



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the
First Round of 'Informal-Informal' Negotiations on the Zero Draft of the
Outcome Document *and* Third Intersessional Meeting of the UN Conference
on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20)

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Events convened on Thursday, 22 March 2012

Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication: Sharing national experiences on frameworks for action

Presented by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)



Mohamed Nbou, Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment, Morocco, highlighted national pilot programmes on water and waste management, which will allow job creation and have environmental benefits.

This event, moderated by Laura Trevelyan, BBC, discussed national experiences in addressing green economy and sustainable development.

Nikhil Seth, UN DESA, saying that green economy will provide opportunities for employment and the youth, called for focusing on practical implementation rather than on theoretical definitions. René Orellana, Ministry of Environment, Bolivia, cautioned against prejudging what a green economy entails, noting that the concept is being addressed in the negotiations.

Dana Kartakusuma, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Environment, Indonesia, said green economy is low-carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive. He highlighted experiences, including a programme on business environmental performance rating.

Ndonye Parkinson, Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources, Kenya, mentioned that his country does not have a policy on green economy but undertook numerous programmes, such as "green school programmes" and "green cities". He underscored the creation of a steering committee on green economy to provide advice to the government. Mohamed Nbou, Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment, Morocco, highlighted the creation of a national strategy to move forward the transition to a green economy focusing on key sectors, such as renewable energy.

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Sheila Marie Encabo, National Economic and Development Authority, the Philippines, highlighted that her country created a Council for Sustainable Development in 1992, with participation of civil society.

Charles McNeill, UNDP, announced the Equator Prize winners for 2012, saying that the official ceremony will take place during Rio+20 at a high level event. He acknowledged the leading role of local and indigenous communities world-wide in realizing green economies and pioneering innovative solutions.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed: linking green economy to poverty eradication; indicators for green economy; and consideration of women in the green economy.

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Can the Green Economy Achieve Equitable Transformation and Sustainable Development?

Presented by the Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED), the Danish 92 Group and the Centre for Environment and Development (CED)

This side event considered the underlying principles that should be integrated into the green economy.

Opening the meeting, Kim Carstensen, Fair GreenSolutions, asked if and how the green economy concept can lead to greater sustainable development and equity.

Leida Rijnhout, ANPED, introduced the “Seven Principles of the Green Economy” publication. She said that these principles aim to serve as a guide for transforming the economy, saying they include: mother earth; planetary boundaries; dignity; justice; precaution; resilience; and responsibility. She said that these goals do not conflict with Agenda 21 but rather add to them and that future work will identify the leverage points for implementation.

Uchita de Zoysa, CED, mentioned the need for language that “inspires the South” such as equity and well-being. He underscored equity as an uncompromising concept for Rio+20. One participant mentioned that concepts of equity have become eroded by recent multilateral agreements, such as the outcomes of the Durban Climate Conference held in December 2011; another participant reported on the need to measure and verify progress.

Tara Rao, Fair GreenSolutions, presented on the publication “Building an Equitable Green Economy.” Hoping that it will accelerate equitable economic transformation and sustainable development, she said the purpose of the paper was to: identify elements of the green economy as a tool for sustainable development; analyze proposals towards Rio+20; provide a framework to assess the outcomes of Rio+20; and provide a basis for partnerships with academic and professional institutions. She defined the green economy as a process of transformation and dynamic progression, elaborating on key points, such as ensuring that market distortions are removed and the planet’s carrying capacity is respected. She referred to five working principles that can be used to inform an equitable green economy, including the principle of transparency and involvement of affected actors.

In the ensuing discussions, participants considered ways to advance ideas in the current negotiation text. One participant asked how these principles can be operationalized; another talked about needing to move away from prescriptive policy to focus instead on empowerment. One participant suggested the need to focus on sustainability principles rather than the green economy “brand,” with another cautioning against a rushed outcome at Rio+20 that is insufficient.

Srinivas Krishnaswamy, Danish 92 Group, shared a case study of energy access in India as an example of the green economy. He stressed the need for political will and elaborated on the pre-requisites of a green economy, including: sustainable energy infrastructure development; consumption and production systems; job creation; and livelihood enhancement.

Uchita de Zoysa presented on the “Peoples Treaty on Principles for Green Economies” and opportunities to effectively advance these principles on the

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Tara Rao, Fair GreenSolutions, introduced the “Building an Equitable Green Economy” paper expressing hope of inspiring work on the Green Economy in the Rio+20 process and beyond.



Kim Carstensen, Fair GreenSolutions, noted the importance of equity principles in the green economy

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ground. He said that treaties are not a final outcome, but rather the start of a process. He further stressed the need for civil society to work towards a common position and focus on convergence around principles. He suggested developing an action plan for the future since Rio+20 will be the start, and not an endpoint, for a green economy. With a view to organizing NGO strategies at the Second Round of "Informal-Informal" Negotiations on the Zero Draft of the Rio+20 Outcomes Document, to be held in April 2012, he suggested that NGOs move beyond individual initiatives and treaties towards a common platform. He advocated for mapping Government, UN agencies and stakeholder activities at Rio+20 to better understand how these actors are working for sustainable development.

In the ensuing discussion, one participant mentioned how examples of the Green Economy already exist and must not be ignored. She urged governments to build on models that already work instead of "reinventing the wheel." Another participant noted how the Rio+20 discussions are taking place in the larger context of a historical transition, which invites a common framework for action. Uchita de Zoysa said that an outcome at Rio+20 will depend on how civil society decides, creates, commits and plans to implement the principles discussed.



Uchita de Zoysa, called for the convergence of civil society organizations around common principles for Rio+20

Agriculture at Rio+20: What should be decided - and what kind of agriculture should be promoted?

Presented by Biovision, Millennium Institute, and the More and Better Network

Aksel Nærstad, Co-coordinator, More and Better Network, opened the session, saying that it was being held to discuss views in response to the outcomes of the High-level Round Table on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture held from 15-16 March 2012.

David Amudavi, Director, Biovision Africa Trust, provided an overview of the highlights and outcomes of the High-level Round Table. He said the recommendations included: enabling frameworks for sustainable agriculture; the integration of science and policy; the need for a leadership change within the sector; and improved monitoring mechanisms.

Carlos Marentes, La Via Campesina, called for ensuring that peasant, family and small-holder farmers have access to seeds, markets and technologies. Robynne Anderson, World Farmers Organisation, said there was a need for continual adaption in the agriculture sector and emphasized that there is no "finish line" for agriculture. A representative from Brazil outlined their support for small-holder farmers, as well as ensuring food security for vulnerable populations.

François Pythoud, Federal Office for Agriculture, Switzerland, said the methods used for sustainable agriculture should provide sufficient produce, be environmentally resilient, economically viable and resource efficient. Bente Herstad, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, noted the need to ensure livelihood of farmers and increase access to research and extension services for small-scale farmers.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed: land degradation and water conservation; the principles of agroecological farming; and food-chain perspectives of agriculture.



Bente Herstad, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, stressed that fisheries should be included in the definition of small-holder farmers.

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A Roadmap for Ocean Sustainability

Presented by the Pew Environment Group on behalf of the High Seas Alliance

This event, moderated by Lisa Speer, The Natural Resources Defense Council, focused on High Seas and how Rio+20 could provide a critical message on the issue.

After a video presentation, Tony Haymet, Director, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California San Diego, said oceans have absorbed 90% of human caused heat since 1850, which have contributed to warming and the expansion of sea-level rise. He underscored the value of oceans because they are: one of the two existing carbon dioxide sinks, the only heat sink and the source of 50% of the oxygen we breathe; and home to an invaluable amount of biodiversity. He mentioned opportunities for sustainable development in the context of oceans, including: ending over-fishing and perverse subsidies; careful and fair use of molecular resources; and potential use as protein source.

Ambassador Jean-Pierre Thébault, Roving Ambassador for the Environment and Rio+20, France, said that oceans governance should be a central issue in Rio+20 and supported the launch of a negotiating process for an implementing instrument of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). He underscored this should provide a legal regime for marine protected areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ); a governance framework to enable further studies and a basis for access and benefit sharing of genetic resources.

Diré Tladi, Permanent Mission of the Republic of South Africa to the UN, underscored UNCLOS' possible interpretations and legal difficulties in the context of biodiversity in ABNJ, particularly for access and benefit-sharing of genetic resources, as well as sustainable use of resources.

Susan Lieberman, Pew Environment Group, urged for a strong outcome on oceans in Rio+20 to start a process for a new implementing agreement under the UNCLOS that would pave the way for cooperation and regulation for the conservation and sustainable use of high seas' biodiversity.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed: the relevance and pertinence of launching a negotiating process for a UNCLOS' implementing instrument; and ways for an effective governance of international conventions, including a NGO's proposal to involve citizens in environmental conventions' compliance mechanisms, modelled on the Aarhus Convention.



Diré Tladi, Permanent Mission of the Republic of South Africa to the UN, supported including the closure of governance gaps relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in ABNJ as an outcome of Rio+20.



Susan Lieberman, Pew Environment Group urged states to start effectively managing and conserving high seas, as well as to make progress in fisheries management by, *inter alia*, improving monitoring, control and surveillance



L-R: Tony Haymet, Director, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California San Diego; Ambassador Jean-Pierre Thébault, Roving Ambassador for the Environment and Rio+20, France; Lisa Speer, The Natural Resources Defense Council; Susan Lieberman, Pew Environment Group; and Diré Tladi, Permanent Mission of the Republic of South Africa to the UN.

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