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INTERLINKAGES AND CROSSCUTTING ISSUES

General

- The EU believes that in order to achieve sustainable development it is necessary to adopt a long-term integrated approach which takes proper account of social, economic and environmental factors and contributes to poverty eradication. It is also important to take into account the cost of inaction in policy making.
- The pursuit of narrow sector objectives in isolation risks compromising the achievement of wider policy goals, most of all regarding climate change.
- There are a number of interlinking issues, where taking action will have benefits for each of the thematic issues. Arguably, each of the thematic issues is in itself an interlinking issue. From our regional discussions and from the Secretary General's report, we realise that there are a few key inter-linkages such as transport and planning which require particular attention. Taking action on these will have benefits for each of the issues in this thematic cluster.

Crosscutting Issues

- We also believe it is important to address the crosscutting issues, including means of implementation, that were agreed at CSD11. To mention just a few these include:
 - Poverty eradication
 - Changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption
 - Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development
 - Capacity building
 - Finance and investment
 - Gender equality
 - Health
 - Education
- **Poverty eradication** is an overarching objective and essential requirement of sustainable development.
- Each country is responsible for its own sustainable development though regional and global considerations are vital given the cross-boundary effects of air pollution and similar. We firmly agree with the Secretary General on the need for strong **national development strategies**, which take account of energy for sustainable development, industrial development – including changing patterns of consumption and production, air pollution and climate change.
- In all countries, sustainable development has so far not been sufficiently integrated in policy-making and planning processes. Still, the goals and development areas of

different sectors are not balanced to ensure sustainability. The JPOI commitment to formulate and begin implementation of Sustainable Development Strategies by 2005 must be recalled and further implemented. The EU stresses the importance of the peer reviews as a voluntary learning process for the governance of these strategies. Countries can benefit from this process, both as reviewed country and as peer reviewer.

- Environmental sustainability underpins the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. **Protecting and managing our natural resource base** is therefore fundamental to achieving lasting development.
- Nature provides immeasurable benefits to the six billion people living on our planet. By exploiting the world's diverse natural resources, humankind has achieved improvements in well-being over the last few centuries. Since the world's natural resources are limited, and ecosystems are increasingly vulnerable, we should today be more careful than ever about the ways we use natural resources, as the underlying issue is the way we use natural resources and return them to the natural environment. In this context we reaffirm our commitment under the JPOI and the Convention of Biological Diversity to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth. We also wish to highlight our support to the implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification in that regard.
- In many countries declining budgets for **research and development** are hampering the ability of policy makers to find the most effective solutions to a number of the challenges we face.
- Inadequate development, lacking transfer and deployment of affordable, efficient and environmentally sound technologies and in some cases high costs of these technologies continue to hinder progress on each of the thematic issues.
- **Education**, as a tool of implementation, can contribute to the effectiveness of policies for sustainability.
- Access to education is vital to a sustainable economic and social development. Whilst some regions particularly Latin America and the Caribbean and South East Asia, have made excellent progress in achieving the MDG of achieving access to primary education for all by 2015, significant barriers still remain in other regions, including sub-Saharan Africa. These are well known and include competing demands on children, in particular girls, to undertake domestic chores, lack of resources, lack of infrastructure and lack of energy to enable schools to function. Campaigns and communication initiatives could support awareness and respect of basic human rights.
- The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development provides an appropriate long-term framework of reference. It is important to coordinate various initiatives to ensure effectiveness of the overall processes. The UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development represents a regional contribution to the Decade with the aim to support the achievement of sustainable development and could provide guidelines for other regions.