



ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE DISCUSSION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE FOLLOW-UP TO RIO+20: 9 APRIL 2013

During its sixty-fifth session, the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) addressed the follow-up to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20) and the post-2015 development agenda for Europe. The full-day discussion was part of the session's high-level segment and took place at the UN Office in Geneva on Tuesday, 9 April 2013. Although the Commission decided not to hold a formal post-Rio+20 regional implementation meeting (RIM), the discussion in Geneva was seen by delegates as an important contribution to the implementation of Rio+20 decisions in the UNECE regional context.

Discussions took place in two panels: "The future of sustainability: from transition to transformation;" and "Sustainable development governance: regional implications and perspectives for the post-Rio+20 institutional set up."

During an interactive discussion led by panelists, participants from governments, UN agencies, Major Groups and other stakeholders discussed the relevance of the Rio+20 outcomes for the work of the UNECE. They suggested ways the Commission can contribute to the formulation of post-2015 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and the creation of new governance mechanisms to lead work on sustainable development in the future, i.e., the High-level Political Forum (HLPF). All participants commended the role of the UNECE in promoting sustainable development in the region, especially in standard-setting and developing indicators.

Delegates described their on-going work and plans to advance the outcomes of Rio+20 at the sub-regional and national levels. Specific proposals were offered both on SDGs and the HLPF. There was a general feeling that the SDGs should build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and take account of country-specific circumstances. As to possible SDG themes, most delegates singled out the green economy, sustainable energy, food security and nutrition, transport, water, role of cities, health, and sustainable consumption and production. On the HLPF, participants emphasized the need to build on lessons learned from the UN Commission on Sustainable Development,

and offered concrete suggestions on the HLPF's positioning in the UN system. Several delegates pointed out that if sustainable development policies are to be effective, focus might be shifted from global agreements and mechanisms to the regional, sub-regional and local levels where practical results can be achieved more quickly. Strong emphasis was put on civil society participation in sustainable development mechanisms at both the deliberation and implementation stages.

There was general agreement that the discussion of the two themes in Geneva was useful for defining regional priorities in the post-Rio+20 period, as well as areas where UNECE can assure results within its mandate and resources. Delegates also believed the discussion was useful to better understand the positions of countries and stakeholders in the region at a time when negotiations on the SDGs and the HLPF are taking shape in New York.

A set of Chair's summaries of the panel discussions was issued at the end of the meeting on Thursday afternoon. Delegates adopted the summaries as a series of annexes to the Report of the Commission.

IN THIS ISSUE

| | |
|--|---|
| A Brief History of the United Nations Sustainable Development Conferences | 2 |
| Report of the Meeting | 3 |
| Follow-Up to Rio+20 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda | 3 |
| Panel A: The future of sustainability: from transition to transformation | 4 |
| Panel B: Sustainable development governance: regional implications and perspectives for the post-Rio+20 institutional set up | 5 |
| Upcoming Meetings | 7 |
| Glossary | 7 |

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCES

STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE: The UN Conference on the Human Environment was held in Stockholm, Sweden, from 5-16 June 1972, and produced three major sets of decisions. The first was the Stockholm Declaration. The second was the Stockholm Action Plan, containing 109 recommendations on international measures against environmental degradation for governments and international organizations. The third set of decisions was a group of five resolutions calling for: a ban on the testing of nuclear weapons; the creation of an international environmental databank; addressing actions linked to development and the environment; the creation of an environment fund; and establishing the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the central node for global environmental cooperation and treaty making.

BRUNDTLAND COMMISSION: In 1983, the UN General Assembly established an independent commission to formulate a long-term agenda for action. Over the next three years, the World Commission on Environment and Development—more commonly known as the Brundtland Commission, named for its Chair, Gro Harlem Brundtland—held public hearings and studied the issues. Its report, *Our Common Future*, which was published in 1987, stressed the need for development strategies in all countries that recognized the limits of the global ecosystem's ability to regenerate and absorb waste products. The Commission emphasized the link between economic development, security and environmental issues, and identified poverty eradication as a necessary and fundamental requirement for environmentally sustainable development.

UN CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: UNCED, also known as the Earth Summit, was held from 3-14 June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and involved over 100 Heads of State and Government, representatives from 178 countries and some 17,000 participants. The principal outputs of UNCED were the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 (a 40-chapter programme of action) and the Statement of Forest Principles. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity were also opened for signature during the Earth Summit. Agenda 21 called for the creation of a Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), as a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED, enhance international cooperation, and examine progress in implementing Agenda 21 at the local, national, regional and international levels.

UNGASS-19: The 19th Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) for the Overall Review and Appraisal of Agenda 21 (23-27 June 1997, New York) adopted the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (A/RES/S-19/2) and assessed progress since UNCED.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The WSSD met from 26 August - 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa. The goal of the WSSD, according to UNGA resolution 55/199, was to hold a ten-year review of UNCED at the summit level to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development. The WSSD

gathered over 21,000 participants from 191 governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, civil society, academia and the scientific community. The WSSD negotiated and adopted two main documents: the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI); and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development.

The JPOI is designed as a framework for action to implement the commitments agreed at UNCED and includes chapters on poverty eradication, consumption and production, the natural resource base, health, small island developing states (SIDS), Africa, other regional initiatives, means of implementation and institutional framework.

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (RIO+20): The third and final meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20), Pre-Conference Informal Consultations facilitated by the host country, and the UNCSD convened back-to-back in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 13-22 June 2012. During the ten days in Rio, government delegations concluded negotiations on the Rio outcome document, titled *The Future We Want*. Representatives from 191 UN member states and observers, including 79 Heads of State or Government, addressed the general debate, and approximately 44,000 people attended the official meetings, a Rio+20 Partnerships Forum, Sustainable Development Dialogues, SD-Learning and an estimated 500 side events.

Participants at Rio+20 were encouraged to make voluntary commitments for actions to implement the conference's goals, with financial commitments from governments, the private sector, civil society and other groups. *The Future We Want* calls for the UNGA to take decisions on, *inter alia*: designating a body to operationalize the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production; identifying the format and organizational aspects of a high-level political forum (HLPF), which is to replace the CSD; strengthening UNEP; constituting an Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be agreed by the UNGA; establishing an intergovernmental process under the UNGA to prepare a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy; and considering a set of recommendations from the Secretary-General for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies.

In addition, the UNGA is called on to take a decision in two years on the development of an international instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea regarding marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. The UN Statistical Commission is called on to launch a programme of work on broader measures to complement gross domestic product, and the UN system is encouraged, as appropriate, to support best practice and facilitate action for the integration of sustainability reporting.

The text also includes text on trade-distorting subsidies, fisheries and fossil fuel subsidies. On SIDS, the text calls for continued and enhanced efforts to assist SIDS in implementing the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation and for strengthened UN system support to SIDS

to address ongoing and emerging challenges. It also calls for the Third International Conference on SIDS to be held in 2014.

UNGA-67: The 67th session of the UNGA adopted a resolution on the implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of Rio+20 (A/RES/67/203), which outlines the negotiation process for the creation of the HLPF, and recommends that the CSD hold a “short and procedural” final session following the conclusion of negotiations on the HLPF. The text also calls for the OWG on SDGs to report to the UNGA at its 68th session and to report regularly, taking into account the convening of the first HLPF, and the special event in 2013 to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

AFRICAN REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING (RIM): The African RIM took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 19-21 November 2012, together with the Eighth Session of the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development and adopted an Outcome Document. Recommendations focused on: arrangements for the HLPF; the SDGs, including Africa’s priorities, such as poverty eradication, food security and desertification, among others; and means of implementation. One of the recommendations called for the African RIM to be elevated to a high-level regional forum to ensure effective engagement of African countries in the HLPF.

LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN RIM: This meeting took place in Bogota, Colombia, from 7-9 March 2013, preceded by a Caribbean Forum on 5-6 March 2013 to discuss issues of importance to the sub-region. The Caribbean Forum adopted guidelines on how to continue working towards development in the Caribbean, which contributed towards an agenda for discussions around the Third International Conference on SIDS in 2014. The RIM provided space for delegates to express regional priorities for the post-2015 development agenda, including addressing inequality; sustainable consumption and production; broader measures for assessing sustainable development, including those related to health, education, environment and well-being; and new ways of financing, beyond traditional official development assistance (ODA).

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY OPEN WORKING GROUP ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: The first formal meeting of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) took place on 14-15 March 2013 at UN Headquarters in New York. Participants shared initial views on both the process and substance of the SDG framework, and suggested priority issues to include in the goals. The main areas emphasized were: eradication of poverty and hunger; employment and decent jobs; sustainable consumption and production; gender equality and empowerment of women; access to and good management of the essentials of human well-being, such as food, water, health and energy; and means of implementation. Delegates outlined views on integrating the SDGs with the post-2015 development agenda, and maintaining focus on implementation of the MDGs.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

On Tuesday morning, Chair Uglješa Zvekić (Serbia) welcomed delegates, noting the relevance of the meeting to discussions of the post-2015 development agenda. Delegates adopted the agenda (E/ECE/1463).

UNECE Executive Secretary Sven Alkalaj observed a stronger need for multilateralism, including an appropriate set of intergovernmental economic institutions. Highlighting member states’ agreement to create SDGs at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, he reminded everyone that “the clock is ticking.”

Joshua Lincoln, UN Office at Geneva (UNOG), addressed delegates on behalf of UNOG Director-General, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. He commended the work of UNECE on public-private partnerships, and its ability to combine regional and global perspectives.

KEYNOTE SPEECHES: Vladan Zdravković, Ministry of Energy, Resources and Environment, Serbia, highlighted the work of the Open Working Group (OWG) on SDGs in developing one set of clear and comprehensive goals, and recommended that goals and targets should include: water, land and ecosystems, mentioning forests; energy and resource efficiency, mentioning sustainable waste management; and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Gennadiy M. Gatilov, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Russian Federation, called for broad consultations on developing SDGs, especially on energy and transport, saying the SDGs should include the most important and quantifiable targets and indicators that can be monitored. On governance, he suggested strengthening the coordinating function of ECOSOC and synergy with the HLPF.

Elena Dumitru, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Romania, noted no incompatibility between environmental concerns and economic growth, and stressed the importance of the role of government in bringing about a green economy through standards, indicators and voluntary approaches. She called for focus on energy, water, transport, and management of land and forests, the 10-year framework of programmes (10 YFP) on sustainable consumption and production (SCP), and the role of civil society.

Tair Mansurov, Secretary-General, Eurasian Economic Community, noted the UNECE’s role in promoting economic recovery in the region, and highlighted, with the Rio+20 outcome in mind, the importance of focusing on regional priority measures, including green economy, food security, transport, and innovation. He described his organization as the nucleus of economic integration, which also covers the human-social dimension, and its specific projects including biotechnology, land re-cultivation and addressing risks from uranium extraction.

FOLLOW-UP TO RIO+20 AND THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Moderator Claire Doole, ClearView Media, invited Mark Halle, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), to deliver the keynote speech.

Halle discussed the lessons of Rio+20, saying that the world cannot depend on progress being made through global intergovernmental negotiations. He stressed the need to place

equity at the center of the development agenda, noting that this has been the main obstacle to lack of progress in negotiations, including those on climate and trade.

He suggested that, nevertheless, Rio+20 demonstrated widespread goodwill and resolve to progress on environmental issues, and proposed discerning which topics are “right to move,” suggesting the international community should stand behind issues that have gathered international momentum, for example, on removal of fossil fuel subsidies. He emphasized the potential for progress at the regional and sub-regional levels, citing as examples the work of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the C40 movement on cities.

On the green economy, he highlighted the need not only to address environmental challenges, but also to have an economy that offers and delivers social justice, calling on delegates to show leadership in their areas of strength.

PANEL A: THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY: FROM TRANSITION TO TRANSFORMATION

PANELISTS: Adnan Amin, Director-General, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), outlined the challenge of rising energy demand and its knock-on effects, including on food prices. He commended the adoption of renewable energy targets in many countries, noting that renewables have become the most economical solution to energy demand in many countries and regions. He highlighted China’s large increase in wind power installations, renewable energy investments in the Gulf countries and Africa, and the “favorable business case” for countries in southeastern Europe to adopt renewables.

Amin presented information on new jobs being created in the renewables sector, highlighting this as an economic opportunity for countries. He promoted IRENA’s development of tools to help countries make the right choices for their own situations, including tools for mapping solar and wind potential and IRENA’s “Renewables Readiness Assessment.”

David Stanners, European Environment Agency, presented on measures of progress towards green and healthy futures. He said that European Union (EU) environmental policies have had a greater impact on improving resource efficiency, rather than on enhancing ecosystem resilience. He noted that Europe currently imports 20-30% of its raw materials, shifting its own environmental burden abroad. He presented an EU proposal for a programme to run until 2020, titled “Living Well within the Limits of Our Planet,” which provides objectives for smarter and more inclusive growth. He highlighted the need for good information to be used in decision making.

Tim Campbell, Chairman, Urban Age Institute, emphasized the role of cities as partners of nation-states. He said that despite the failure of government negotiations, cities can develop innovations and are stepping into such areas as lighting, water, waste management, and internet services. He gave the example of rapid bus transit that has been adopted in some large cities without the support of national policies.

Olivier Cattaneo, Sciences Po Paris, listed several factors that must be taken into account when addressing the global food situation: food availability and sustainability; the need to increase productivity using limited resources, such as water, and reduce waste; access to food, especially for women and children; safe and nutritious and culturally proper food; and stability of

food prices. He spoke of the role of civil society and the private sector, and the link between food problems and political stability. He drew attention to changing trade patterns in food and the need to enhance the efficiency of global value chains, and reduce trade distortive measures and subsidies.

DISCUSSION: The EU stressed that the EU is aiming for ambitious follow-up to Rio+20, including on means of implementation. He highlighted the European Commission’s February 2014 communication setting out views on the post-2015 overarching framework for bringing together sustainable development and poverty eradication. He noted in particular: green growth as a central theme of the current EU strategy on jobs and growth; the importance of renewable energy to enhancing energy security, and the need for an integrated approach to building cities. He recognized the key role of agriculture and rural development in eliminating poverty, hunger and malnutrition, noting the contribution of small producers and family farms. He supported the UN Secretary-General’s “Zero Hunger” challenge and the reduction of food waste.

Germany acknowledged the diversity of EU member states and the UNECE’s strength in dealing with a range of challenges, including its statistical indicators for monitoring sustainability, and its ability to identify best practices and provide standards and guidance. He stressed that the green economy can take into account the different approaches, models and tools available in different countries, and is not a strict set of rules.

Turkey highlighted the UN Forum on Forests currently taking place in Istanbul, stressing its importance as the first high-level conference following Rio+20.

Romania, supporting the EU, remarked on its own transition to a green economy. She stressed the need for a national action plan, and mentioned efforts towards a “circular economy” approach, resource efficiency, integrated clean production, schemes for green investment, sustainable management of waste, and environmental education.

Summarizing the morning’s discussion, Stanners underlined the need for governments to create enabling conditions for civil society and, joined by Campbell, for cities in particular. Amin suggested taking specific approaches rather than continuing to seek global agreements. Cattaneo noted that in the area of food security problems are local and the solutions should be local as well.

When the discussion resumed in the afternoon, the Russian Federation supported the green economy, taking specific country conditions into account.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe singled out the Aarhus Convention as stimulating public participation in sustainable development. He hoped the link between sustainable development and security would be addressed in the follow-up to Rio+20.

Belarus suggested the UNECE could broaden its list of issues designed to assure transformation to sustainability. Croatia called on governments to support green business and investment.

The Women’s Major Group proposed prioritizing environment and health. On social protection and inclusion, she promoted a global social protection floor, saying the money should be accessed from tax havens. She proposed using the term “green and equitable economies.”

In response, Stanners affirmed the importance of environment and health to the green economy. On food security, Cattaneo referred to programmes and agreements to support small farmers, mothers and children.

Italy proposed a combination of carbon pricing and diffusion of low-carbon technologies to make “dirty” production less affordable. He highlighted the need for: creation of decent jobs; removal of price-distorting subsidies and ensuring efficient resource allocation; and analysis of the whole life-cycle of products, including carbon footprint analysis.

Austria presented its plan for creating green jobs through increasing investment in the environmental goods and services sector. On food security, he underlined Austria’s support of FAO voluntary guidelines on land tenure and responsible agricultural investment, and called for a common approach to reducing food waste and losses.

Slovenia recommended a human rights-based approach to post-2015 goals.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said that while unit costs of renewable energy are declining, they involve increased system costs. He noted that besides large investments in renewable energy, China has the world’s largest nuclear energy programme. He stressed that renewables and nuclear energy could complement each other.

The World Health Organization observed that that climate change, migration, unplanned urbanization, and air and water quality can trigger new threats to health. She concluded that health is both an outcome and a prerequisite for reducing poverty and contributing to sustainable development.

The Energy Charter Secretariat presented: its outreach to the North African and Southeast Asian regions; assessment of existing low-carbon treaties and protocols; and planning for a high-level workshop on the role of energy agreements in international trade. He said its constituency favors the elimination of fossil fuel subsidies, and setting up regional low-carbon infrastructure.

Summing up the discussion, Stanners highlighted the importance of listening to stakeholders, embracing complexity and uncertainties, and adopting an “anti-fragility” concept. Campbell noted that social equity and inclusion take place more fully at the local level, in cities. Cattaneo stressed the importance of multi-stakeholder solutions that are developed from the bottom up.

The NGO Major Group expressed concern that youth are being excluded. She rejected policies of austerity and, referring to tax havens, suggested tapping “the offshore league.”

PANEL B: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE: REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR THE POST-RIO+20 INSTITUTIONAL SET UP

Eviatar Manor, Permanent Representative of Israel to the UN in Geneva, thanked all speakers on the first panel, and opened discussions on the next panel on sustainable development governance.

PANELISTS: Nebojša Kaludjerović, Montenegro, urged the future HLPF to truly reflect the three pillars of sustainable development, saying the CSD had emphasized the environmental

aspect. He proposed strengthening the regional commissions and their vertical integration, and also noted the importance of sub-regional cooperation.

Enrico Giovannini, President of the Italian National Institute of Statistics and Chair of the Conference of European Statisticians, called for early involvement of statisticians to provide reliable data and investment in their work. He emphasized measurement of vulnerability and matching sustainable development policies with corporate and social responsibility. He informed delegates of a framework with a set of indicators for measuring sustainable development, which will be presented for endorsement by the Conference of European Statisticians in June 2013.

Vladimir Zakharov, Director, Institute of Sustainable Development (Moscow), and member of the Russian Federation Civic Chamber, urged popularizing sustainable development among the general public. He stressed the need for incentives, including respect for cultural heritage. He supported Halle’s proposal to identify particular windows for sustainable development promotion, for example, through sporting events. He also proposed considering the situation of countries with significant natural resources, such as Russia and Brazil, whose resources are valuable for the world.

Jan Dusik, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, presented decisions taken at UNEP’s Governing Council (GC) meeting in February, highlighting universal membership, and member states’ request for UNEP to work more at the country level and to strengthen its regional presence. He emphasized the need for the HLPF to build on the strengths of the CSD, and noted the request from the GC to make clear the links between SCP and the SDGs, adding that SCP should be one of the goals.

Ireland, on behalf of the EU, declared the EU’s readiness to play a part in establishing the HLPF, while avoiding overlap. He called for ensuring the highest-level political representation at the HLPF, and for the HLPF and post-2015 processes to work together in a complementary manner. He recommended exploring other models of civil society representation besides that adopted by the CSD. He suggested the HLPF could meet as a ministerial segment of ECOSOC, as well as having regular meetings at the UNGA. He said SDGs should take into account different national priorities, and be of a global and universal nature, as well as limited in number, action-oriented and linked to targets and indicators.

Belarus said the regional commissions are better placed to understand the needs of countries, and that this session should propose that the UNECE be included in the future mechanism of sustainable development.

France highlighted the role of public participation, and noted the UN’s Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean’s (ECLAC) interest in using the experience of the Aarhus Convention in the region.

Romania recommended avoiding duplication of the HLPF’s functions at the global level, and proposed the UNECE coordinate with UNEP on regional consultations to prepare input to HLPF deliberations.

The Russian Federation said the SDGs should be limited in number and well packaged. He opposed expansion of the three dimensions of sustainable development to a fourth area

of political issues and security, and having the HLPF as a new international supervisory mechanism with new bureaucratic structures. He mentioned the possibility of discussing regional arrangements after the HLPF is settled.

Children and Youth reminded delegates of the need for a special representative for future generations, and stressed equity.

Austria affirmed that there should be one set of SDGs, and the HLPF should be under ECOSOC but with links to the UNGA. Duplication should be avoided, and optimal use should be made of what is already in place. He emphasized that the participation of stakeholders is crucial.

The UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) referred to cooperation with the UNECE in green industry, and stressed the need to address the situation of middle-income countries. He informed delegates about the upcoming High-Level Conference of Middle-Income Countries, organized by the Government of Costa Rica on 12-14 June 2013.

Italy expressed concern that the weakening of the CSD had a negative impact on work at the regional level. On the OWG discussions, he recommended further exploring linkages between the SDGs and the HLPF, especially with regard to SDG review and follow-up processes, adding that the HLPF should become “the main body for sustainable development.” He proposed the UNECE could prepare regional contributions to the OWG on SDGs.

Kyrgyzstan, referring to the 2014 Ten-year Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action on Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries, called on the UNECE to work more closely with mountainous and landlocked states, including on trade, border crossing issues, and investments in eco-friendly small and medium hydropower. She envisaged greater scope for the involvement of transnational corporations in promoting the SDGs, beyond corporate social responsibility initiatives.

The Women’s Major Group, speaking also on behalf of NGOs and supporting Children and Youth, called for a single governance framework for SDGs and the post-2015 agenda, based on a principle of non-regression. She highlighted the importance of integrating with EU processes, for example on their water policy dialogues. She called for more work on “beyond GDP” indicators, including indicators for equity and well-being. She said that financing should come from national budgets, ODA, a financial transaction tax, a “polluter pays” tax, and elimination of subsidies, such as those for large fishing fleets. She emphasized transparency, public participation, the need to address asymmetries of power and the role of small and medium enterprises in sustainable development.

Giovannini noted that while MDGs refer to current conditions, SDGs must look to the future. He also explained the complexity of measuring the inter- and intra-generational dimensions, noting that more data will be needed, and that equity concerns mean going beyond national averages to examine different groups. He also noted the complexity of integrating regional dimensions in global goals, giving the example of different obesity and nutrition concerns in Europe and in Africa.

Kaludjerović agreed the HLPF should be linked with ECOSOC and the UNGA, with ECOSOC providing coherence to the three dimensions of sustainable development, and the UNGA providing universality. He also affirmed the need to strengthen the role of civil society in sustainable development processes.

Zakharov stressed the need to measure public awareness, and called for achievements at city levels to be extended to local community initiatives.

Dusik affirmed the role of the UNECE in ensuring that national and regional perspectives are accurately reflected in the global debate. He looked forward to UNEP assisting the regions, including Central Asian countries and regional bodies, to feed into the sustainable development process, avoid duplication, and support “the right platforms” for the regional governance of sustainable development.

Manor thanked the moderator and panelists for their contributions to the debate. He declared the panel closed at 6:00 pm.

On Thursday afternoon, 11 April, the Chair issued summaries of the panel discussions, on the understanding that these were not negotiated documents.

On follow-up to Rio+20 (Panel A), the Chair’s summary highlighted the interdependence of poverty reduction and environmental sustainability, the importance of innovation in contributing to a green economy, and the potential for treating the UNECE region’s diversity as a laboratory for testing different approaches to environmental challenges. It noted delegates’ affirmation of the UNECE’s work on statistical indicators, its Education for Sustainable Development initiative, and its performance reviews with regard to environment and innovation.

On sustainable development governance (Panel B), the Chair’s summary observed that the HLPF’s link to ECOSOC was still taking shape in ongoing negotiations in New York, and cautioned against creating the HLPF as a “heavily bureaucratized” structure. It noted views that the regional commissions should take an active role in both the HLPF and SDGs processes, linking the global and national level discussions. It also recommended considering the role of UNECE in the implementation of policy decisions, given its expertise with tools and approaches. The summary noted that various opinions had been expressed regarding the organization of regional meetings, including recommendations to avoid a proliferation of regional meetings, and to consider institutional arrangements at the regional level only after the HLPF is set up. The summary noted that the CSD model could be a starting point for exploring other models of public participation. It affirmed the role of stakeholders, and noted a proposal to have a representative for future generations in the HLPF.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Second Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals:

The second session of the UNGA Open Working Group will continue to discuss the elaboration of the SDGs. **dates:** 17-19 April 2013 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1549>

Towards a Post-2015 Development Agenda: Regional Consultations in Latin America and Caribbean: This meeting is part of a series of regional consultations for the post-2015 agenda and will include participation of civil society, the private sector, academia and parliamentarians. **dates:** 17-19 April 2013 **location:** Jalisco, Guadalajara, Mexico **contact:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mexico **email:** dudapartramites@sre.gob **www:** <http://participacionsocial.sre.gob.mx/docs/post2015/guadalajara/eng/programme.pdf>

Asia and Pacific Regional Implementation Meeting on Rio+20 Outcomes: The Asia and Pacific Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) will discuss regional perspectives on the global processes resulting from the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), such as the establishment of a High Level Political Forum to replace the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, and the development of sustainable development goals, and identify regional follow-up. The meeting is organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. **dates:** 22-24 April 2013 **location:** Bangkok, Thailand **contact:** ESCAP Secretariat **email:** escap-esdd-oc@un.org **www:** <http://www.unescap.org/events/RIM2013>

Arab Regional Implementation Meeting on Rio+20 Outcomes: The Arab RIM will discuss the outcomes of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development and their implications for sustainable development agenda in the Arab region. The meeting is organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. **dates:** 29-30 May 2013 **location:** Dubai, UAE **contacts:** Reem Nejdawi or Rita Wehbé, ESCWA Secretariat **phone:** +961-1-978 578 or +961-1-978-513 **fax:** +961-1-981 510/511/512 **emails:** nejdawi@un.org or wehbe@un.org **www:** <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNum=2044E>

International Labour Conference: The 102nd session of this conference is organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO), and will include presentation of a paper and general discussion on "Sustainable development, decent work, and green jobs." **dates:** 5-20 June 2013 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **contact:** Official Relations Branch, ILO **phone:** +41-22-799-8944 **fax:** +41-22-799-7732 **email:** RELOFF@ilo.org **www:** <http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/102/lang--en/index.htm>

High-Level Conference of Middle-Income Countries: The conference aims to create a platform for knowledge exchange and connection of middle-income countries, and to develop a joint action plan and declaration feeding into discussions of the post-2015 development agenda, and facilitating network governance structures for knowledge sharing. The conference will be hosted and organized by the Government of Costa Rica and facilitated by the UNIDO initiative Networks for Prosperity.

Preparatory meetings will be held in Geneva, Vienna, New York and Washington DC, including a 7 May Open Dialogue on Financing for Sustainable Economic Development in New York. **dates:** 12-14 June 2013 **location:** San José, Costa Rica **phone:** +43-1-26026-0 **fax:** +43-1-2692669 **email:** MIC-Conference@unido.org **www:** <http://micconference.org/conference/>

UNGA-68: The 68th session of the UN General Assembly is expected to be preceded by the first meeting of the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). A one-day session of the Commission for Sustainable Development may be held prior to the meeting. **dates:** 17-30 September 2013 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York, US **contact:** Saijin Zhang **phone:** +1-212-963-2336 (General Assembly Affairs), +1-212-963-7172 (Protocol and Liaison) **fax:** +1-212-963-1921 **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/> and <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1556>

UNGA Special Event to Follow up Efforts made towards Achieving the MDGs: The UN General Assembly (UNGA) will hold this one-day event during the 68th session of the UNGA in September. This will represent the occasion for leaders to identify actions to complete the MDG process and to provide guidance on priorities to focus on. **date:** 25 September 2013 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Saijin Zhang **phone:** +1-212-963-2336 (General Assembly Affairs), +1-212-963-7172 (Protocol and Liaison) **fax:** +1-212-963-1921 **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ga/>

GLOSSARY

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| CSD | UN Commission on Sustainable Development |
| ECOSOC | Economic and Social Council |
| HLPF | High-level Political Forum |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| ODA | Official development assistance |
| OWG | Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SIDS | Small island developing states |
| UNCSD | United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) |
| UNECE | United Nations Economic Commission for Europe |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNGA | United Nations General Assembly |
| UNIDO | United Nations Industrial Development Organization |