

## UNCSD INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: MONDAY, 30 APRIL 2012

On Monday, delegates resumed informal negotiations on the draft outcome document for the UNCSD. Working Group 1 focused on Section III (Green Economy). Working Group 2 considered Sections I (Preamble/Stage Setting), II (Renewing Political Commitments), and IV (IFSD).

### WORKING GROUP 1

**SECTION III: GREEN ECONOMY:** In an effort to streamline the text, Co-Chair John Ashe proposed various textual suggestions, referred to here as new Co-Chairs' suggested text (NCST). On approaches, visions, models and other tools to achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development, and on green economy as a tool for sustainable development, the EU proposed labeling green economy as an "essential" rather than "useful" tool. The G-77/CHINA said it would need to consult further, but preferred labeling the green economy as "useful" rather than "essential."

On general guidance for green economy policies (NCST pre 25 quat), the G-77/CHINA asked for a reference to CBDR, but SWITZERLAND, NORWAY, NEW ZEALAND, JAPAN and CANADA opposed reference to a specific Rio Principle.

On what green economy should be (NCST pre 25 dec), the G-77/CHINA sought, but SWITZERLAND, AUSTRALIA and the US opposed, text stating that green economy policies "require" an enabling environment, rather than "create" one. On reference to SCP, the G-77/CHINA inserted text on developed countries taking the lead. However, the EU, US and SWITZERLAND opposed this. The EU and US supported referring to resource efficiency. The G-77/CHINA reiterated its call for a paragraph dealing with what green economy should not be. JAPAN, supported by the EU, asked to include text on green economy being a common undertaking for all countries. Regarding a subparagraph on MOI for green economy, the EU, supported by CANADA, NORWAY and SWITZERLAND, replaced "support" MOI with "mobilize," and added "from all sources, national and international, public and private." The G-77/CHINA sought, but the US opposed, text referring to the right of development.

On efforts towards an equitable and inclusive transition towards green economy (NCST 25), the G-77/CHINA supported efforts towards "sustainable development" rather than "green economy," and inclusive "future" instead of "transition," adding that efforts be undertaken in line with national sustainable development plans and priorities. The US and JAPAN preferred retaining reference to green economy.

On each country choosing an appropriate path towards a green economy (NCST 25 bis), the EU modified language to reflect that it was not green economy that would be nationally defined, but rather the path towards such an economy. The G-77/CHINA added, *inter alia*, language on the sovereign right of states to exploit their own resources.

On managing natural resources in a green economy (NCST 26), the EU, opposed by the US, sought to include a reference to "climatic impacts." The G-77/CHINA proposed text calling on developed countries to "undertake significant changes in the lifestyles of their people." SWITZERLAND, with NORWAY and JAPAN, proposed moving the G-77/China addition to the paragraph on SCP.

On the job creation potential of green economy (NCST 28), the G-77/CHINA, with the EU, added text on necessary skills and on social and health protections. The US sought to replace references to "decent jobs" with "decent work," while SWITZERLAND, with the EU and REPUBLIC OF KOREA, proposed "green jobs and decent work." The HOLY SEE sought text on worker education.

On encouraging governments to develop policy options and regulatory frameworks that encourage SCP (NCST 28 bis), the G-77/CHINA proposed language on, *inter alia*: market-based growth strategies as insufficient by themselves (supported by the EU); and the importance of a national framework of social policies. The G-77/CHINA deleted reference to: green economy (opposed by the EU, the US, CANADA, the REPUBLIC OF KOREA and JAPAN); and the integration of social and environmental costs in economic decision making, with NORWAY and the EU preferring retention and the US reserving on this point. SWITZERLAND and NORWAY, opposed by NEW ZEALAND, favored listing specific policy options.

On green economy policies considering the contributions of small-scale farmers, fishers, foresters and indigenous people (NCST 28 ter), the EU, SWITZERLAND and AUSTRALIA, opposed by the G-77/CHINA, asked for deletion of language specifying "particularly in developing countries."

On green economy and integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development (NCST 29), the EU sought to add text on private sector participation, "from global firms to small and medium-sized enterprises." The G-77/CHINA added "new additional" to the reference on assistance. KAZAKHSTAN, with BELARUS, referenced middle-income countries.

On international support to facilitate the transition to green economy (NCST 30), the EU, with BELARUS and the US, proposed merging this paragraph with NCST 25 *dec*

This issue of the Earth Negotiations Bulletin © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Leila Mead, Delia Paul, Keith Ripley, Nathalie Risse, Ph.D., and Chris Spence. The Digital Editor is Manu Kabahizi. The Editor is Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the Bulletin are the European Commission (DG-ENV), the Government of the United States of America (through the Department of State Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs), the Government of Canada (through CIDA), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). General Support for the Bulletin during 2012 is provided by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Australia, the Ministry of Environment of Sweden, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, SWAN International, the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES), the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (through the Global Industrial and Social Progress Research Institute - GISPRI), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Funding for translation of the Bulletin into French has been provided by the Government of France, the Belgium Walloon Region, the Province of Québec, and the International Organization of the Francophone (OIF and IEPF). The opinions expressed in the Bulletin are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the Bulletin may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the Bulletin, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11D, New York, NY 10022, United States of America. The ENB team at the Second Round of 'Informal-Informal' Negotiations on the zero draft of outcome document of the UNCSD can be contacted by e-mail at <leila@iisd.org>.



or NCST 29. The G-77/CHINA added text on transitioning “through nationally defined visions, models, policies, tools and approaches.”

## WORKING GROUP 2

**SECTION I: PREAMBLE/STAGE SETTING:** Co-Chair Kim Sook recommended referring just once in the text to an issue or Rio Principle. He highlighted the need to resolve usage of terms regarding technology transfer, indigenous peoples and women’s empowerment.

The G-77/CHINA proposed removing introductory language on “sustainable choices” (CST 1 ter). The EU, supported by the REPUBLIC OF KOREA, highlighted the need for language acceptable to Heads of State.

On prioritizing poverty eradication (CST 2 and 2 alt), SWITZERLAND emphasized environmental protection and improvement as critical to addressing poverty.

On accelerating achievement of internationally agreed goals (CST 2 bis), SWITZERLAND said the text should take into account the broader spectrum of internationally agreed goals.

On reaffirming commitments (CST 2 quat), the G-77/CHINA proposed having two paragraphs: on principles and obligations under international law; and on the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and other issues, including the need to combat racism, xenophobia and related intolerance.

On freedom, peace and security (CST 2 quat bis), JAPAN suggested reference to human security. The US supported this proposal, while the G-77/CHINA opposed it.

On good governance (CST 2 quint), CANADA and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA supported a US proposal to delete “equitable” in the context of economic growth.

On strengthening international cooperation (CST 4), the REPUBLIC OF KOREA and others requested language on the “protection, survival and development of children.”

On conference themes and objectives (CST 5 and 5 alt), the G-77-CHINA said there is no agreement on transition to green economy as a conference theme.

## SECTION II: REAFFIRMING POLITICAL

**COMMITMENT:** On the Rio Conventions (CST 9), the G-77/CHINA agreed to redraft this so as to retain mention of CBDR specifically with respect to the UNFCCC.

On progress integrating the three pillars of sustainable development (CST 11), the G-77/CHINA proposed reinstating a paragraph on the impacts of climate change. In relation to fisheries, AUSTRALIA, supported by NEW ZEALAND, proposed retaining mention of “overcapacity” related to fisheries subsidies. ICELAND and CANADA bracketed fisheries text.

On poverty and population (CST 11 bis), the HOLY SEE maintained its reservation to mentioning population dynamics.

On areas of insufficient progress and setbacks (CST 11), the G-77/CHINA said it could not agree with a US insertion on “including access to sexual and reproductive health.”

On concern about the continuing high levels of unemployment and underemployment (CST 13 ter), the US asked to replace language on the “development of a global strategy on youth employment” with “development and implementation of strategies on youth employment.” CANADA and NEW ZEALAND supported this proposal.

On the need for sustainable development to be inclusive and people-centered (CST 14 bis), ICELAND, with NEW ZEALAND, asked to retain reference to the Cairo Programme of Action, the Beijing Declaration and the Beijing Platform for Action.

On countries in special situations (CST 15), the G-77/CHINA, supported by NEW ZEALAND, emphasized a proposal to convene an international SIDS conference.

On landlocked countries (CST 15 quat), the G-77/CHINA proposed alternative text outlining their particular challenges and reaffirming full commitment to addressing their special development needs.

On harmony with nature (CST 16) and cultural diversity (CST 16 bis), delegates agreed to the text, *ad referendum*.

On governments and legislative bodies (CST pre 17), the US qualified mention of environmental monitoring and assessments with “integrated with social and economic data.”

On the role of civil society (CST 18), the US, supported by CANADA and NEW ZEALAND, proposed access to “legitimate” information. ICELAND supported alternative text (CST 18 alt), including freedom of association and assembly, and the use of information sharing technology for accountability. The G-77/CHINA preferred using paragraph 21 *quint* on NGOs as a basis for discussion. The EU commented that “civil society” goes beyond NGOs. The US proposed new text (paragraph pre 18) on information and communication technologies (ICT) as integrating all three pillars of development.

On business and industry (CST 19), the G-77/CHINA proposed deleting mention of regulatory and policy frameworks. AUSTRALIA proposed compromise text supporting such frameworks “where market failure exists.”

On sustainability accounting and reporting (CST 24), the US proposed to replace “reliable and robust global system” with “global best practices.”

On the contribution of the scientific and technological community (CST 20 bis), JAPAN, with the US and CANADA, preferred deleting a G-77/China proposal related to bridging the technological gap between developing and developed countries. The HOLY SEE opposed this deletion.

On contributions of farmers (CST 21 quat), the G-77/CHINA sought to delete a reference to “reduce land degradation and desertification.”

Discussions continued in the evening, with delegates turning their attention to the section on IFSD.

## IN THE CORRIDORS

As delegates embarked on their second straight week of negotiations, the magnitude of the task still faced in streamlining the text seems to have hit home. Ongoing efforts to reduce the text to a manageable size became bogged down in both Working Groups. In particular, participants in Working Group II were pointing to a few “frayed nerves” and moments of tension as delegates tried to streamline the text while also preserving, where possible, their own positions and preferences.

Some participants were also reflecting on a Monday morning meeting of the Bureau with Major Groups and member States. While the event apparently elicited some interesting discussions on key UNCSD goals, some participants seemed disappointed. “The usual players were there—which is good—but it would have been nice to see a wider range of delegates,” said one Major Group observer. “Not enough energy this time around,” observed another comparing it with a similar meeting in March.

Meanwhile, avid music fans were speaking about Monday evening’s performance in the General Assembly Hall by an array of famous musicians and other celebrities for International Jazz Day. “This is one UN gathering where I don’t mind if it goes late into the night!” said a smiling delegate who had managed to secure a ticket.