

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

1. Ensuring an effective institutional framework for sustainable development at all levels is key to the realization of the goals of sustainable development. To achieve these goals and to meet the emerging challenges, the sustainable development governance architecture needs to be strengthened at the international, regional and national levels as these are inextricably linked and mutually interdependent. There is a clear need to enhance the responsiveness of the current institutional arrangements for the full implementation of Agenda 21, bearing in mind all relevant principles, including in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities of States.

Objectives

2. Measures to strengthen sustainable development governance at all levels should be taken within the framework of Agenda 21 and build on developments since UNCED and focus inter alia on the following objectives:
 - a) Ensuring coherence and policy integration in the economic, social and environmental fields;
 - b) Strengthening implementation, monitoring and accountability;
 - c) Limiting overlap or duplication of activities, including within the various parts of the UN system, based on their terms of reference and comparative advantages;
 - d) Enhancing transparency, and participation;
 - e) Strengthening national and local capacities for, and commitments to, sustainable development and its pre-conditions;
 - f) Facilitating the integrated and coordinated implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the Financing for Development Conference and WSSD outcomes;
 - g) Promoting effective arrangements and mechanisms that integrate in a balanced manner the three dimensions of sustainable development i.e.: economic, social and environment;
 - h) Promoting horizontal and vertical coherence and consistency in policy formulation and implementation as well as effective coordination at all levels;

- i) Promoting transparency and effective involvement and accountability of all relevant parts of government and of civil society in the implementation of Agenda 21 and sustainable development decision-making;
- j) Strengthening institutional mechanisms dealing with effective policy formulation, coordination, implementation and review as well as reinforcing inter-linkages among these mechanisms;
- k) Addressing the constraints of developing countries for implementing sustainable development in the areas of financing, technology and capacity building, through inter alia the implementation of projects by the UN system, and based on their national priorities; and,
- l) Strengthening regional and sub regional capacities for sustainable development

Strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development at the international level

- 3. The international community should re-commit to the goals of sustainable development as reflected in Agenda 21 and the outcomes of WSSD in policy development and implementation. In this context the international community should:
 - a) Integrate long-term sustainable development goals, as well as support for implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of WSSD into policies, country frameworks, work programmes and operational guidelines of relevant UN agencies and the international financial and trade institutions within their mandates, while ensuring that their activities are consistent with, and respond effectively to the sustainable development goals and priorities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
 - b) Urge the international financial organisations to ensure that their macroeconomic policies and structural reforms take full account of, and are supportive of, sustainable development objectives and priorities, including those of developing countries so as to avoid adverse effects on the environment and social development;
 - c) Take concrete steps towards ensuring that decision making processes of international finance and trade institutions are open, transparent, equitable, rule based, predictable, non –discriminatory, take into account the need for special and differential treatment of developing countries and provide for more effective participation of all member countries including through enhancing the capacity of member developing countries and member countries with economies in transition to effectively participate in trade negotiations, as provide for in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, as well as

facilitating the contributions and participation of civil society in the work of WTO;

- d) Promote a better understanding, including through policy dialogue, of the links between trade/finance, environment and social development and, thereby, better appreciation of their implications for implementation of sustainable development at the national level and promote initiatives to ensure coherence between the rules of the multilateral trading system and the rules of multilateral environment agreements consistent with and in support of the work program agreed through the WTO;
- e) Strengthen collaboration between the UN system, International Financial Institutions (including the Global Environment Facility) and the WTO at the international policy level, regionally, as well as at the operational level, including through specific action orientated partnerships and networks, ensuring that all aspects of sustainable development are addressed, and support in particular developing countries' efforts in implementing Agenda 21 and the outcomes of WSSD;
- f) Invite GEF to take further part in financing not only the projects with global environmental benefits but also the projects that address domestic environmental benefits within the context of sustainable development;
- g) Increase the level of resources of the Funds established within the MEAs after the UN Conference on Environment and Development, along with enhanced delivery mechanisms to make those resources available to developing countries in an expeditious way

(paras f and g require further consultation**)**

- h) Strengthen and better integrate the social dimension in sustainable development policies and programs, as well as ensure that sustainable development objectives are fully integrated in policies and programmes of bodies which have a primary focus on social issues;
- i) Implement the outcomes of the UNEP Governing Council Seventh Session/Global Ministerial Environment Forum International Environment Governance process and to consider making membership of UNEP's Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum universal;
- j) Develop a collaborative partnership between the United Nations, agencies and organisations of the UN system, financial institutions and WTO to support implementation of sustainable development, as described in paragraph 12 and 13 below.

(sub- paras i and j require further consultation**)**

- k) Engage actively and constructively in ensuring the timely completion of the negotiations on a comprehensive UN convention against corruption as well as in the work on existing conventions, including extending their membership, as appropriate; and,

(para k which has been moved from the chapter on globalisation, requires further consultation**)**

- l) Develop a framework for trans-national corporation accountability.

(para l requires further clarification and consultation**)**

Role of the General Assembly

4. The General Assembly, as the principal organ of the United Nations should adopt sustainable development as a key element of the overarching framework for UN development activities, particularly for achieving the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Declaration development goals and give overall political direction to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the WSSD and ensure that their implementation is regularly reviewed.
5. The General Assembly is invited to consider moving social issues covered under the "Copenhagen Agenda" from its Third to Second Committee as a step towards making the Second Committee a sustainable development committee.

(Para 5 requires further consultation**)**

Role of ECOSOC

6. The role of ECOSOC in promoting sustainable development and in promoting overall system wide coordination and coherence in this regard, as stipulated in Agenda 21 and pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/227, should be strengthened through the following measures:

(paras 6 a, b, c and d require further clarification and consultation**)**

- a) Ensuring that the Council's 'high-level segments' take due account of sustainable development objectives, *inter alia*, through periodic consideration of major cross-cutting sustainable development themes. Recommendations in regard to such themes could be made by the Commission on Sustainable Development or other relevant bodies within the system, in consultation with the CSD;

- b) As well, the Council's 'high-level and coordination segments' should be held back to back every three years with a common theme on the implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of WSSD particularly those related to the necessary means of implementation for developing countries;
- c) Ensuring that the 'co-ordination' and 'operational activities' segments of ECOSOC sessions adequately take into account all relevant aspects of UN system's work on sustainable development, based on proposals by member states, recommendations in the reports of the Secretary General as well as in the reports of the Council's subsidiary bodies and the executive boards of the UN funds and programmes;
- d) Promoting greater complementarity, policy co-ordination and coherence of those activities of the Council's functional commissions and its other subsidiary bodies, which are relevant to sustainable development and implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the WSSD. To that end, the Council should consider:
 - (i) Inviting its functional commissions¹ and expert bodies² to transmit to the CSD those parts of their reports which are closely related to the agenda of the CSD;
 - (ii) Organising a sustainable development segment within the existing substantive session of ECOSOC where it would consider the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development along with relevant parts of the reports of its other subsidiary bodies and give guidance on their future activities;
 - (iii) Deciding that the Council's expert bodies whose mandates are closely related to sustainable development and implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of WSSD to submit their reports through the CSD to ECOSOC so that their recommendations would receive due consideration and comment by the CSD prior to ECOSOC consideration; and,
 - (iv) Terminate the work of the Committee on Energy and Natural resources and transfer its work to the CSD.
- e) Ensuring that ECOSOC's role in the arrangements to follow-up the Monterrey Consensus in partnership with the World Bank and the IMF as well as WTO are closely linked with its follow-up of the Johannesburg Summit outcomes, including monitoring of pledges that developed countries have made at the

¹ Statistical Commission; Commission on Population and Development; Commission for Social Development; Commission on the Status of Women; and Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

² Committee for Development Policy

Monterrey Conference. In particular, the spring meetings of ECOSOC and the Bretton Woods institutions should be further developed in line with the Monterrey Consensus (paragraph 61 (b)) and the Johannesburg Summit outcomes in the broader context of the implementation of Agenda 21, WSSD outcomes and the internationally agreed development goals including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.

Role and function of the Commission on Sustainable Development

7. The CSD should continue to be the central high-level body within the UN system on sustainable development and serve as a forum for consideration of issues related to the interface and inter-linkages between the three dimensions of sustainable development. While the role, functions and mandate of the Commission as set out in General Assembly Resolution 47/191 continues to be relevant, CSD needs to be strengthened to improve the effectiveness of international sustainable development governance and its future operations and working modalities will need to be modified in the context of the foregoing considerations. An enhanced role of CSD should include monitoring of the agreements as well as fostering coordination of programs and partnerships emanating from implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Summit at the international level. Consideration could be given to making the membership of CSD universal. (**** the last sentence requires further consultation****)
8. Within this context the CSD should give more emphasis on actions which enable implementation at all levels including promoting and facilitating partnerships involving governments, international organisations and relevant stakeholders for the implementation of sustainable development. The CSD should also maintain and strengthen its key role in policy formulation, fostering policy coordination and integration within the UN system of the issues of economic development, social development and environmental protection in a balanced manner, as they are interdependent and mutually reinforcing dimensions of sustainable development.
9. In relation to its policy formulation role, the CSD should:
 - a) Provide a forum for better integration of policies through interaction among Ministers dealing with the various dimensions and sectors of sustainable development through the high-level segments
 - b) Focus on new or emerging issues related to sustainable development, within the framework of implementation of Agenda 21 and WSSD outcomes.
 - c) Focus on the cross –sectoral aspects of specific sectoral issues as they relate to implementation of sustainable development.

- d) In relation to the above, build on the work of other institutions and structures which have the mandate for specific sectoral issues, and, as required, collaborate with these institutions in undertaking in-depth consideration of these issues.
 - e) Limit the preparation of negotiated decisions to less frequent periods and in the intervening periods, the CSD should focus on actions related to implementation of previously negotiated agreements, initiatives and partnerships.
10. In relation to its role to facilitate implementation, the CSD should emphasise the following:
- a) Review progress in, and promote further implementation of agreements, commitments and partnerships that have been launched as part of the implementation of and under the auspices of the WSSD and CSD, as well as other related partnerships, including identification of factors affecting lack of progress in implementation and take appropriate decisions aimed at overcoming these factors;
 - b) Review issues related to financial assistance and transfer of technology for sustainable development as well as capacity building. In relation to capacity building the CSD should encourage exchange of experience with respect to strengthening national and regional sustainable development governance.
 - c) Analysis and exchange of experience on measures that assist sustainable development planning, decision making, implementation etc. such as sustainable development strategies, environmental, social and economic impact analysis methods and use of indicators and geographic information systems. In this regard, the CSD could give consideration to more effective use of national reports and regional reviews.
 - d) Give periodic consideration to significant legal developments related to sustainable development.

(sub-para d requires further clarification and consultation**)**

11. In relation to policy coordination as well as stakeholder involvement and building partnerships the CSD should:
- a) Provide at the international level a primary meeting point for governments, international organisations and stakeholder interests relevant to sustainable development. For CSD meetings that are focussed on practical experience of implementation, governments, international organisations and stakeholders should be encouraged to include on their delegations experts experienced in implementation of issues under consideration.

- b) Give greater consideration to the scientific contributions to sustainable development, through for example, drawing on scientific advice of specialist organisations, encouraging countries to include scientists in their delegations and encouraging national academy of sciences and international and regional scientific networks to be involved in the CSD.

Role of international institutions

(Paras 12 and 13 require further consultation**)**

- 12. The collaborative partnership among the United Nations, agencies and organisations of the UN system, international financial institutions and the WTO called for in paragraph 3 (j) should:
 - a) ensure effective and collective support to the implementation of sustainable development at all levels;
 - b) secure coherence in the approaches of international institutions to implementation of Agenda 21, the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, relevant sustainable development aspects of the Millennium Declaration; the Monterrey Consensus; and the outcomes of the Fourth WTO Ministerial Meeting (Doha), and
 - c) ensure that sustainable development objectives are further incorporated in work of international organisations, funds, programs and financial institutions.
- 13. This collaborative partnership should operate as a high-level inter-agency co-ordinating arrangement on sustainable development which would include the principal UN agencies and institutions dealing with sustainable development, the international financial institutions and the WTO, and which will keep ECOSOC and the CSD fully informed on actions it is taking to implement Agenda 21 and WSSD outcomes.
- 14. To promote effective implementation of sustainable development at the international level the following is also required:
 - a) Streamline the international sustainable development meeting calendar so as to reduce the number of meetings; reduce the length of meetings; and, reduce the amount of time of meetings spent on negotiated outcomes in favour of more time spent on practical matters related to implementation. As well, organise meetings back to back and side to side where appropriate;
 - b) Integrate, as appropriate, programmatic initiatives of the Johannesburg Summit across sectoral institutions and ensure the involvement of the relevant elements of civil society and the private sector. In this context, establish modalities to follow-

up the new partnership arrangements included as part of the Johannesburg outcome. Participation of major groups in this context should be enhanced; and,

- c) Make full use of developments in the field of information and communication technologies.
15. The principle of non-discrimination among major MEAs should be fully taken into account in any structural reform aiming at strengthening International Sustainable Development Governance and Institutional arrangements. In this regard, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification like other Rio Conventions should have dedicated a specific and permanent financial mechanism. In this context, the international community should:
 - a) Commit to designate GEF as the permanent financial mechanism of UNCCD. In this regard, the GEF Second Assembly to be held October 2002, and the 6th Session of COP/UNCCD should take the necessary measures to this effect; and,
 - b) Invite GEF Assembly to respond positively and effectively to the demands arising from Johannesburg summit, bearing in mind that financing sustainable development requires substantial increase in the next replenishment of the GEF.

(**para 15 requires further clarification and consultation**)

16. Strengthening of international arrangements for sustainable development governance will be an evolutionary process. The international system needs to keep under review relevant arrangements, identify gaps, eliminate duplication of functions and continue to strive for greater coherence and integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development at the regional level

17. Effectively pursue implementation of Agenda 21 and WSSD outcomes and sustainable development needs at the regional and sub-regional levels through the UN Regional Commissions as well as other regional and sub-regional bodies, and other groupings of countries with common interests, including relevant trans-regional bodies. In this regard and based on the actions outlined below, the regional and sub-regional levels should be much more involved in preparations for, and in providing inputs to, CSD meetings and activities.
18. Improve intra-regional coordination and cooperation on sustainable development among regional commissions, UN funds, UN agencies, regional development banks, and sub-regional and other bodies and develop, or enhance, regional sustainable development strategies and action plans that reflect regional priorities.

19. In particular, and taking into account relevant provisions of Agenda 21, the UN Regional Commissions in collaboration with other regional, and sub-regional bodies should:
- a) Promote the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development into their work, in a balanced way. In this regard the capacity of the Regional Commissions to support implementation of Agenda 21, WSSD outcomes and other aspects of sustainable development should be enhanced;
 - b) Facilitate and promote the integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development into regional, sub-regional and other as well as national bodies e.g. by providing fora for exchange of experience, good practice, case studies and partnership experience related to implementation of sustainable development policies and initiatives;
 - c) Mobilize technical and financial assistance for the implementation of regionally and sub-regionally agreed programmes and projects and contribute to the provision of support to countries that lack adequate access to capital markets, and countries where poverty remains a challenge;
 - d) Consider establishing regional or sub-regional processes or changes to existing processes by which national reports on implementation of Agenda 21 and national sustainable development strategies are mutually reviewed and analysed, and experiences are shared; and,
 - e) Actively encourage new partnerships to tackle sustainable development challenges in the region and subregions and develop open and transparent dialogue processes with multi-stakeholder groups in a manner consistent with CSD practice.
20. Strengthen the sustainability dimension of bilateral and, regional and sub-regional programs agreements by including a commitment to sustainable development and establishing a dialogue to enable exchange of best practices as appropriate;
21. Support regionally and sub-regionally agreed development programs promoting sustainable development e.g. the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS by the international community.

Strengthening the institutional framework for sustainable development at the national level

22. Continue to promote coherent and coordinated approaches to sustainable development governance at the national and local levels as this provides an

important element for promoting cooperation and achieving coherence and consistency at regional and international levels. Also promote the establishment or strengthening of existing authorities and mechanisms necessary for policy-making, coordination and enforcement.

23. All countries should ensure that they have national sustainable development strategies in place by 2005, at the latest. Countries should also adopt and implement legislation in areas related to sustainable development, as appropriate.
24. National sustainable development councils or equivalent bodies should, where possible, be established or enhanced if they exist by all countries to provide a high level national focus on sustainable development policy development and implementation, including national sustainable development strategy processes and to emphasize equitable multi-stakeholder participation at all stages in implementing sustainable development. Such bodies should facilitate the dialogue between relevant government ministers and representatives of major groups and other stakeholders. National sustainable development councils should be composed of relevant government ministers and representatives of major groups and other stakeholders.
25. Ensure that there is policy coherence and integration between national and local sustainable development strategies and other development frameworks, including, where applicable, poverty reduction strategies.
26. All governments should promote sustainable development at the national level. Nevertheless, there is a need to strengthen the role of the international system in supporting capacity building for sustainable development governance at the national levels. The international community should therefore:
 - a) Enhance the UN system organisations' support for national efforts in building sustainable development including by ensuring that all aspects of sustainable development are adequately addressed in the UN Development Group and the UN Development Assistance Framework;
 - b) Ensure that the UN system supports measures to improve national sustainable development plans/strategies of developing countries and countries with economies in transition incorporating social, economic and environmental policies as relevant and ensuring full ownership and leadership by countries; and,
 - c) Ensure better integration of considerations related to environmental protection and sustainable management of natural resources in poverty reduction strategies as a tool to promote sustainable development.
27. Complement efforts by developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition, to enhance national governance arrangements for sustainable

development through undertakings by the international community in support of new or enhanced national governance capacity building programs related to sustainable development, including through:

- a) Cross-sectoral approaches to formulating national strategies and plans for sustainable development;
 - b) Participatory, multi-stakeholder approaches to dialogue and planning, including a gender perspective;
 - c) Policy analysis and management capacity, including multi-sector and interdisciplinary analysis of economic, social and environmental policy issues, and the use of multi-dimensional planning and assessment approaches and tools, including environmental assessment;
 - d) Negotiation and implementation capacity, for enhancing effective participation in international environmental and economic agreements and instruments;
 - e) Aid co-ordination and management capacity, including capacity to efficiently and effectively manage programme and sector-wide approaches; and,
 - f) Capacity development in monitoring
28. Significantly strengthen relevant UNDP programmes as a key mechanisms for supporting national sustainable development capacity building efforts. Multi- and bilateral development cooperation agencies should continue to play an active role in supporting developing countries in the development and implementation of national sustainable development strategies.
29. Enhance the role and capacity of local governments and stakeholders in implementing sustainable development including appropriate decentralization of responsibilities and institutions, local decision-making processes, and local ownership of resources and continuing support for Local Agenda 21 programs and other sub-national sustainable development strategies and partnerships.
30. Support the use of indicators for sustainable development, suited to country specific conditions, to be used at the national level on a voluntary basis.

Participation of major groups

31. Enhance partnerships between governmental and non-governmental actors, including all major groups as well as volunteer groups, on programmes and activities for the achievement of sustainable development at all levels, particularly at the national and sub-national levels.

32. Develop global multilateral guidelines on public access to information, public participation on decision-making and access to justice drawing on existing experience, including regional initiatives designed to implement Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration.
33. Acknowledge the importance of the interrelationship between human rights promotion and protection and environmental protection for sustainable development and invite further consideration of these issues in the relevant fora, including by continued cooperation between UNEP and UNHCHR.

(paras 32 and 33 require further clarification and consultation**)**

