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## 3 Marrakech Task Forces

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### 3.1 An overview of the Task Forces

Under the Marrakech Process, the Marrakech Task Forces have been organised with the main objectives being:

- Supporting the implementation of concrete SCP projects (Phase 3 of the Marrakech Process)
- Focus on specific SCP themes or sectors to develop and or improve SCP tools and methodologies
- Strengthening North-South cooperation in the SCP implementation

These Task Forces are voluntary initiatives led by countries or groups of countries that – in cooperation with other partners – commit themselves to carrying out a set of activities which support the implementation of specific SCP projects. Four Task Forces were initially launched at the Costa Rica Meeting in 2005. To date, seven Task Forces are active on the following themes:

- Cooperation with Africa (hosted by Germany)
- Sustainable Products (hosted by the UK)
- Sustainable Lifestyles (hosted by Sweden)
- Sustainable Public Procurement (hosted by Switzerland)
- Sustainable Tourism (hosted by France)
- Sustainable Buildings and Construction (hosted by Finland)
- Education for Sustainable Consumption (hosted by Italy)

There are no specific rules or obligations for the Task Forces as they are entirely voluntary initiatives. However, they are expected to be output-oriented with the aim of demonstrating the added value of practical approaches or strategies for very specific product categories (e.g. meetings and publications should not be the core output). Ideally, a Task Force should comprise roughly 5-10 interested governments with a geographical balance among regions. The objectives and the current status of each Task Force are introduced below. Appendix 1 provides a list of members, meetings and activities.

## 3.2 Progress of the Marrakech Task Forces

### 3.2.1 “Cooperation with Africa” Task Force

The Cooperation with Africa Task Force was created to support African countries to implement the African 10YFP (see 1.1) by enabling these countries to “leapfrog” towards sustainable patterns of consumption and production. The specific objectives of the Task Force are:

- Strengthen existing organisational structures and establish new structures to promote SCP in African countries;
- Develop and support projects for implementing SCP methods in Africa;
- Support the integration and mainstreaming of environmental education in African schools and universities; and
- Promote sustainable procurement by governmental organisations through training courses and awareness raising.

The Task Force was created by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and is chaired together with the African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (ARSCP). The German government is also providing funding for a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) who supports the work of this Task Force at the UNEP Regional Office for Africa (ROA). The Task Force has organised two meetings during 2006 and the third meeting will be held in June 2007 in Addis Ababa.

The Task Force is currently conducting its own activities in the following three areas:

- Development of an African eco-labelling scheme
- Development of national/city-wide SCP Programmes
- Review of opportunities for leapfrogging in African countries

By May 2007, the Task Force compiled best practices in the area of managing environmental problems from 12 African countries and made a report entitled *Best Practice in African Countries* with help from a consultancy (see Section 4).

### 3.2.2 Sustainable Products Task Force

The International Task Force for Sustainable Products (ITFSP) aims at increasing the product performance in terms of energy, waste and other aspects of eco-design. The specific objectives of the Task Force are to:

- Raise awareness of product policy as means of achieving international development and environmental objectives;

- Seek common priorities and opportunities for cooperation in encouraging more innovation on product eco-design; and
- Establish and participate in open and transparent processes for improving product performance.

The primary coordinator for this Task Force is the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) with participation from 13 countries and four international agencies. The Task Force has organised three meetings since its launch in November 2005.

The Task Force has focused its work on three aspects of globally traded energy consuming products: science, policy, and mechanisms to develop standardised test procedures to measure energy performance and to introduce harmonised energy efficiency labels and standards. The members developed the concept of creating Global Sustainable Products Networks (GSPNs) in key products and related subjects. These networks aim to bring together the expert communities working on connected issues and encourage sharing of expertise and experience with the goal of achieving greater international cooperation. To date, four GSPNs have been established to cover lighting, home entertainment products, electric motors and compliance issues. During the latest meeting held in Canberra in November 2006, the Task Force discussed the need for greater international cooperation to address policy issues influencing the development of challenging performance standards aimed at reducing energy demand including stand-by power consumption.

### 3.2.3 Sustainable Lifestyles Task Force

The Task Force on Sustainable Lifestyles focuses on exploring actions that individuals can take to modify their lifestyles to fit a more sustainable pattern of consumption. Its main objectives are to provide input to the 10YFP by bringing tested policy tools, methodologies and best practices to promote and deliver sustainable lifestyles.

The Government of Sweden is sponsoring this Task Force with the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Integration and Gender Equality acting as the primary coordinators together with the Ministry of Environment of Argentina acting as co-chair. Participating in the Task Force are governments, international and regional agencies, several NGOs and research institutes from both developed and developing countries. The Task Force has organised four meetings between June 2005 and April 2007 and is planning the next meeting in autumn 2007 with a focus on cultural aspects of sustainable lifestyles.

The Task Force has been supporting the implementation of several demonstration projects including:

- Sister classrooms between USA, Mexico and Costa Rica on life-cycle based sustainable consumption and global citizenship
- Training sessions in China and Brazil to assist governments, local authorities as well as NGOs and consumer associations with development of communication strategies and sustainability awareness campaigns
- Workshops to develop creative communities for sustainable lifestyles in emerging urban economies

- Website expansion and regional workshops of the UNEP/UNESCO YouthXchange programme
- Development of the UNEP Creative Gallery on Sustainability Communications
- A review of best practices in promoting sustainable lifestyles around the world
- Development of a guidebook for industry on sustainable lifestyles
- A knowledge base on research
- A toolkit for marketing and advertising courses targeted to universities

### 3.2.4 Sustainable Public Procurement Task Force

The overall objective of the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Public Procurement is to promote and support the implementation of sustainable public procurement (SPP) by developing tools and supporting capacity building in both developed and developing countries.

The Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) is coordinating the effort with participation from twelve other governments and six international agencies. The Task Force has so far organised four meetings.

In the meetings, it was agreed that the outcomes of the Task Force's work should include:

- Clarification on the legal framework of SPP (national regulations, multilateral and bilateral trade rules, labour standards, etc.)
- A SPP toolkit including needs assessment
- A paper on accounting for the value of SPP (innovation, system cost regulation vs. non-action, fair competition, social and environmental benefits, etc.)
- A plan for implementing the toolkit in pilot countries
- Joint work and support to other Task Forces, especially Sustainable Products Task Force

### 3.2.5 Sustainable Tourism Task Force

The role of the International Task Force on Sustainable Tourism Development is to develop and promote actions that encourage sustainable tourism, since this sector has a significant but often overlooked impact on the natural environment. The focus areas of the Task Force are climate change, biodiversity, cultural and natural heritage, and local development.

The primary coordinator of the Task Force is the French Ministry for Ecology, and Sustainable Development and Town and Country Planning (Regional Development). Fifteen other governments and eight international agencies are among the members. In addition, nine NGOs and business associations working in the areas of conservation and tourism are also participating in the Task Force. The Task Force has organised two high-level meetings thus far and the third meeting is planned between October and November 2007.

Main activities proposed in the Task Force programme of work include:

- Collection of good practices
- Education and capacity building for future tourism managers (tourism schools) and local SMEs in the accommodation sector
- Development of a guide on tourism and coastal zone management
- Promotion of corporate social and environmental responsibility and partnership with the private sector
- Promotion of national strategic documents integrating sustainable tourism
- Analysis of tourism-oriented Local Agenda 21 and local governance
- Development of policy tools (review of existing labels, standards and certification processes, financial guide on tourism investments)
- Promotion of natural and cultural heritage as assets for sustainable tourism development
- Information - Communication - Networking activities (pilot communication campaign on sustainable tourism)

### 3.2.6 Sustainable Buildings and Construction Task Force

The main objective of the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Buildings and Construction is to support the development of innovative local and national policies that will mainstream sustainability in construction, use, maintenance and renovation of buildings. The first priority of the Task Force has been to ask: How can the public sector promote energy efficiency, energy savings and use of renewable energy in the built environment?

The Task Force aims to fulfil the above objectives through:

- Mapping out the baseline condition for sustainable buildings and construction (document research);
- Initiating research projects on jointly determined issues;
- Publishing best policy practices and policy action points; and
- Cooperating with parallel initiatives concerned with sustainability of construction.

The Task Force is coordinated by the Ministry of the Environment of Finland with participation from seven other national and local governments. There are also observers from international agencies and the 15-strong Finnish National Advisory Group. To date, the international Task Force has organised three meetings (two information sharing meetings and a workshop).

At the first workshop, it was agreed that the Task Force should focus on two main outcomes:

- Compilation of a list of joint policy recommendations to be published in time for the CSD-15 in May 2007. The document explores the use of policy mechanisms to promote sustainability issues involved in new construction, refurbishment of existing buildings, and maintenance and operation of buildings.
- The publication of best policy practices *Buildings for a Better Future* in time for the CSD-15 and the Stockholm Meeting in June 2007.<sup>26</sup>

As the outcome of the first workshop, the Task Force drafted Policy Action Points. In cooperation with the Task Force, the UNEP Sustainable Building and Construction Initiative (SBCI) published a baseline report entitled *Buildings and Climate Change: Status, Challenges and Opportunities* in 2007.<sup>27</sup>

### 3.2.7 Education for Sustainable Consumption Task Force

The main objective of the Task Force on Education for Sustainable Consumption is to focus on the key role of formal learning processes in providing knowledge, awareness and competences to enable individuals and social groups to be the main actors of change towards more sustainable consumption behaviours.

At the first international meeting of the Task Force (Genoa, 16-17 April 2007), eight thematic working groups were established as permanent knowledge and learning communities for the period 2007-2009 to provide contributions and inputs towards the fulfilment of the expected outcomes defined in the terms of reference. The working groups (WGs) focus on: essential needs to introduce SCP in formal learning processes (WG1, WG4, WG5), the contribution of social capital to SCP (WG2), education and private sector (WG3), building experiences on local traditions, cultures and natural heritage (WG7), initiatives and future perspectives in the Mediterranean region (WG8). The role of the working groups and their activities provide also the basis to widen participation, to strengthen collaborations and to define new synergies.

The Task Force is working as well on the following activities:

- Collection of good practices
- Research on the good practices submitted, proposing viable ways forward in the field of education for sustainable consumption
- Creation of linkages and synergies between the activities of the Task Force and initiatives at national, regional and international level under the broad concept of Education for All as a life-long learning process and within the framework of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD, 2005-2014)

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<sup>26</sup> This publication is available on the Task Force's website [www.environment.fi/sbc](http://www.environment.fi/sbc)

<sup>27</sup> For more information on SBCI, visit [www.unepsbci.org](http://www.unepsbci.org)

- Development, in cooperation with the Sustainable Lifestyles Task Force and UNEP-DTIE, of a research project on education and sustainable consumption

The expected outcomes for the Task Force are:

- Creation of a matrix highlighting political priorities, a framework of policy options, a basket of voluntary commitments and future practices selected following the research on good practices;
- Report on projects (e.g. integrated approach to education, etc) and initiatives in the field of education for sustainable consumption launched within the framework of activities of the Task Force;
- Guidelines to integrate different processes (ESD, sustainable development and SCP), to include sustainable consumption into formal education curricula at all levels, to share research-action methodology on projecting educational initiatives;
- Promotion of projects and activities on education for sustainable consumption focused on the specific thematic clusters of the CSD and referred to the Mediterranean and other regional areas;
- Provision of a list of indicators and criteria for quality assessment, evaluation and monitoring initiatives;
- Study on the thematic issues of education (e.g. pedagogic aspects) and consumption (e.g. merchandising, communication and information) analysing specific aspects and the key interlinkages and interdependencies; and
- Report on the outreach activities of the Task Force and the involvement of other countries, with a particular reference to developing countries, in the work of the Task Force.

The Task Force is coordinated by the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea and is supported by the work of Task Force secretariat (UNEP-DTIE, Istituto Scholè Futuro, University of Bergamo) through the provision of inputs in defining and planning activities and the creation of networks among the relevant stakeholders on education for sustainable consumption.

### 3.3 Analysis of Task Force activities

As voluntary initiatives without specific rules or obligations and being set up according to the interest areas of leading governments and members, the seven task forces are diverse in the composition of their membership, the scope of activities, and their objectives and goals. This analysis aims to identify possible gaps to be filled in coming years, such as identifying SCP priorities and sectors as well as areas likely not covered by existing Task Forces.

#### Working areas

The working areas of the seven Task Forces illustrate the diversity and multidimensional nature of SCP issues – some Task Forces focus on specific sectors (sustainable tourism) while others address policy tools and programmes (sustainable products, sustainable public procurement, sustainable buildings and construction), social and behavioural issues (sustainable lifestyles, education for sustainable consumption) or focus on a specific region (cooperation with Africa).



**Figure 4: 7 Marrakech Task Forces and their diverse nature**

Through this diverse selection of topics, the seven Task Forces are generally considered to have provided a good coverage of key SCP issues, each responding to priorities and needs identified during regional consultations and international expert meetings. However, gaps that are not sufficiently addressed by existing Task Forces remain. Notable among these are:

- Water and sanitation: The improvement in the management of water resources and sanitation was raised as a priority both in Latin America and Africa but is not directly covered by any existing Task Force.
- Energy saving, energy efficiency and renewable energy: Energy issues are addressed particularly in Africa and Europe. While some relevant issues are included within the discussions within the Sustainable Products, Sustainable Lifestyles and Sustainable Buildings and Construction Task Forces, additional work or a new task force may be needed to systematically address energy saving, energy efficiency and renewable energy as strategies for tackling climate change.
- Urban development: Latin America and Africa in particular emphasised the need to tackle the issues caused by rapid growth of urban areas, which include waste management, transport (with a view to international transport), and land use and spatial planning. The State of Victoria in Australia has expressed its interest in leading a task force on sustainable cities.



- Food and agriculture: The promotion of sustainable agricultural methods, the improvement in market access for agricultural products and the expansion of use of agricultural products are among the topics African participants proposed during the consultations as specific actions.

Other important aspects to consider as potential cross-cutting issues are:

- Economic and social integration: It was emphasised particularly in Latin America that the improvement in environmental performance needs to be integrated into the process of economic and social policy development.
- Development of financial mechanisms: The needs of financing SCP-related projects was highlighted in all regional consultations as well as in international expert meetings with the utilisation of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) as an illustrative example.

### **Member profiles**

As stated in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, developed countries need to take a lead in promoting SCP and the 10YFP as it is in these countries where consumption and production levels are greatest. By taking a lead role the developed countries also provide a type of development assistance to developing countries through the transfer of knowledge and experience. In this sense, the enthusiastic response from Europe, with all seven Task Forces led by European governments, is very encouraging.

Given that all the Task Forces have made great efforts for engaging a wide range of regions, the Task Forces are diverse in terms of number of members, geographic representation and constituency. Most of the Task Forces include developing countries among their members. The Cooperation with Africa and Sustainable Lifestyles Task Forces chair their groups jointly with counterparts from developing countries. Nonetheless, nearly half of the members of the Task Forces are still European.

Sustainable Lifestyles, Sustainable Tourism and Education for Sustainable Consumption Task Forces, are actively engaging stakeholders other than representatives from governments and international agencies. Stakeholders being engaged include NGOs, research institutes, business and technical experts from various fields. At the same time, some Task Forces chose to limit their membership primarily to public sector representatives.

### **Deliverables and outcomes**

Most of Task Forces define their deliverables or outcomes mainly as publications or capacity building activities. These include:

- Developing research documents, best practice manuals, best policy publications, educational materials, toolkits, etc.
- Providing training and pilot-testing of the produced manuals and toolkits
- Developing policy tools and mechanisms

Conversely, some Task Forces aim to incorporate more concrete actions and projects in their activities. The Cooperation with Africa Task Force is planning to develop an eco-label for Africa, while the Sustainable Products Task Force is establishing expert networks of specific product categories or topics. The Sustainable Lifestyles Task Force is supporting the implementation of five concrete demonstration projects. The Sustainable Tourism Task Force is developing a campaign on sustainable holidays (Brazil) aiming at assisting inter-governmental agencies, governments, industry and civil organisations to use effective communication tools that can raise tourists' awareness on responsible behaviours in holiday-making choices and unlock the positive power of consumer demand.

### 3.4 Challenges and opportunities for the Task Forces

The following presents challenges that need to be addressed and opportunities for improving the Task Forces in the coming years. Based on the above analysis and observations on the development of the Task Forces, it is recommended that the Task Force coordinators and the governments engaged under the Marrakech Process take the following into consideration:

- ***More active participation from developed countries outside Europe:*** The current leadership of European governments in the coordination of the Task Forces shows their commitment to SCP and their response to the WSSD's call to developed countries to take the lead in promoting SCP. However, developed countries outside Europe (Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and USA) should also be encouraged to take more active leadership and participation roles in the Task Forces as well as the Marrakech Process in general.
- ***More engagement and ownership of developing countries:*** More active engagement of developing countries in the Task Forces is also clearly a priority. As currently practiced by a small number of the Task Forces, the ownership of the Task Forces can be shared with developing countries through co-chairing, hosting task force meetings, or other means (e.g. co-chairing at Sustainable Lifestyles and Cooperation with Africa Task Forces).
- ***More coordination between Task Forces and regional strategies:*** In the same manner addressed in Section 1.2, Task Forces can look for additional synergies with regional SCP strategies. This would help them to better understand regional priorities and needs and enable a more effective response and support for SCP issues relevant to each region with the outcome being that the Task Forces could serve as an implementation mechanism for the regional strategies. One potential example could be support from the Task Forces to the SCP Help Desk based in China through provision of expert information and practical advice on their own working areas.
- ***More engagement of other stakeholders:*** There remain a number of important stakeholders in the working areas of Task Forces such as development agencies, businesses and NGOs (especially regional and international NGOs/networks) that need to be engaged. They could be active partners in the Task Forces by creating joint projects and identifying new opportunities for innovative SCP solutions. Among pioneering examples is the public-private partnership between development agencies, businesses and NGOs for developing market solutions for the poor (e.g.

Human Development through the Market, see Background Paper 2). The engagement of researchers is also important to better understand the causes of unsustainable consumption and production patterns and to effectively turn existing knowledge into action. Task Force members can also be encouraged to reach out to stakeholder forums and initiatives in their respective countries.

- **Address gap areas:** There is also a need to identify the best ways to address gaps in working areas of the Task Forces, such as waste, energy, food, sustainable cities, transport and engaging and involving SMEs. Creating new Task Forces or extending the scope of existing Task Forces could be one way to fill these gaps. However, gaps may also be addressed by developing synergies with other existing public or private initiatives and networks. For example, the International Solid Waste Management Association<sup>28</sup> (ISWA) could support the Marrakech Process in the area of waste. UN HABITAT could also take a more active role building synergies with the regional and national programmes under the Marrakech Process.
- **More financial support for Task Forces:** The operation of the Task Forces has relied mainly on relatively small contributions from host countries and substantial financial support has not yet been provided by other developed countries, international agencies or development agencies. This remains a challenge, more financial mechanism are required in order to scale up the activities and achieve a meaningful impact. Other Task Force members than those acting in the role of chair should be encouraged to make financial contributions or help sourcing additional financial resources. For example the TF on Sustainable Products is preparing a project proposal to obtain GEF funding.
- **More cooperation between Task Forces:** More cooperation and information sharing between the different Task Forces will be necessary to create synergistic benefits as well as to avoid overlapping work. Some collaboration is already happening. The Sustainable Tourism and Sustainable Lifestyles Task Forces jointly conducted training on “communicating sustainability with a focus on sustainable tourism campaigns” in Sao Paulo in April 2007. The international launch meeting of the Education for Sustainable Consumption Task Force was held in Genoa, 16-17 April 2007, in parallel with the third meeting of the Sustainable Lifestyles Task Force. Each country can also be encouraged to coordinate the participation in different Task Forces.
- **Enhanced visibility of activities:** In order to become an effective Marrakech Process implementation mechanism and to secure additional financial support and stakeholder involvement, the visibility of Task Force activities could be improved through activities such as internet websites, use of media and outreach activities in stakeholder forums. While some Task Forces have developed their own websites (e.g. Sustainable Products, Sustainable Buildings and Construction, and Sustainable Tourism Task Forces), more coordinated and effective communication is desirable.

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<sup>28</sup> The 10 Years Perspective Paper can be downloaded from [www.iswa.org](http://www.iswa.org)

- ***Clearer targets and progress monitoring:*** It is important for the Task Forces to set a clear scope of activities and deliverables. This will ensure focusing limited resources on the highest priorities and avoiding overlapping with other existing sector initiatives. The activities of the Task Forces need to be monitored and evaluated in order to show their progress and contributions to the Marrakech Process and SCP in general. Hence setting clear targets and performance indicators could be an important tool.

### 3.5 Key questions for the working group

Based on the above discussion on achievements and challenges of the Marrakech Task Forces, key suggested questions to be discussed among the participants in the working group on the role of the Task Forces to further develop the 10YFP (28 June, Group 3) are presented below:

1. How can the Task Forces support more effectively the implementation of the regional/national SCP priorities and frameworks?
2. How can more cooperation between the Task Forces be promoted?
3. How to address other SCP priority areas that are not covered by the Task Forces (e.g., food, waste, mobility)?
4. What are the key actions needed to support the work of the Marrakech Task Forces? How to obtain more institutional and financial support?
5. How can the Task Forces continue support to develop the 10YFP and how can they support the future implementation of the 10YFP?