

A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20)

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Events convened on Friday, 22 June 2012

UN System: Together for the future we want

Organized by UN System Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB)



Addressing the role of youth in sustainable development solutions, **Ban Ki-moon** announced plans to appoint a Special Representative from youth to provide high-level guidance on the way forward.

This high-level side event, moderated by Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary, ECLAC, considered the UN system's capacity to advance economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

Opening the side event, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted issues related to the green economy and green growth, vulnerable human populations and social protection floors as key areas of work to be undertaken by the CEB.

Helen Clark, Administrator, UNDP, addressed the need for integrated policy services to develop comprehensive solutions.

Achim Steiner, Executive Director, UNEP, welcomed the Rio+20 outcome for placing the dialogue on economic policy central to sustainability.

Juan Somavia, Director-General, ILO, considered future changes to production and consumption and the corresponding need for concrete analyses related to jobs.

Irina Bokova, Director-General, UNESCO, elaborated on the important role of education in the SDGs.

Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General, UN World Tourism Organization, addressed the importance of tourism and global mobility for development.

Joan Clos, Executive Director, UN-Habitat, described the importance of urbanization for sustainable development, stressing the role of planning and design.

On the need for social protection floors, Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director, UN-Women, emphasized the importance of social security systems and listed examples of effective implementation in certain countries.

Anthony Lake, Executive Director, UNICEF, focused on the innovation potential of communication technologies, stressing its ability to save children, girls and women.



Sha Zukang, Secretary-General, UNCSD (Rio+20), reflected on the progress made in the Rio outcome and described the UN system role as critical in ensuring that outcomes translate into action.

Continued on page 2

UN System: Together for the future we want

Continued from page 1

Ertharin Cousin, Executive Director, WFP, reported on strategies to ensure a diversity of agricultural development for diet and underscored the importance of food access for girls to enable their education.

Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director, UNFPA, emphasized the need to engage young people through social media.

Noting an atmosphere of pessimism, Rima Khalaf, Executive Secretary, Coordinator, UN-Regional Commissions, expressed her optimism for the momentum towards democratic societies based on rights and freedoms.

Margaret Chan, Director-General, WHO, listed the challenges facing public health, adding that a healthy population, workforce and women are prerequisites for sustainable development.

Navi Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights, reported on progress made throughout Rio+20 for ensuring human rights, stating that language on human rights is present throughout the draft outcome document.

Antonio Guterres, High Commissioner for Refugees, discussed how trends in, *inter alia*, climate change and population growth heighten humanitarian challenges and create conflict in certain regions.

Jose Graziano da Silva, Director-General, FAO, addressed the need to find better ways to improve access to healthy diets.

Michel Jarraud, Secretary-General, WMO, elaborated on water, climate change and natural disasters in relationship to sustainable development.

Koji Sekimizu, Secretary-General, IMO, discussed the essential role of shipping in any programme for sustainable development and emphasized its importance for job generation.

Konrad Osterwalder, Rector, UNU, addressed the need for research to focus on problems the UN is dealing with.

Rachel Kyte, World Bank, commended the coordination of UN bodies towards inclusive green growth.

Reflecting on the way forward, Sha Zukang, Secretary-General of Rio+20, underscored the need to ensure an effective and coordinated follow-up process to Rio+20.



Achim Steiner, Executive Director of UNEP, stated that the frontier of sustainable development occurs at the level of national policy making.



Helen Clarke, Administrator of UNDP, showcased the UNDP publication Triple Wins for Sustainable Development.

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UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and leaders of the UN highlight their efforts to support countries and coordinate policy for sustainable development.

Enhancing Science-Policy Links for Rio+20: The Future Earth Initiative

Organized by International Council for Science (ICSU), the International Social Science Council (ISSC), Belmont Forum of Funding Agencies, UNEP, UNESCO, the UN University and the WMO

This side event introduced the Future Earth Initiative, a global research programme aimed at understanding and coping with risks from global environmental change. The initiative will co-design knowledge by collecting views from developing and developed countries as well as multiple disciplines, including the natural and social sciences as well as engineering, arts and the humanities.

Chairing the event, Diana Liverman, Co-Chair, Future Earth Transition Team, explained that the initiative will build on the successful track record of policy-relevant research programmes and assessments, such as the Global Carbon Project, the Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS), and the IPCC. Liverman outlined Future Earth's research framework, which will integrate scientific capacities across thematic areas, including planetary boundaries, DRR and governance.

Yuan Tseh Lee, President, ICSU, underscored his support for Future Earth, stating the initiative will contribute to the implementation of Rio+20 outcomes.

Irina Bokova, Director General, UNESCO, recalled the UN Secretary-General's decision to create a science council led by UNESCO, and pointed to its fruitful collaboration with Future Earth.

Christian Blondin, WMO, stressing the importance of international cooperation, said Future Earth's innovations in interdisciplinarity and governance will yield solutions for multiple stakeholders at all levels.

Carlos Nobre, National Secretary, Brazilian Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, urged for better science communication, declaring that Brazil would be pleased to become a regional node for Future Earth.

Tanya Abrahamse, CEO, South African Biodiversity Institute, underscored the need for sharing and showing scientific, socially-relevant work in the South. She highlighted the need for Southern scientific voices to be heard.

Patrick Monfray, Co-Chair, Belmont Forum, highlighted challenges for Future Earth, such as bringing more countries on board, and identified potential issues for multidisciplinary research, including on food security, ecosystem services and green growth.

Heide Hackmann, Executive Director, ISSC, said enhancing the science-policy interface requires integrating scientists from different fields, civil society and the private sector. She said Future Earth's agenda is framed by social science, rather than bringing social disciplines in at the last stage of scientific research.

Amina Mohamed, Deputy Executive Director, UNEP, said the recognition of the role of science in the Rio+20 draft outcome is a crucial achievement, and provides a platform for further work on providing science-based policy advice.

Robert Watson, Chief Scientific Adviser, UK's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, said Future Earth is the multidisciplinary research programme that "we should have put together 20 years ago." He added that it will allow a transformation in the way science works for society by identifying problems and providing knowledge-based solutions.

In ensuing discussions participants addressed, *inter alia*, how to inspire young scientists and how to disseminate and make scientific information understandable for civil society.



Diana Liverman, Co-Chair, Future Earth Transition Team, said the initiative will help to write a new contract between science and society.



Yuan Tseh Lee, President, ICSU, stressed that science has, in recent years, become increasingly clear on the dangers global environmental change poses for human wellbeing.

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A roadmap for ECE Forests in a Green Economy

Organized by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), FAO and the Governments of Finland, the Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, Serbia, Sweden and the US

During this side event, participants and members of a high-level panel chaired by Heikki Granholm, Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and Bekir Kayacan, Turkey, convened to discuss the draft ECE Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy, which identifies actions required at the national, regional and international levels for a transition towards a green economy.

On the Action Plan for the Forest Sector in a Green Economy, Sven Alkalaj, Executive Secretary, ECE, elaborated on the five pillars of sustainable production and consumption, low carbon forest sector, decent green jobs, valuation of and payment for ecosystem services, and monitoring to improve forest governance.

Dominique Reeb, FAO Chief Technical Adviser, reported on the roadmap and timeline for the Action Plan, emphasizing broad participation in the country-led initiatives leading up to its adoption in November 2012.

On the priority actions for the Finnish forest sector, Jari Koskinen, Finland's Minister of Agriculture and Forests, proposed: replacing biomass use for energy with new sustainable solutions; innovative new technologies and products; enhancing service and jobs; and ensuring competitiveness and viability of current and new activities.

Veysel Eroğlu, Turkish Minister of Forestry and Water Affairs, presented on Turkey's proposed actions, including developing national forest standards, wood energy technologies, honey production forests, and mapping ecosystem services.

Magnus Kindbom, Swedish Vice Minister for Rural Affairs, focused on priority actions for the Swedish forest sector and introduced the Forest Kingdom Initiative, aimed at developing green products and services through: skills provision and raising youth interest in forestry, with a particular focus on gender; wood constructions and energy-efficient building technologies; tourism, including in rural areas.

During the ensuing discussion, participants prepared recommendations indicating priority actions to foster the transition to a green economy, and discussed, *inter alia*: the philosophy of nature conservation; payments for ecosystem services; diversity of and within ecosystems; standardization of forests in Turkey; and awareness-raising on the importance of forests in Europe.



Jari Koskinen, Finland's Minister of Agriculture and Forests, invited participants to "Metsä 2013," the joint meeting of the ECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission.



Veysel Eroğlu, Turkish Minister of Forestry and Water Affairs, emphasized the need for assessment studies to introduce PES.

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L-R: Magnus Kindbom, Vice Minister for Rural Affairs, Sweden; Veysel Eroğlu, Minister of Forestry and Water Affairs, Turkey; Bekir Kayacan, Turkey; Heikki Granholm, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland; Sven Alkalaj, Executive Secretary, UNECE; Jari Koskinen, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland; and Mustafa Kurtulmuşlu, Director General, General Directorate of Forestry, Turkey

Decent Work and Social Protection Floors for Sustainable Development

Organized by the ILO, UNEP and IMF

The event, moderated by Marcia Poole, ILO, provided examples of policies and programmes linking social protection, employment, economic and environmental issues.

Juan Somavia, Director-General, ILO, stressed the need to restructure the present development model so that social inclusion and socio-environmental concerns are integrated. In a follow up to the Rio+20 outcomes, Somavia drew attention to his organization's sector analysis of the green economy with a focus on youth. He stressed the need not just to protect jobs but also to go beyond the present economic model and have a vision with social dignity for livelihoods, families and peace.

Heikki Holmås, Norwegian Minister for International Development, underscored the importance of inclusivity, fairness and equity in the transition toward a green economy. Holmås called for exploring ways of how equity can contribute to economic growth rather than how economic growth can contribute to equity. He expressed hope that ILO policies would influence those of the IMF.

Tereza Campello, Brazilian Minister of Social Development, stressed the importance of political decisions and policies in ensuring that economic growth will include socio-environmental concerns. Stressing the importance of ensuring universal health care and education even during financial crises, Campello said that long-earned social achievements should not be sacrificed in the transition to a green economy.

Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, President's Delivery Unit for Development, Monitoring and Oversight and Head of REDD+ Task Force, Indonesia, called for the protection of forest-dependent people that protect biodiversity and mitigate climate change. Calling for changing conventional economic metrics, he lamented that the services of these people are not calculated in countries' GDP.

Achim Steiner, Executive Director, UNEP, stressed the importance of inclusivity as a tool in moving forward with the green economy. He explained that his push for a green economy began by meeting with the IMF and trade unions.

Min Zhu, Deputy Managing Director, IMF, highlighted the Social Dialogue between ILO and IMF. Min stressed the importance of integrating local practice lessons into macro and microeconomic policies. Noting that the IMF has leveraged ILO's social knowledge and UNEP's environmental knowledge, he said these latter institutions can leverage IMF's fiscal policies.

In the ensuing discussion, participants commented on: the importance of accountability mechanisms; appropriate combination of legislative and economic policies; and mandatory sustainability reporting. Noting that only 13% of international financial flows are ODA, one participant inquired on how to change the international economic laws such as regional trade agreements so as to rechannel the remaining flow toward an inclusive green economy.



Noting that increasing ODA cannot be the solution to all sustainable development issues, Heikki Holmås, Norwegian Minister for International Development, urged for new financial instruments such as currency exchange taxation.



Marcia Poole, ILO, said that Norway was instrumental in bringing together the IMF and ILO to discuss ways forward in bringing about an inclusive green economy.

More information:

<http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/green-jobs/lang-en/index.htm>

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L-R: Min Zhu, Deputy Managing Director, IMF; Juan Somavia, Director-General, ILO; Marcia Poole, ILO; Tereza Campello, Brazilian Minister of Social Development; Kuntoro Mangkusubroto, President's Delivery Unit for Development, Monitoring and Oversight and Head of REDD+ Task Force, Indonesia; and Heikki Holmås, Norwegian Minister for International Development of Norway