

22. The core of sustainable development lies in the coordinated development of the three pillars of economic development, social progress and environmental protection. An institutional framework for sustainable development must be centred on ensuring that these three pillars are addressed in a balanced manner.

23. The international community needs to commit to a meaningful strengthening of governance in all three pillars and to make improving the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development into policymaking a priority.

24. Any reforms will need to focus on improving the functioning of governance structures in this regard on all levels—local, subnational, national, subregional, regional and global. Furthermore, reforms should also provide for the engagement of member States and with United Nations agencies to ensure the strategic direction and national implementation of outcomes as well as open and inclusive mechanisms for engaging all stakeholders, in particular the most disadvantaged populations, women and youth, in decision-making processes.

25. The United Nations should continue to play a leading role in advancing the progress of sustainable development and in providing technical and capacity-development support to developing countries. Better coordination among the United Nations agencies, programmes, funds and institutions needs to be ensured, following the principle of Delivering as One, which will increase effective field and country implementation. The role of regional commissions, as a key element of the regional institutional framework for integrating the three pillars of sustainable development, as per provisions of Agenda 21, needs to be further strengthened to effectively support the implementation of regional and subregional sustainable development strategies and plans.

26. At the global level, international financial institutions will also need to review their programmatic strategies to ensure the provision of better support to developing countries for the implementation of sustainable development. Also at the global level, Rio+20 should identify steps for reforming global governance for sustainable development, including short-and medium-term actions. Options for strengthening the United Nations Economic and Social Council and/or establishing a Sustainable Development Council should be considered. The role of any Sustainable Development Council should be to enhance the monitoring of the progress of sustainable development. To make any Sustainable Development Council that might be established as a result of Rio+20 more effective and inclusive, an advisory body consisting of major groups' representatives, including women and youth, and the scientific community could be established. Such a structure would need to be duplicated at the national level to allow for the effective implementation of sustainable development.

27. Any institutional reform needs to ensure that environmental governance is also strengthened to eliminate the segregation of the environment pillar from the economic and social pillars and to cater for the proliferation of the multilateral environmental agreements. Universal membership and predictable funding for UNEP would be important in the short run. Some interventions noted that the international community needs to review the options and/or support for further strengthening and elevating the status of UNEP to a global environment organization while others were against this proposal.

Partnerships for sustainable development

28. Global, regional and subregional partnerships proved to be successful mechanisms for a more inclusive approach to the implementation of sustainable development after the World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002. Forming regional and inter-regional partnerships to provide support for developing capacity, enhancing policymaking and decision-making processes and increasing awareness were emphasized as effective means for implementing, financing and transferring technology.

29. Delegates also proposed the following partnerships for sustainable development as regional contributions to Rio+20 outcomes:

- Astana Green Bridge Initiative: Europe-Asia-Pacific Partnership for Implementation of Green Growth (Kazakhstan). The Green Bridge Partnership Programme developed under this initiative requires a multilateral, long-term partnership, a more stable basis for green investments and a technology transfer mechanism for green technologies and innovations. The programme will be able to ensure free assistance and advice to countries and institutions on new technologies or innovation and also use other countries' experiences in to help to reform policies to attract green investment. The Government of Kazakhstan welcomed the participation of member States of the Europe and Asia-Pacific regions to share their experiences, lessons learned and best practices.
- Eco-city development as reflected in the Future City (Japan). The future megacities in Asia need to be designed and developed in a sustainable manner to maximize the benefits of low-carbon technologies and waste management.
- Initiative to Cultivate Sustainable Citizens (Japan). The development of human resources in Asia and the Pacific is the key to implementing sustainable development.

Annex II

Seoul Outcome

The Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
19–20 October 2011, Seoul, Republic of Korea

1. The participants of the Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development met in Seoul, Republic of Korea on 19-20 October 2011.
2. Recognizing that the Asia and Pacific region is one of the most diverse regional groupings, characterized by high economic growth rates while being home to the largest number of the world's poor,
3. Further recognizing that the diverse range of States in the region, including but not limited to Small Island Developing States, high-mountain States and land-locked States, continues to face many special and particular vulnerabilities,
4. Reaffirming the principles contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development Agenda 21, as well as the instruments further adopted for the implementation of Agenda 21, in particular the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,
5. Also reaffirming that the main objective of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) is to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assessing progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges,
6. The participants considered that the outcome of the Rio+20 conference should be:
 - Based on the Rio Principles, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities
 - Action-oriented
 - Forward-looking
 - Consensus-based
 - Inclusive
 - Supportive of global partnerships for sustainable development.
7. Participants agreed that a green economy has to be seen in the context of the overriding objectives of sustainable development and poverty eradication. The green economy approach should take into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in particular, in the context of the Rio Principles. In that regard:

- It should:
 - Promote sustained economic growth for poverty eradication
 - Be one of the means to achieve and promote sustainable development
 - Facilitate trade opportunities for all countries, in particular, developing countries
 - Address the three pillars of sustainable development in a comprehensive, coordinated, synergetic and balanced manner
 - Allow sufficient policy space and flexibility for governments to pursue sustainable development strategies, based on national circumstances and respective stages of development
 - Promote the inclusion of vulnerable sections of society, women and youth
 - Involve all stakeholders
 - Facilitate technological innovation and transfer and promote access to green technologies at affordable costs
 - Address the challenges of delivering a green economy in Small Island Developing States in particular, along with high-mountain and land-locked States
 - Increase resilience to natural disasters.
 - It should not be used as a pretext for green protectionism.
8. There is a need to reform and improve the institutional framework for sustainable development. The reforms should:
- Strengthen coherence and coordination
 - Enhance implementation at all levels
 - Strengthen governance in all three pillars
 - Promote the spirit of multilateralism
 - Improve balance and integration among the three pillars
 - Promote institutional capacity-building at all levels
 - Be aimed at enhancing the role of the United Nations at all levels, including regional and subregional levels.
9. The participants expressed their gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Korea, ESCAP, UNEP and ADB for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality.
