

Open Working Group on Sustainable Development- 10th Session
31 March- 4 April 2014
Cyprus-Singapore-United Arab Emirates

Thursday, April 3, 2014

Talking points

Focus area 13: Sustainable Cities and human settlements

- In the chapeau we would like to add the word 'safe' after decent so that we have 'decent, safe and affordable human settlements' as the cities we want should be free from any kind of threat, be it economic, social or environmental.
- Furthermore, we note the importance of sustainable consumption and production in relation to this focus area as cities are major consumers of water, energy and natural and processed products as well as generators of greenhouse gas emissions and waste.
- With regard to action area (a) on slums, we would like to endorse the UN Habitat's proposed target to half by 2030 the proportion of people living in slums in each country towards inclusive and adequate housing including by providing adequate infrastructure and basic services
- In action area (b) we would like to also include non motorized mobility
- Action area (c) overlaps with Focus Area 6 on water and Focus Area 14 on SCP and our initial assessment is that it may be better addressed under Focus Area 6
- For action area (d) resilience to climate change and natural disasters in urban planning should be highlighted
- Action areas (e), (f), (g) and (h) could be developed as indicators under selected targets of this focus area
- We attach great importance to and we are very supportive of action area (j) on cultural heritage and we would like to add to it "the revitalization of historic districts and the rehabilitation of city centres"

- Finally we consider the integrated planning and management of cities and human settlements, the protection and restoration of safe and green urban spaces– including preservation of urban ecosystems and biodiversity -and the implementation of green infrastructure policies as vital elements that need to be taken into consideration while formulating any potential targets for this focus area. A possible target to consider could be ‘to increase the green park space and reach a park provision of 0.8ha per 1,000 population’.

Talking points

Focus area 14: Promote Sustainable Consumption and Production

- The Rio + 20 Conference recognized that sustainable production and consumption is a prerequisite for sustainable development and should be approached in a holistic way. Its cross-cutting nature has been mentioned by many in this room and a number of action areas under the SCP can be mainstreamed in other focus areas such as cities, economic growth, industrialization, infrastructure, energy, food, and water.
- In particular, we observe that there are not just strong linkages but direct overlaps in some cases, for example, action area (a) on energy efficiency (overlaps with focus area 7 on “energy”) and (d) on food waste (overlaps with “sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition”). As such, we may begin by identifying overlaps and discussing whether there are critical points that stand out, in order to judge if SCP may merit being a standalone goal.
- Our troika finds the action areas under the SCP comprehensive, however we also note that potential targets should aim to address ends rather than means.
- With regard to action areas g, h, i, j and l : while they are important means to achieve SCP, they may not all merit being addressed as potential targets

Talking points

Focus area 15: Climate

- Climate change is an existential threat to humanity and the planet. It has grave impacts on all aspects of life and as such it needs to be mainstreamed in all policies, plans and programs at all levels.
- We also would like to stress that given the on-going negotiations under the UNFCCC for a new agreement in 2015, goal/target setting in the OWG process that may prejudge or contradict UNFCCC negotiations should be avoided.
- There is a broad consensus in the room that climate change needs to be treated as cross-cutting issue across the spectrum of focus areas.
- Our troika is of the view that the action areas under climate change can be incorporated in other relevant focus areas. For example action area (c) can be incorporated in focus areas 8, 9 or 10.
- Disaster risk reduction and prevention has particular relevance to climate change, and action areas (b) and (e) may be further explored to increase resilience to disasters that are increasingly caused or exacerbated by climate change, including risks to coastal cities that are being affected by sea level rise.