

Implementing the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production

Briefing note

Meeting basic needs of the poor, promoting resource efficiency in key industrial sectors, and assisting governments in implementing policies in areas such as water, energy and housing, should be focal areas for UNEP's contribution to the ten-year framework on sustainable consumption and production. This was the outcome of an informal advisory meeting of experts, organised by UNEP in Paris, 2 March 2004.

The advisory task force meeting was organised in co-operation with UN DESA (the UN Division on Economic and Social Affairs) and brought together, in their personal capacity, experts from governments, business associations, NGO's and international governmental organisations.¹

1. Introduction

One of the outcomes of WSSD (Johannesburg Summit, September 2002) was the call to promote and develop a 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production (10YFP) in support of regional and national initiatives. So far, four regional meetings (in Latin America and the Caribbean and Asia-Pacific region) and one international review meeting (in Marrakech, Morocco) have been held. For 2004 other regional meetings (in Africa and Europe) are planned, while another international review meeting will be organised in 2005.

2. The implementation challenge

The 10-year framework is not simply a series of meetings to discuss issues, but is intended to promote implementation of projects, supported by international programmes of UN agencies and other regional and international organisations. An important challenge for all parties involved would be to clearly communicate about the meaning of the framework - what added value it has in concrete terms - so that other stakeholders can join the efforts, in particular development aid agencies, regional and international development banks, other UN agencies and the private sector.

3. Priority areas for future work

Poverty eradication and social issues have clear linkages with the sustainable consumption and production agenda. The 10YFP primary focus should be on mass consumption and industrial production, which is not restricted to industrialised countries. There is an emerging "global consumer class", with large groups of middle-class consumers showing increasingly similar consumption patterns, for instance in countries such as Brazil, China and India. These groups would be included as target groups in the work on both consumption and production issues, whereas large parts of Africa are confronted with challenges of a different nature, with provision

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of better access to basic needs as overriding priority. UNEP's work in this area should aim at meeting **basic needs of the poor**, incorporating the Millennium Development Framework and operationally following the CSD thematic cycle of work. This means a focus on water, sanitation and human settlements in 2004 and 2005. Linkages to energy, air pollution, climate change, and industrial development would be focal areas in 2006 and 2007, with other specific areas in the years after.

UNEP has, as the experts pointed out, a special role to play in testing global methodologies through concrete **demonstration projects**. These will show the feasibility of approaches, which can then be replicated by other agencies, such as UNDP and the World Bank. An example of such a project is a "circular economy" demonstration project in China. UNEP could also provide a global platform to assess and promote projects, through which two-way learning (from North to South, South to North as well as from South to South and North to North) is facilitated, as well as more regional co-operation.

Emerging **national strategies** on sustainable consumption and production, such as the dialogues started in China, Nicaragua, Germany and the United Kingdom, should help to identify concrete delivery mechanisms, such as National Cleaner Production Centres, and increase government's commitment. Strategies should be inserted in national strategies on sustainable development and in poverty reduction strategies, rather than be created as separate plans.

Key instruments and tools that UNEP should work on - based on its existing expertise and networks on Sustainable Consumption and Cleaner Production, include the Life Cycle Initiative and integrated product policies (IPP), economic instruments, and communication and advertising. Education should be developed in co-operation with UNESCO. Capacity building and reaching small and medium sized enterprises remains a key area. Linkages with the trade agenda need to be explored as well.

Key sectors and issues for the implementation of resource-efficiency strategies include the information technology sector, more in particular prevention and management of electronic waste, as an input to the ongoing Information Summit discussions. This should be carried out in co-operation with the Basel Convention, and UNEP's e-Sustainability Forum. UNEP should also consider taking up the disseminating of information on international (product) standards, on multilateral environmental agreements, on reporting guidelines (such as GRI initiative), on sustainable procurement and on technology transfer. Assistance of national governments in implementing the UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection should start with a focus on water.

This briefing note was prepared by UNEP DTIE. An electronic copy of this document is available on www.uneptie.org/pc Comments and inputs are most welcome.

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