



#YOUTH2030

7th Economic and Social Council Youth Forum CONCEPT NOTE

Thematic Breakout Session

“Ensure Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns”

30 January 2018

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Room 7

United Nations Headquarters, New York

1. Background and Context

In the "Future We Want" governments and representatives of other stakeholders meeting in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 2012, recognized the promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns as a general objective and indispensable requirement of sustainable development. Sustainable consumption and production consist of promoting the efficient use of resources and energy, the reduction of food waste and of foods losses along production and supply chains, sound management of chemical waste, as well as the construction of infrastructures that do not harm the environment. The improvement of access to basic services, is essentially about encouraging industry, businesses and consumers to be mindful of the environmental consequences of their production and consumption patterns and the creation of ecological jobs.

The call for sustainable and responsible consumption and production is captured in the 10 Year Framework of Programs for Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP for SCP) and SDG 12 of the Agenda 2030. SDG 12 encourages the reduction of waste, the reuse packaging and products, and recycling. This includes the efficient use of natural resources, the reduction of food waste and of foods losses along production and supply chains, sound management of chemical waste, as well as an adaptation in technological capacities to move towards sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

Furthermore, achieving the 10YFP for SCP and SDG 12 will depend on the ways in which societies adapt to rapid urbanization and transgression of planetary boundaries in the face of fast growing population worldwide.



More than 50% of the world's population currently live in urban areas, and by 2050, urban dwellers are projected to account for about 2.5 billion people. Sustaining this population requires innovative solutions and effective regulatory frameworks to ensure that such trends do not come at an unsustainable environmental cost.

Currently, the significant growth in the world's population means a greater demand for food, water, farmland and income sources, and this can result in accelerated urbanization, a deteriorating natural resource base and an unsustainable and disproportionate consumption of resources. To counter the negative externalities from the aforementioned, including demands for water reserves, energy and food production, requires the adoption of more sustainable production and consumption approaches and mechanisms, in efforts to do more and better things with less resources.

Economic activity remains the main pull factor towards urban areas, and while efforts to tap into economic opportunities in rural areas are still on national and international agendas, the reality of large numbers flocking to cities in the hope of finding work opportunities and improving livelihoods is inevitable. Additionally, increased urbanization may cause increased marginalization of more vulnerable groups of society, which in turn may result in increased unsustainable patterns of production and consumption. This is particularly true for the large number of young women and men seeking employment in an already saturated labour market.

Effectively inducing changes in consumption and production patterns requires a strong national framework that is integrated into national and sectoral plans, together with adherence to international norms. Almost all Members States of the United Nations are party to at least one of the multilateral environmental agreements and are investing efforts in regular monitoring and reporting on them. However, while increased national efforts confirm the importance of addressing challenges linked to air, soil and water pollution, as well as sustainable resource utilization and waste management, there is an evident need to engage all levels of society in the process to ensure progress towards the achievement of SDG 12. The dialogue has to enable an all-of-society approach for responsible and sustainable consumption and production patterns to be adopted into a society's behavior as a whole.

It is therefore crucial to ensure that the creation or expansion of decent employment opportunities through increased urban economic activity is pursued in a socially and environmentally sustainable manner that equally encourages responsible production and consumption patterns – a question of how to “do more with less”. Creating sustainable and resilient communities can only be achieved by decoupling economic growth from escalating resource use and environmental degradation, while ensuring social inclusion.



Youth are an integral driver to achieve these objectives, especially considering today's reality with the largest youth population (under 25 years of age) in the history of the human race. Young women and men can be highly responsive to prevailing economic, social, and environmental challenges and fostering their empowerment holds great potential for widespread positive impact. They can contribute to ensuring that technological advancements, policy frameworks, behavioral change and regulatory frameworks are utilized in ways to improve consumption and production patterns and can contribute to shaping and directing incentives, including future investment and national policies, for socially and environmentally responsible behavior.

Actions and initiatives led by young women and men can trigger the necessary momentum for local innovation and development, and can contribute to instilling responsible and sustainable consumption patterns to create resilient communities. In particular, youth-led social enterprises, youth activists, scientists, practitioners and their good practices can play a key role in light of these endeavors, especially as these increasingly get involved in a wide range of industries and services. Furthermore, they can greatly inform research and innovation through the measurable data generated on social impact through their activities, as well as inspire the spirit of change needed to ensure sustainable production and consumption patterns. These youth-led initiatives and actions will also contribute to improving opportunities for decent social and economic participation that are in line with the objectives of SDG 12.

Objective:

The breakout session on Sustainable Production and Consumption through youth-led action (SDG 12 & 10YFP for SCP) will seek to:

- Share critical and reflective analysis and experiences of young people affected by and working in matters associated by sustainable production and consumption patterns, and leverage respective experience and expertise in promoting youth-led actions and activities, including youth-led social entrepreneurship, research and innovation;
- Create more awareness about SDG 12, the 10 Year Framework of Programs for Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP for SCP);
- Explore how youth social entrepreneurs, activists scientists and practitioners, amongst others, can drive the adoption of responsible and sustainable consumption



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and production patterns with a view to creating resilient communities, and thereby contribute to the achievement of SDG 12 and the 10YFP for SCP.

- Inform the deliberations of the HLPF, the United Nations Environment Assembly and the 10YFP secretariat;
- Seek renewed commitment from partners to support the implementation and monitoring of SDG 12 and the 10YFP for SCP;
- Strategize on how to further promote the message of SDG 12 and the 10YFP for SCP, and the role of youth in it.

Expected results:

- Share critical and reflective analysis and experiences of young people affected by and working in matters associated by SCP patterns;
- Create more awareness about SDG 12, the 10 Year Framework of Programs for Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP for SCP)-Discuss annual meetings and report;
- Inform the deliberations of the HLPF, the United Nations Environment Assembly and the 10YFP secretariat;
- Seek renewed commitment from partners to support the implementation and monitoring of SDG 12 and the 10YFP for SCP;
- Strategize on how to further promote the message of SDG 12 and the 10YFP for SCP, and the role of youth within it.

2. Organization:

- The session is organized by a lead UN entity (UNIDO) and the UN MGCY SCP/SDG 12 Working Group
- The session will be opened and moderated by a UN entity (UNIDO) which will introduce the topic and welcomes the participants to join the discussion and will



facilitate the conversation among the participants, by laying out the guiding questions and expected results.

3. Session structure and format:

- The session will be an open discussion facilitated by a moderator/facilitator (UNIDO) based upon the guiding questions and the expected outcomes. There will be no panelists
- Questions to be addressed:
 - How can youth-led actions and initiatives contribute to SCP?
 - What experiences of good practices for SCP can you share with us?
 - What do you think is the biggest challenge to achieving SDG 12 and how can children and youth help address this challenge?
- The rapporteur (UNIDO) will take notes and prepare a summary to be presented in the report back session.

Issues at stake:

- 10 Year Framework of Programs on Sustainable Consumption and Production
 - Evolution
 - Context- Difference from previous narrative (circular economy etc)
 - Links with system-wide sustainable development frameworks
 - Challenges and Opportunities
 - Examples of positive youth action and negative barriers
- SDG 12
- Emerging Issues

Other key issues

- The potential of youth-led actions and initiatives in effectively contributing to promoting responsible and sustainable production and consumption patterns;



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- Identify different barriers that society faces in the realization of sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Identify policy frameworks (regulatory and facilitative) that can be put in place to ensure faster adoption of sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- The importance of impact measurement to ensure continued adaption of business solutions to economic, social and environmental challenges.

Suggested reading:

- [The Future We Want](#)
[GA Resolution 66/288 - The Future We Want](#)
- Sustainable Consumption and Production Global edition. A Handbook for Policymakers
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?page=view&type=400&nr=1951&menu=35>
- Progress report on the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns
http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/2015/56&Lang=E
- Entrepreneurs 4 Social change (E4SC): www.E4SC.org