

UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM) for CSD-19

New York, 28 February – 4 March 2011

HIGHLIGHTS OF SIDE EVENTS

28 February

Oceans, Coasts and SIDS in Rio+20 Process

sponsored by the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands

The side event On Oceans, Coasts, and SIDS in the Rio+20 Process was organized as an interactive session attended by member-states, featuring panelist presentations by the Co-Chair and Head of Secretariat of the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands (GFO) and the Chief of SIDS Unit, Division for Sustainable Development, UNDESA. The representative of GFO made a presentation on the topic of “The Global Oceans Forum Assessments: How Well Are We Doing?”, while the representative of DSD/DESA spoke on “Supporting SIDS Preparations for the UN Conference for Sustainable Development, UNCSO Rio+20, 2012”. The stated objective of the side event was to provide a venue for discussion on the top issues related to oceans and coasts which SIDS countries would like to see in the Rio+20 process, and on how the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands could help to achieve these goals.

The Global Oceans Forum, with support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), is mobilizing to prepare a number of assessments of progress achieved (or lack thereof) on oceans and coasts in fulfilling the prescriptions of the 1992 Earth Summit and of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), with the goal of ensuring that oceans has a prominent role in the 2012 Rio+20 conference. The needs and perspectives of SIDS nations are of key importance in developing this global oceans agenda. It is important to push for oceans to become an important component of the 2012 Rio+20, and in particular, to explore the extent to which SIDS countries may wish to have certain analyses done related to SIDS and oceans for use in the Rio+20 process as part of the Global Forum’s planned assessments. In the last several years, the Global Oceans Forum has prepared a number of analyses related to SIDS and oceans, which we could work to update or reformulate as needed.

Throughout the session, discussion among panelists and the representatives from Micronesia, Australia, and Marshall Islands recognized the need for a broad framework with practical and specific goals at Rio+20 that focuses on green economy and holding accountable the agreements that have already been made. This includes upholding JPOI, mitigating climate change and circulating the most current research regarding such, while also considering the uneven stress put on the SIDS by larger country waste within a long-term strategic vision.

Public Transport and Sustainable Development

sponsored by the International Union of Railways (UIC)

In his presentation the representative of UIC stated that with 200 members worldwide, the UIC plays a major role in the rail transportation of freight and passengers throughout the

issues and be made aware of the consequences of minimal action in regard to chemicals management.

Global Outlook on SCP Policies

Sponsored by the European Commission

Sponsored by the European Commission, this side-event was to preview the upcoming report commissioned by UNEP entitled, "Global Outlook on SCP Policies", which aims to review a range of promising policy instruments, business and civil society actions at the regional and national level to promote SCP patterns. This report is jointly published by IISD and UNEP, and comprises of regional chapters written by the different regional offices of IISD, and a global chapter drawing together the regional issues into a global SCP policy outlook. The presentation included the case studies of Mauritius and Brazil, and their challenges and achievements in implementing SCP policies, as well as a brief overview of the reports contents.

The representative of the European Commission framed the discussion on SCP within the context of resource efficiency. This strategy for sustainable development has been a long-standing policy within the European Commission Action Plan on SCP, and encompasses the efficient use of all of the earth's resources whether renewable or non-renewable. Presentations from Mauritius and Brazil followed highlighting their experiences in implementing a SCP framework, and the areas in which challenges arose.

Mauritius, having been an original pilot country for the UNEPs SCP programme in 2007 had the greatest experience with implementation of policy. It was highlighted the need to have a strong political will, a strong umbrella environmental policy, funding and a strong vision such as 'Maurice Ile Durable' to successfully implement sustainable policies. The representative of Mauritius also pointed out the challenges of choosing the right projects to achieve maximum implementation of the seven priority SCP policies outlined. So far, 24 of 45 projects implemented have been successfully completed, but lots of projects were constricted due to inappropriate application to the situation of Mauritius either because of lack of funds, lack of technical capacity or lack of need.

business implementation, enforcement of implementation and impact analysis of implementation that could be improved in the different regions. At a global level however, a policy consensus on the importance of key issues within SCP appears to have been reached.

The issue of Civil Society inclusion and participation in the SCP process was raised during the interactive discussion, but no case studies were presented representing an example of civil society consultations at the regional level. One key reason given for this was the varying levels of interest at the national level in civil society participation and the restraints this placed on regional level consultations. One EU example was the web-based 'Your Voice in Europe' that had a very strong response from Civil Society, but was very taxing at an institutional level to adequately process responses.

Other issues raised during the discussion include the disaggregating of women's and children's data and role in SCP programmes, and how the implementation may differ for these vulnerable groups. Issues such as these are best addressed. They are best addressed.

The One Planet Living framework to communicate and implement sustainability was presented (Riddlestone). Tested primarily in London and 51 other cities, the framework uses a city-based approach to sustainably meet the needs of its citizenry as per the following principles: waste should be seen as a resource, travel needs to be reduced by drawing on communicative technologies, sustainable materials must be used in all construction, local and sustainable food diets must be emphasized, food waste minimization, water must be managed more carefully, space should be provided for wildlife and wilderness, the incorporation of cultural heritage (using traditional wisdom) into policy should take place, actions for equity and the local economy should occur, and improvement of human health and happiness must be taken into account.

The plan provides a framework for a policy change to reduce emissions in new homes to zero percent in the United Kingdom by 2016. Relatedly, the French process for green economy was outlined: to improve building energy and harmonize town planning, to organize more environmentally friendly transport, to reduce energy and CO2 emissions, to increase biodiversity, to better process waste, and to implement new ecological governance. Brief attention was given to financing such aforementioned projects in the form of a similar capacity-building Marrakech process model, sustainable tourism, and centralizing women as a cost-effective practical measure.

4 March

Green Economy: Ears to the Ground, Lessons and Priorities from National Dialogues on Green Economies in Four Countries.

Sponsored by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

The Green Economy Coalition has in the past year hosted dialogues in Brazil, India and Mali to discuss and help frame the debate.

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extreme poverty and environmental degradation due to human use was a key theme reiterated throughout the discussion. The need to change the institutional structure for dealing with environmental issues was discussed along with the need to address social,

It was stated that all human beings have the right to live a healthy life. Young generations