



Contribution to Rio+20 Zero Draft

Almost twenty years after the Earth Summit in Rio 1992 the stock-taking of global achievements for sustainable development leaves a bleak picture. Environmental degradation and depletion of natural resources have worsened and are likely to cause conflicts and insecurity for future generations. Widespread poverty as well as constrained development possibilities exist especially where the poorest countries and communities suffer the most from the global demand on resources and adverse environmental impacts. The development paths of the North and South remain alarmingly unsustainable well beyond the carrying capacity of the planet and do so at an increasing pace. The world, especially political actors in industrialised as well as in industrialising nations, has failed to deliver sufficiently on securing sustainable livelihoods for all within safe planetary boundaries. Even in view of the combined environmental, economic and food crisis, so far there is no sufficient political ambition in sight to address them adequately.

The UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) in Rio 2012 needs to generate the necessary political will to change course. The world must embark on a socially and ecological sustainable green economy path that achieves sustainable development and poverty eradication and breaks with the business as usual scenario. Bold actions are needed to achieve social and economic equity and environmental sustainability. This implies that deliberate decisions have to be made in order to create enabling policy environments, to redirect public and private funds that have catalysing effects to boost truly green economies that are able to deliver on basic societal needs such as energy and food for all in the north and south. Active governmental measures to strengthen the right to development for the poor and to support the most vulnerable groups are fundamental to decrease vulnerability to social and economic changes as well as the effects of distorted ecosystems for example climate change.

Governments should send their Heads of State or Government to Rio+20 and make following commitments:

1) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

*The Rio summit offers the possibility to deliver an internationally agreed **vision of development that catalyses fundamental changes in our economies** towards more social and economic equity and environmental sustainability while ensuring poverty reduction focusing on the most vulnerable groups. **Green economy might be seen as an useful tool to embark on a sustainable economic pathway** with specific and ambitious goals to catalyse structural change.*

Heads of states and governments therefore need to commit to a set of global **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030** - complementary to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The global community should agree on a **mandate for the UN to develop the SDGs** further and to define their scope. The scope must not fall behind internationally agreed targets and include short-term milestones in order to ensure immediate implementation and avoid gaps in political commitment due to election cycles.

SDGs should be based on the following principles and cornerstones:

- **Avoid unintended consequences of conventional decision making** and overcome traditional sectoral approaches by avoiding solutions that aggravate problems in other sectors (Nexus-approach).
- **Incorporation of guiding principles of sustainable development** by other international finance and trade institutions, including those in- and outside the UN system.
- **Measuring of societal goals beyond GDP growth** that integrates societal well-being and preservation of natural capital and environmental resilience.
- **Implementation of Rio+20 roadmaps established by every nation by 2015** with ambitious and clearly identified short term milestones leading to national SDGs. These roadmaps could be supplemented by national action plans addressing specific political areas as for example **national low and zero carbon action plans** for emerging and industrialised economies including national specific renewable energy and energy efficiency frameworks to be implemented and operational by 2030.
- **Self-Commitment of Governments on national Rio+20 roadmaps and SDGs** that clearly show national contributions to the achievement of the global SDGs.
- **Mechanisms monitoring the achievement of national Rio+20 roadmaps and SDGs** by a designated UN-Body sufficiently mandated assess the level of national achievement and provide policy recommendations.

2) Green Economy

*Green Economy being part of sustainable development needs to be understood, as a **system of economic activities to deliver societal goals** of providing justice and equity, i.e. sustainable and improved human well-being and livelihoods for all, while fully respecting the ecological limits of planetary boundaries and without exposing future generations to significant environmental risks and ecological scarcities. Investing in greening high impact sectors and services, **investing in people and in natural capital** must go hand in hand. As a tool to embark on a sustainable economic pathway it supplies for a fair and equitable transition of today's economies and values and governs natural resources.*

In order to achieve this, heads of states and governments need to commit to a green economy that encompasses:

- **Elimination of subsidies** harmful to climate and environment by 2020 - especially subsidies on fossil fuels and in the agricultural and fishery sector.
- **Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions** to reach the goal of limiting global warming to two degrees above the pre-industrial age level.
- **Access to sustainable and renewable energy** for all by 2020 for basic needs, inter alia by promoting community-owned decentralized energy supply.
- **Socially or community control of basic living supplies** such as water supply and incorporation of water use in frameworks of other sectoral approaches.
- **Ensure food security for all** by promoting sustainable agricultural and fishing practices and committing to policies and market mechanisms that support small-scale agriculture and fishery to manage sustainable food production.
- **Preservation of ecosystems and their biodiversity** in order to provide key ecosystem services to achieve food, water and energy security.
- **Stop deforestation and preserve natural forests** as well as modified natural forests by 2020 and implement policies and measures that stop the drivers for deforestation including safeguards to land use changes.
- **Restoration of ecological and natural resources** including forests as the base of economic activity including eroded soils.
- **Address gaps in ocean governance** for areas beyond national jurisdiction and establish a global network of Marine Reserves until 2017.
- **A financial system that contributes to the realisation of human rights** as agreed in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- **A trade and investment regime** providing the necessary policy space for regulation in order to make it work **for environmental protection, human rights, equity and justice.**
- Regulations and incentives to **promote sustainable production and consumption** patterns.

3) Institutional Frameworks for Sustainable Development

*The objective to reform the institutional framework for sustainable development must be to fundamentally **improve governance, accountability & liability**.*

In order to achieve this, heads of states and governments need to commit to:

- Strengthening the governance system by **upgrading the UN Environment Programme** through strengthening and extending its mandate to include means for consultancy of countries willing to enter a transformation process as well as better implementation, compliance and enforcement mechanisms.
- **Creating a Sustainable Development Council (SDC)** in order to coordinate the existing structures relevant to sustainable development in – and outside the UN system and to monitor the progress in achieving SDGs on a global and on national levels.
- In order to achieve political acceptance of the sometimes difficult transition process **participative and democratic principles** should be developed, promoted and safeguarded.