

Environmental Sustainability Thematic Consultation Leadership Meeting

San Jose, Costa Rica 18-19 March 2013

BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR PARTICIPANTS

The following provides the relevant papers for the working sessions of the meeting. Included in this package is:

- 1. Concept Note for the Leadership Meeting (previously shared)
- 2. <u>Background Paper for Breakout Session 1, 18th March: Environmental</u> Sustainability and the MDGs
- 3. <u>Background Paper for Breakout Session 1, 19th March: Environmental Sustainability Within the Post2015 Agenda, Issues of Consensus and Divergence</u>
- 4. Concept Note for Breakout Sessions 1 and 2

Please note we request all participants to be familiar with the information contained herein as it will be the basis for ongoing discussions for the course of the meeting. Items 2 and 3 provide summary of the e-discussions which have been conducted prior to the meeting. Item 4 will guide the discussions in the breakout groups.

Additional summaries of the weekly e-discussions will be provided separately for information and reference.

Leadership Meeting Concept Note: March 18-19, 2013, Costa Rica

Background

The World We Want initiative aims to gather the priorities of people from every corner of the world and help build a collective vision that will be used directly by the United Nations and World Leaders to plan a new development agenda launching in 2015, one that is based on the aspirations of all citizens.

Leading up to the year 2015, the United Nations is planning a series of consultations to help shape the post-2015 agenda with support from Civil Society coalitions including the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, World Alliance for Citizen Participation (CIVICUS) and the Beyond 2015 Campaign. This process includes the creation of a High Level Panel, up to 100 national consultations, 11 thematic consultations, and a Global Online Conversation - all of which will contribute to a vision for The World We Want beyond 2015. One of the eleven major global thematic consultations is on environmental sustainability. This consultation is being co-led by the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme and co-hosted by the Governments of France and Costa Rica, and runs from November 2012 through June 2013.

The Environmental Sustainability thematic consultation is designed to ensure that the process is truly owned by people from around the world. It applies an innovative process that allows for the various stakeholders engaged in the discussion to not only participate in a dialogue but also to help frame the dialogue and the issues that need to be discussed. Therefore, the Consultation has been organized into two phases. During the first phase a call for Discussion Notes and an e-discussion were launched on the World We Want platform. This phase will culminate in the Leadership Meeting in Costa Rica to review the results of the first phase and identify the key areas of consensus as well as areas where further dialogue is needed. The outcome of the meeting will thus frame the second phase of the Consultation. The outcomes of the consultation will also provide a key contribution to help shape the conceptual foundation for environmental sustainability in the post 2015 agenda.

So far, the Consultation has solicited great interest and over 90 discussion notes have been submitted through the World We Want platform and an active e-discussion is currently underway. A synthesis report of the first phase is being prepared and will be shared ahead of the Leadership Meeting.

Objectives

The UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda has proposed that environmental sustainability be one of the four core dimensions in a post-2015 development agenda. Based on this

and the outcomes of Rio+20, as well as other proposals and positions on post-2015, there seems to be overwhelming consensus that the post-2015 development agenda will need to apply an integrated and balanced approach that includes environmental sustainability as a central component if we are to achieve the future we want. The thematic consultation on Environmental Sustainability therefore aims to facilitate an open dialogue to stimulate creative thinking on how best to reflect environmental sustainability in a multi-dimensional context within the future development agenda.

The Leadership Meeting will build on the MDGs, Rio+20, and results of the first phase of the consultation to:

- build consensus on the key issues that should frame environmental sustainability in the post-2015 agenda, considering key inter-linkages, drivers and enablers;
- identify areas where further dialogue, outreach and innovative thinking is needed to continue to build consensus and evolve the discussion, which will frame the second phase of the Consultation; and
- develop a cohort of leading and emerging thinkers from around the world to continue to
 engage in dialogue and raise visibility and awareness around environmental sustainability issues
 for moving towards the world we want.

Therefore, participants in the Leadership Meeting will also be invited to engage in the subsequent online consultation which will be framed around the outcomes of the meeting.

All inputs received throughout the Consultation will lead to a series of papers on inter-related themes and development of a final report that summarizes global viewpoints and stakeholder concerns.

Content and Agenda

The Leadership Meeting is a two-day event that will facilitate participatory discussions. The plenary sessions of the meeting will be webcast and there will also be opportunities for the online community to engage in the discussion.

Day 1 of the meeting will focus on reviewing the results of the first phase of the consultation and the latest thinking on environmental sustainability in the post-2015 agenda (building on Rio+20 outcomes and learning from the MDGs) to identify key areas of consensus and divergence. This will include a plenary session and breakout groups. Day 2 will aim to move towards developing a framework that defines an integrated approach to frame environmental sustainability in the post-2015 agenda as well as key issues where further dialogue and thinking is needed. The output of the meeting will be determined by the participants.

There will also be an opportunity for participants to record video messages that will be posted on the Consultation website.

A more detailed agenda and background documents will be shared with the confirmed participants ahead of the meeting.

Target Audience

Approximately 40 leading and emerging thinkers from the non-governmental sector will be invited to participate, alongside participants from the UN, sponsoring Governments of France and Costa Rica, the High Level Panel, and IFIs. Aiming at a balanced representation of key stakeholder groups, participants have been invited based on a number of demographic criteria and technical backgrounds. All participants are acknowledged leading and innovative thinkers/experts. They all bring in a multi-dimensional and forward-looking perspective to the consultation. Several participants represent networks and some have submitted a Discussion Note to the consultation.

Logistics

The event is taking place at the Real Intercontinental Hotel in San José, Costa Rica on Monday 18 and Tuesday 19 March 2013. A separate Logistics Note will be provided.



Environmental Sustainability and the MDGs

Background Paper for Breakout Session No 1: 18th March

This paper provides brief background on the MDGs and specifically the issue of environmental sustainability and how it relates to the MDG development agenda. The MDG contains valuable lessons for the Post 2015 agenda and we must be able to reflect on those lessons and learn how to build on successes and minimise the constraints to achieving environmental sustainability in the Future We Want. In this regard this paper is structured around 3 themes being 1) framing the MDGs; 2) the substance of the MDGs; 3) implementing the MDGs.

1. Framing Development – From MDGs to Post 2015

While there is some conjecture on the relationship between MDGs and the Millennium Declaration (MD) there is no doubt that the links between the goals and targets have their foundation in the MD. It has even been argued that the original formal MDG targets were established in the MD (MacArthur 2013, unpublished). However, other views suggest the MDGs were established through consultations between global development actors responding to the OECD International Development Goals (IDGs) and the Human Development approach being influenced by Amartya Sen of the World Bank (Hulme, 2007).

However, it is clear that the MDGs carried the weight of 189 nations of the UN (in 2000) who signed the MD. The only Target that could potentially be deemed an interpretive stretch from the Millennium Declaration to the MDGs is the non-quantitative Target 9, which is to, "Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources." The Millennium Declaration includes the first half of the sentence but not the second half, although the latter can be presumed as addressed through the substance of "Agenda 21," which has its own complicated global history.

Unlike the period when the MDGs were established we now have a sequencing of international conferences which provides the opportunity to shape the Post2015 agenda. That is, the MD and MDGs were established before the Rio+10 conference in Johannesburg held in 2002 and the major influence on environmental sustainability at that time was the Rio 1992 Earth Summit which saw a large focus on global environmental issues. Now we are in the position where Rio+20 conference held in Brazil in June 2012 and its outcomes can readily influence the post 2015 agenda. We have an opportunity to bring 20+ years of international experiences of these global sustainable development conferences to bear on the issue of environmental sustainability in Post2015 agenda.

2. The Substance of the MDGs - Convergence Lost

Many have recognized the value of the MDGs, including MDG7, in terms of their shared focus on poverty reduction, their globally accepted set of indicators with clear goals, targets and timeframes to support policy monitoring and accountability, and the comparatively high level of visible political commitment attached to the Goals¹. Many have also acknowledged that the MDGs provide a common framework and an improved coordination opportunity for development actors and promote concrete actions to address human development issues². "The MDGs have rallied different stakeholders under a single umbrella and created global consensus and contributed for the betterment of life." The experience also shows that "global consensus around environment goals can be achieved, and that goal-setting can be a powerful way of motivating, shaping and driving actors to achieve positive outcomes."⁴

However, many have also argued that the MDGs had important shortcomings which could have been avoided if a more inclusive process had led to their design and content.⁵ It is argued that the nature of MDG7 with its largely qualitative goals on environmental sustainability and its lack of overarching on how to achieve this left MDG7 as mostly a silo among the other MDGs which were seen as more focused on the social development agenda. The achievement of MDG7 on environmental sustainability by 2015 is mostly off track (see annex 1).⁶

As stated, one of the key issues with MDG 7 is the weak linkages to national development planning. Environmental issues are not highly integrated into the MDG country reports outside of MDG 7 specifically. When environmental issues are discussed in the context of the other goals, the causal link between poverty and the environment is not well articulated nor is a response developed. One of the obstacles to progress towards the MDG 7 objective is its fragmented nature and the lack of an overarching framework or means of integrating different components of environmental sustainability. While MDG 7 contains elements that contribute to environmental sustainability, those elements do not provide a full picture. Indicators on forestry and protected areas for example do not reflect critical changes affecting the poor such as land degradation and desertification, although improvements in protection and management of forests and other systems are of particular relevance to the rural poor who rely more directly on biodiversity and natural resources. "Poverty reduction and biodiversity or ecosystem degradation are deeply intertwined and have roots in social, environmental and economic complexities. These can be dealt with building partnerships at local or regional scale and by

¹ UN DESA and UNDP. 2012. Synthesis of National Reports for Rio+20:

http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/742RIO+20_Synthesis_Report_Final.pdf

² UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda (2012). (See reference above).

³ Geremew Sahilu Gebrie, submitted discussion note

⁴ Hui-Chi Goh, submitted discussion note

⁵ Realizing the Future We Want for All, Report to the Secretary General; UN System Task Team on the Post 2015 Development Agenda, New York June 2012.

⁶ Thematic paper on MDG7 Environmental Sustainability prepared by the UNDG Task Force on MDGs for the 2010 Global MDG Summit

fostering institutions which are embedded within communities."⁷ This lack of linkages can be exacerbated at the national level if countries mechanically adopt the global set of targets and indicators without explicitly linking or tailoring them to national priorities and conditions⁸.

3. Implementing MDG7 – A Challenge for National Development Policy Processes

While the MDGs and Targets have the political legitimacy that comes from intergovernmental agreements the same cannot be said for the indicators and should not be considered in the same category. For an issue as complex and varied as environmental sustainability this presents methodological as well as analytical challenges.

Many countries are just initiating MDG7 data collection and monitoring efforts, and some are finding it difficult to allocate the proper resources⁹. According to the UNDP review of national MDG reports in 2006, apart from access to water, less than half of countries had reported sufficient data for monitoring progress. However, it should be noted that several indicators were added in 2008 so additional data and reporting has occurred in recent years. Countries also face many challenges in monitoring the MDG 7 indicators. These include unreliable and inaccessible data, a lack of statistical capacities, as well as difficulties related to lack of public awareness, legislative and regulatory frameworks, inadequate human resource capacity and the need for more partnerships.

However apart from these implementation challenges there are a range of normative challenges which have affected the integration of MDG7. Lack of political will, pressure on environmental resources from high use and "natural hazards and other external shocks"¹⁰, insufficient governance and planning policies, a lack of "science, education, media and culture for environmental sustainability"¹¹, social unrest and lack of financial resources are among the challenges contributing to insufficient progress on environmental sustainability. One of the main challenges is the lack of coordination among internal authorities stemming from an unclear definition of roles and responsibilities. Also, collaboration among the donor community presents difficulties in terms of country priorities versus those of the donor community. Another major issue is the lack of commitment regarding the necessary investments to achieve MDG 7, pointing to the fact that targeted interventions and investments in environmental sustainability can have strong positive impacts. In fact, many countries have highlighted the heavy reliance on

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⁷ Harpinder Sandhu, submitted discussion note

⁸ UNDP. 2006. Making Progress on Environmental Sustainability: Lessons and Recommendations from a Review of over 150 MDG Country Experiences:

http://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/environment-energy/www-ee-library/mainstreaming/making-progress-on-environmental-sustainability/mdg7english.pdf

⁹ UNDP, 2010. The Path to Achieving the MDGs: A Synthesis of Evidence from Around the World

¹⁰ CAN International and Beyond 2015, submitted discussion note

¹¹ UNESCO, submitted discussion note

the global agreements and supporting finance coming from the Global Environment Fund (GEF) to meet their environmental sustainability targets. 12

MDG 7 "fails to address the motors driving impoverished populations from the countryside into cities." "Failures to reach global targets in relation to halting biodiversity loss have added further stresses to vulnerable peoples and communities. Biodiversity, ecosystems and the services they provide are the foundations on which all people rely." Indeed, the future development framework will need to, among others "adequately recognize the gender dimensions in several of the other but, MDG3 targets, including MDG7 on environmental sustainability" to "adequately reflect the importance of conserving and restoring natural systems as a component of strategies to reach other development targets" 16.

A 2012 Thematic Paper on MDG 7 shows that this goal won't be reached by 2015 unless we bring changes to the way development occurs. This motivates for the need for "truly forward-looking development goals. … focusing also on the needs of people who will be born over the next years." Furthermore, CAN International and Beyond 2015 noted that it was a "lost opportunity that the MDGs did not provide guidance on how to address the root causes of poverty and environmental degradation, such as inequality within and between countries".

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¹² UNDP and UNDESA (2012)

¹³ Brendan Coyne, submitted discussion note

¹⁴ BirdLife International, submitted discussion note

¹⁵ International Alliance of Women, submitted discussion note

¹⁶ Alejandra Bowles, submitted discussion note

¹⁷ Michael Herrman, submitted discussion note

Annex A: Progress on MDG7

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Products/ProgressReports.htm

	Africa		Asia					Latin America	Caucasus &
Goals and Targets	Northern	Sub-Saharan	Eastern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western	Oceania	& Caribbean	Caucasus & Central Asia
2012 MDG Progress Chart									
GOAL 7 Ensure environmental sustainability									
Halve proportion of population without improved drinking water	high coverage	low coverage	high coverage	moderate coverage	high coverage	moderate coverage	low coverage	high coverage	moderate coverage
Halve proportion of population without sanitation	high coverage	very low coverage	low coverage	low coverage	very low coverage	moderate coverage	low coverage	moderate coverage	high coverage
Improve the lives of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	very high proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	high proportion of slum-dwellers	high proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	moderate proportion of slum-dwellers	-
			2011	MDG Progres	s Chart				
Reverse loss of forests	low forest cover	medium forest cover	medium forest cover	high forest cover	medium forest cover	low forest cover	high forest cover	high forest cover	low forest cover
The progress chart operates on two legend below: Target already met or expected progress insufficient to reach	d to be met by 20	015.	·	No pro	ance with the targ ogress or deteriora g or insufficient o	ation.	ow progress towa	rds the target acco	ording to the



Environmental Sustainability within the Post-2015 Development Agenda Issues of Consensus and Divergence

Background Paper for Breakout Session No 2: 19th March

4. Context and Objective

Record extreme weather events around the world, unsustainable consumption and production patterns, natural resources degradation, and natural resource linked conflicts, are amongst the challenges that the world faces today with direct impacts on development. These are not intractable challenges as evidence also shows that environmental sustainability contributes to improved health, well-being and livelihood opportunities for the poor¹⁸, as well as to secure growth and development that is both equitable and sustainable.

During the last twenty years, inter-linkages and tradeoffs between environmental protection, human development and economic growth – the cornerstones of sustainable development - have been highlighted in major United Nations (UN) Conferences. However, implementation of sustainable development has been a challenge for many countries due, to some extent, to deficiencies in adopting integrated approaches to development that, *inter alia*: i) recognize the linkages between social, environmental and economic considerations (integration); ii) bring government, the private sector, and civil society actors together in decisions (inclusiveness), and iii) promote cross-sectoral planning and decision-making within and between the national, subnational, and local levels of government as well as thematic sectors (coherence).

Environment is often perceived as a relatively weak driver of integrated development approaches. Consequently, the need for addressing environmental sustainability more prominently in the post-2015 development agenda and to ensure its balance with social and economic considerations, has been called for by civil society, Member States, and UN entities. This paper draws on the discussion notes submitted to and the four week e-discussion organized for the Environmental Sustainability Consultation process, to provide context for the challenges and opportunities that addressing environmental sustainability in the Post 2015 development agenda presents.

5. Finding Consensus on Environmental Sustainability

The consultations so far show that there is general agreement on the need to adopt approaches that are more integrated. Different areas of consensus were identified, including moving away from the GDP as sole measure of progress; the holistic approach contrary to the siloed MDGs; the importance of the local level integrated within the global; and, the universality of the development agenda, its goals and targets. In week 4 of the e-discussions it was viewed that the MDG "silo" approach actually stymied and perhaps disassociated the linkages and interactions between the environmental, social and economic aspects of development and their complex, interrelated challenges to sustainability. There is an urgent need to

¹⁸ UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI). 2009. <u>Mainstreaming Poverty-Environment Linkages into Development Planning: A Handbook for Practitioner</u>, UNDP-UNEP.

ensure that the post-2015 development agenda ends the siloes of the MDG era and advances an integrated, people-centered, equitable and sustainable development agenda. Consultation participants have clearly stated that poverty reduction; protecting people's basic needs, resources and wellbeing; and environmental degradation are intricately connected. Framing environmental sustainability as a people-centered issue in the post-2015 development framework will be critical for securing public commitment and support for environmental sustainability. Key messages outline the need to:

- between sectoral and cross-sectoral issues in the design and implementation of the post-2015 development framework. On a national level, this means integrated planning frameworks that adequately account for the value of natural resources and the services they provide. Examples identified in the review to meet this objective include: integrating environmental sustainability as cross-cutting across key sectors (e.g. agriculture, water, energy, education, lands, mining) and international frameworks; integrating poverty reduction and environmental sustainability priorities into national and sub-national policy, planning and budget processes On a global level, the future development framework should be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, to support an effective cooperation between countries over the sustainable management, use and protection of shared natural resources, and ensure that net global consumption of natural resources, waste production and GHG emissions stay within planetary boundaries.
- local ownership and engagement can increase the commitment and accountability for environmental sustainability. Efforts to develop and implement Local and National Strategies, along with the Local and National Action Plans on Sustainable Consumption and Production, must be supported and included as essential elements of the Post 2015. Effective partnerships of governments, citizens, civil society organizations, local communities and the most vulnerable (e.g. poor, women, youth) in decisions related to environment sustainability and allowing them to participate in policy development, to give them access to relevant information, and to promote shared responsibility among all stakeholders was also mentioned.
- recognize and address the contextual factors (such as cultural, ethical, institutional and political)
 that might constrain or drive the consideration of environmental sustainability in decision-making
 and implementation. Examples of these factors include political instability and poor governmental
 interest in environmental sustainability that can lead to weak sustainability leadership and
 management; or values and ethical principles that can determine sustainability of consumption and
 production choices.
- addressing common development challenges A universal agenda underpinned by the principle
 of shared but differentiated responsibility will increase country ownership, commitment and
 accountability for results. Nationally applicable targets and indicators will be crucial, and many
 participants have stressed the need for the post-2015 development agenda to determine
 consumption and production levels. The framework should be relevant and applicable for all
 countries as to ensure that environmental sustainability is addressed in high-, middle- and lowincome countries.
- promote the use of indicators that go beyond economic considerations to measure more
 adequately progress related to the various dimensions of environmental sustainability (e.g. natural,
 physical, social and economic dimensions). The need to promote the use of environmental

accounting¹⁹ to encourage action and measure performance on environmental sustainability was also highlighted.

- provide financial and technical support, and (green) technologies to developing countries to better
 address environmental sustainability. Establishing innovative finance mechanisms by leveraging
 finance from public and private sources and across different sectors (including climate change
 adaptation, biodiversity conservation achievement of food and water security) was also underlined.
- individual and institutional capacity and education to address complex issues related to: i) the inter-linkages between sectoral and cross-sectoral issues ii) champions with power and interest to promote integrated approaches (e.g. parliamentarians, academics, etc.) and motivate others; iii) support business practices and government policies that are ethically sound, seek eco-efficiency, and supply reliable information to consumers and; iv) anticipate, adapt to, and/or recover from the effects of potentially hazardous impacts (climate change and natural disasters, economic instability, conflict, etc.) in a manner that protects livelihoods, accelerates and sustains recovery, and supports economic and social development as well as environmental sustainability.

6. Where are there Divergences on Environmental Sustainability?

Submissions received show some differences of views and sometimes contradictions regarding the integration between various sectors, how to monitor or measure environmental sustainability, the inclusiveness of research and development, and engaging the private sector.

- 1) While many advocated for better integration between various sectors, it is interesting to note that a certain number of proposals in the discussion notes still refer to environmental sustainability through one lens only related to the bio-physical aspects of the environment (e.g. the right of nature) and do not clearly show the linkages with other sectors or issues. For example, deforestation, energy, climate change, disaster risk reduction, chemicals, biodiversity, water and waste management are highlighted often in isolation from other sectors. This may indicate that integrated approaches that try to link economic, social and environmental concerns are still lagging and economic growth is still the chief priority for most governments²⁰.
- 2) While the need for monitoring systems to track progress on environmental sustainability is generally recognized as necessary, there are some divergences on what to include in these monitoring systems and on how to measure environmental sustainability. In this regard, some call for qualitative targets (e.g. establish early warning systems for specific natural disasters within a specified time period), while others advocate for quantitative or numerical targets (e.g. numerical targets on energy efficiency). Some advocate for targets and indicators that reflect linkages between sectors or themes (e.g. targets and indicators that reflect the relationship between environment, health and development; human rights and water; indicators of human well-being that integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development) while others propose targets that only address one sector (e.g. targets on energy efficiency, renewable energy, water use). Finally, some promote mandatory targets and commitments

²⁰ See UN DESA and UNDP. 2012. *Synthesis of National Reports for Rio+20.* New York (USA): UN DESA-UNDP. http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/742RIO+20 Synthesis Report Final.pdf

¹⁹ Environmental accounting refers to accounts that show the contribution of natural resources to economic well-being and the costs imposed by pollution or resource degradation (see, for more information: http://www.unpei.org/PDF/budgetingfinancing/Environmental-accounting.pdf).

while others prefer voluntary targets, noting that some multinational companies and cities have committed with success to voluntary targets to reduce energy consumption and other resources within a specific time period.

- 3) Some submissions underlined the importance of making research more applicable to support decision-making processes on development projects and implementation. However, there seems to be divergence on how research should be carried out: some stress the necessity to consider traditional knowledge and knowledge of people living in extreme poverty, a few see research mainly as the responsibility of technical and scientific experts.
- 4) Whereas engaging the private sector in environment sustainability and development in general is recognized by many (as necessary to, *inter alia*, enable effective cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaborations, to promote technological innovation for enhancing energy efficiency and to provide investments for green economy implementation), some caution that including the private sector and moving toward privatized services could worsen inequalities as this could lead to price increases and result in the exclusion of the poor who cannot afford those services.

7. The Challenges of Environmental Sustainability - Consensus and Context

The consensus which is emanating from the consultations is well known but, the more distinct challenge is how to build them into the Post2015 development agenda. Obviously the experience from the MDGs shows the silo effect of MDG7 has been ineffective to result in a positive change to the global situation on environmental sustainability and the national level results are at best mixed. In addition, the MDGs were seen to have focused exclusively on developing countries and unlike the MDGs, the aspirations for the next development agenda is that its goals and targets could and should be universal in nature.

This presents the notion that environmental sustainability is universal to the development agenda of nation states (as highlighted in the Rio+20 Outcome Document) and that this also links to the idea of global environmental sustainability. The challenge is therefore, how should the post 2015 development agenda address environmental sustainability across a range of country contexts given countries are geographically, culturally, and fundamentally at different stages in terms of development? It also suggests that a range of structural issues need to be addressed in national development approaches. This has been the subject of the UN Sustainable Development Conferences and it is widely recognized in the consultation submissions that the SDG and the Post 2015 development agenda should come together.

Though goal setting was not the purpose of the preliminary discussions on the post-2015 development agenda, SGDs have come up regularly. There have been no submissions suggesting that the SDGs should be limited in number and scope so as to be easier to understand or more achievable. Instead, it has been suggested that the goals, targets and indicators be comprehensive in scope, be as ambitious as possible and focus on complete regeneration and restoration. They are suggested to take a whole systems approach that starts by defining and agreeing on the pre-requisites for transitioning to full sustainability, and to ensure that all people's basic human rights and needs are fully met such as is required and mandated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And we need to develop a process, from the local to the global level that integrates and includes everything.

Environmental Sustainability Thematic Consultation Leadership Meeting

San Jose, Costa Rica 18-19 March 2013

CONCEPT NOTE FOR BREAKOUT SESSIONS 1 AND 2

1. BACKGROUND

The UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda has proposed that environmental sustainability be one of the four core dimensions in a post-2015 development agenda. The other three are: inclusive human development, inclusive economic development, and peace and human security. Based on this and the outcomes of Rio+20, as well as other proposals and positions on post-2015, there is consensus that the next development agenda should apply an integrated and balanced approach that includes environmental sustainability as a central component if we are to achieve the future we want.

The Environmental Sustainability thematic consultation is designed to ensure effective participation and ownership by people from around the world. The innovative process provides for the diverse stakeholders to not only participate in the dialogue, but also help frame it and the issues for further discussion.

The Phase 1 online discussion has culminated in this Leadership Meeting which convenes leading and emerging thinkers in environmental sustainability to review the Phase 1 dialogue outcomes and agree on a framework of key issues for the Phase 2 dialogue. The Phase 2 issues would be those considered key for additional dialogue, and where the thematic consultation could help elaborate diverse positions, thinking and approaches to inform inter-governmental discussions and as appropriate and relevant, the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel of eminent persons on the post-2015 development agenda.

In addition to discussing and agreeing on a framework and key themes for Phase 2 of the consultation, the Leadership Meeting will establish a small team to facilitate the Phase 2 online discussion and to develop a series of final papers on each of the themes based on the outcomes of the overall consultation.

Phase 2 will consist of facilitated consultation on the framework and key themes identified at the Leadership Meeting. The small facilitation team will include focal points (8-12) from various stakeholder groups identified at the Leadership Meeting. A series of carefully framed consultations with specific targets and outputs will generate consolidated stakeholder views around each topic. The Phase 2 consultation will provide broad outreach on a narrow range of topics. The objective is to deliver an inclusive, concrete and transparent process. Phase 2 of the environmental sustainability consultation will culminate in a final report that summarizes stakeholder views, positions and priorities.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Environmental Sustainability Thematic Consultation Leadership Meeting are:

- building consensus on issues that should frame environmental sustainability in the post-2015 agenda, considering key inter-linkages, drivers and enablers;
- identifying areas where further dialogue, outreach and innovative thinking is needed to continue building consensus and evolve the discussion, to frame the second phase of the Consultation; and
- develop a cohort of leading and emerging thinkers from around the world to continue to engage
 in dialogue and raise visibility and awareness around environmental sustainability issues for
 moving towards the world we want.

3. ORGANIZATION

Two working groups will be established to discuss:

- Capitalizing on the MDGs and MDG7 achievements and addressing the gaps; and
- Addressing Environmental Sustainability in the Post-2015 Agenda

As background to the discussions, the co-leads will provide a brief presentation on findings from Phase 1 of the consultation and desk review. A number of breakout groups will be established in each working group. Each breakout group should select a chairperson and a rapporteur to respectively facilitate the discussion and present its report. UN participants will be resource persons observing the meeting and responding to specific questions as required.

Following the breakout group discussions, it is proposed that a moderated panel discussion take place with a representative from each group presenting the outcome of their discussions. Brief presentations and a panel debate totaling 20-30 minutes would be followed by a 30 minute interactive dialogue in plenary.

4. BREAKOUT SESSION 1: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Breakout Session 1: Capitalizing on the MDGs and MDG7 achievements and addressing the gaps

This discussion will build on the Phase 1 e-discussions and focus on the substance, achievements and gaps in MDG7 and what lessons can be learned to take forward into a post-2015 sustainable development agenda. Discussions will focus on three broad areas of MDG7/MDGs: (i) Framing/Achievements; (ii) Content; and (iii) Application. It is also proposed that two small breakout groups look at these three areas. Questions listed below are provided to spur debate. Each group may decide to address them or craft new questions that they consider important.

<u>PLEASE SEE BACKGROUND PAPER NO. 1 FOR A SUMMARY OF THE E-DISCUSSION INPUTS FOR THIS SESSION</u>

<u>Framing/Achievements</u> of the MDGs: this discussion will focus on whether the Millennium Declaration is 'fit for purpose' and inclusive of the outcomes from the three major sustainable development conferences (1992, 2002, 2012)

- 1. In the context of the three sustainable development conferences, are there important outcomes that have been missed in the MDGs and with regard to environmental sustainability?
- 2. What do you consider is the role of environmental sustainability: halting global environmental problems or influencing/guiding national development approaches towards more sustainability? Do you consider there is a need to reconcile these issues and in what way?
- 3. What are the key interlinkages across the eight Millennium Development Goals that provide for integrated implementation of sustainable development, and should be considered in the next generation of development goals?
- 4. What are the principal drivers/ enablers that have led to successful performance? Are these drivers/ enablers applicable to other key environmental issues?
- 5. What successful elements of MDG7 should be considered as part of the new development goals in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda?

Content of the MDGs: This discussion will focus on the substance of the MDGs/MDG7

- 1. Why was the content of the MDGs/MDG7 unable to result in tangible outcomes given the lack of progress as reported in many countries?
- 2. Were the targets chosen for MDG7 sufficient to promote mainstreaming of environment in the context of sustainable development? How could they have been improved, ensuring they are realistic and able to be implemented? How could the linkages between targets and indicators be improved to help meet the overall goal?
- 3. Was the time frame (2000-2015) an appropriate one? What types of time frames would be relevant to the next set of goals? How should progress on Environmental Sustainability be measured comprehensively and at what intervals?
- 4. Why do you think there have been less positive results in some indicators and what have been the reasons these have lagged?
- 5. Based on the experiences of MDGs, what are the potential challenges for arriving at universal set of goals, targets and indicators?

<u>Application</u> of the MDGs: This will focus on the challenges that the MDGs/MDG7 faced, why, and how it could be different in the post 2015 development agenda.

- 1. What are the main barriers which contributed to the achievement of MDG 7 being off track at the international, regional, and national levels? What are the major challenges to integrating the MDGs at the national level, and what can be learned from this going forward?
- 2. How can the major constraints and challenges identified in MDG7 be overcome? (i.e. data gaps, capacity gaps, ineffective implementation, inadequate resources, limited access to information, technology, infrastructure and services, unsustainable practices, lack of incentives and policy incoherence). Who are the stakeholders and what is their role?

- 3. How can the issues of 'political will' be overcome to increase the integration of environmental sustainability into national sustainable development objectives?
- 4. Given that Rio+20 strongly reiterated the Rio1992 call for for coordination and coherence at the national level, how could these issues be integrated building on the lessons of MDG7 regarding capacity gaps and constraints?
- 5. How have environmental challenges evolved since 2000 when MDGs were established and what are the gaps?
- 6. What are the priority environmental sustainability considerations to be addressed in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda and the future we want?

5. BREAKOUT SESSION 2: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Working Group 2: Addressing Environmental Sustainability in the Post-2015 Agenda

This discussion will build on the Phase 1 e-discussions and focus on the opportunities and challenges in reframing environmental sustainability, in different settings, and in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. It is proposed that the discussions focus on key issues related to integrating environmental sustainability more conclusively into a development framework than has occurred with the MDGs. There are five areas of exploration we have defined for integrating environmental sustainability in the Post2015 agenda. We propose these areas will be used as a frame for exploring consensus and divergence on relevant issues. The area is broad and complex and the issues will definitely overlap but the outcomes will help define the next phase and inputs of the process.

Questions listed below are provided to spur debate. Each group may decide to address them or craft new questions that they consider important.

PLEASE SEE BACKGROUND PAPER NO. 1 FOR A SUMMARY OF THE E-DISCUSSION INPUTS FOR THIS SESSION

Group 1: Protecting global commons while respecting national development

- 1. What have been the barriers to action that limit our impact on the global commons at the international, regional and national levels? What are the origins of these barriers?
- 2. How do you think the outcomes from Rio+20 could be more successfully integrated into national actions and making environmental sustainability more present in national development?
- 3. What are the key drivers and enablers that could help national development maintain the global commons?
- 4. What elements of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda could help national development respect planetary boundaries?
- 5. How could existing global environmental goals that have already been negotiated through intergovernmental processes be used in the architecture of the post-2015 sustainable development

agenda? What opportunities exist for articulating new goals in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, taking into account the Millennium Declaration, Rio+20 outcome, and outcomes of other UN summits and conferences?

Group 2: Country typologies

- 1. How can a sustainable development agenda be established that is universal in nature but applicable at the national level and therefore inclusive and relevant for all countries, despite their different contexts and levels of development?
- 2. How would you define environmental sustainability within the context of low income, middle income and high income countries, and what are the priority issues for each typology?
- 3. Which set of issues within environmental sustainability are universal to all, or are common between the sets (i.e. MIC/LIC, HIC/MIC, LIC/HIC)?
- 4. What are the key drivers that influence success or failure of achieving environmental sustainability in each of these typologies/groupings of countries?
- 5. How could existing global environmental goals that have already been negotiated through intergovernmental processes be used in the architecture of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda? What opportunities exist for articulating new goals in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, taking into account the Millennium Declaration, Rio+20 outcome, and outcomes of other UN summits and conferences?

Group 3: Building from the Local Level

- 1. In both urban-rural contexts what are the key poverty-environment linkages (e.g. health, employment) that influence human development and environmental sustainability?
- 2. What are the principle environmental drivers that can lead to positive change in the lives of the poor?
- 3. How do we encourage local communities to become key agents of change for environmental sustainability?
- 4. What are the partnerships which are important to make this happen?
- 5. How could existing global environmental goals that have already been negotiated through intergovernmental processes be used in the architecture of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda? What opportunities exist for articulating new goals in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, taking into account the Millennium Declaration, Rio+20 outcome, and outcomes of other UN summits and conferences?

Group 4: Governance, human rights, peace and security

1. What are the key interlinkages between environmental sustainability and human development, inclusive economic development, and peace and human security? How should these issues be

- articulated together with the rule of law in the preparation of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda?
- 2. How would you translate human rights-based environmental sustainability into the post-2015 sustainable development agenda?
- 3. How do you reconcile long-term Environmental Sustainability with short-term political cycles? What are the enablers and incentive structures required?
- 4. What are the key roles of all stakeholders governments, UN, private sector, civil society and others in enhancing inclusive human development, human rights, peace and security, and the rule of law in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda?
- 5. How could existing global environmental goals that have already been negotiated through intergovernmental processes be used in the architecture of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda? What opportunities exist for articulating new goals in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, taking into account the Millennium Declaration, Rio+20 outcome, and outcomes of other UN summits and conferences?

Breakout Group 5: Inequality and inter-generational issues

- 1. Why are addressing inequality issues important for achieving environmental sustainability?
- 2. What are the key environmental resources that are contested and reflect inequality in sustainable development? What are the structural or cultural inequalities that are barriers to environmental sustainability?
- 3. What are the key relationships between governance, human rights, country typologies and inequalities that need to be considered for environmental sustainability?
- 4. How would you translate equity into the post-2015 framework (e.g. goals, indicators, targets) to support environmental sustainability?
- 5. How could existing global environmental goals that have already been negotiated through intergovernmental processes be used in the architecture of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda? What opportunities exist for articulating new goals in the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, taking into account the Millennium Declaration, Rio+20 outcome, and outcomes of other UN summits and conferences?