

CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY*

First Preparatory Committee Meeting for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, 2012

20 May 2010

* The following summary tries to reflect the breadth of the discussions, highlight the issues that were addressed, and give the sense of the scope and content of the different views set out during the debate. It is not intended to reflect a consensus since clearly it is the Co-Chairs' perception of the debate, and not an agreed text.

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Opening session

1. The Opening session of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) was opened on 17 May 2010 by Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). The meeting elected the ten members of the Bureau including the two co-chairs and the rapporteur of the preparatory process: H.E. Mr. Park In-kook, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea and H.E. Mr. John Ashe, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda as co-chairs, Ms. Tania Valerie Raguz of Croatia as rapporteur and H.E. Mr. Maged A. Abdelaziz of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Mrs. Ana Bianchi of Argentina, Mr. Jiří Hlaváček of the Czech Republic, Mr. Asad Majeed Khan of Pakistan, Mr. John M. Matuszak of the United States of America, H.E. Mr. Charles T. Ntwaagae of Botswana and Mr. Paolo Soprano of Italy as members of the Bureau. Mrs. Maria Teresa Mesquita Pessôa of Brazil was designated as a Bureau member ex-officio.
2. Two contact groups were established, one addressing the preparatory process (headed by Mr. Asad Majeed Khan of Pakistan and Mr. Paolo Soprano of Italy), the other addressing the rules of procedure for UNCSD (headed by Mrs. Ana Bianchi of Argentina and Mr. John M. Matuszak of the United States of America).
3. The appointed Secretary-General of the UNCSD, Mr. Sha Zukang, will be supported by two Executive Coordinators, one from the North and one from the South, to be appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. In his opening remarks, Mr. Sha emphasized that he will oversee the work of the Secretariat in support of the preparatory process with utmost transparency. The dedicated Secretariat of UNCSD will be located in UN DESA and staffed by the Division for Sustainable Development, as well as staff seconded from various UN entities. A departmental task force will be established to support the preparatory process. Inter-agency collaboration involving all the relevant agencies in the UN system will contribute to an effective preparatory process. Existing coordination mechanisms such as the Executive Committee for Economic and Social Affairs (EC-ESA), the Environmental Management Group (EMG) and the UN Development Group (UNDG) will be used to this end. The meeting adopted the agenda. Mr. Tariq Banuri introduced the report of the Secretary-General and emphasized that significant development results of recent years must be sustained.
4. Governments, UN agencies and representatives of Major Groups made statements calling for an ambitious, forward-looking and action-oriented outcome of the conference. A number appealed for a short and focused outcome document. Some indicated that there is

need for the sort of sharp policy focus provided by the clear goals and targets contained in the MDGs, in effect proposing an extension of the MDGs to encompass new sustainable development goals. Several delegations called for the sharp integration into the UNCSD of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. As one delegation put, we should work towards a strong consensus on behalf of humanity and the planet.

5. Speakers highlighted the principal aims of UNCSD as stated in GA resolution A/RES/64/236, namely i) securing renewed political commitment to sustainable development, ii) assessing progress and implementation gaps in meeting already agreed commitments, and iii) addressing new and emerging challenges. They drew attention to the two themes of the conference: the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and the institutional framework for sustainable development.
6. Many speakers noted that sustainable development is key to attaining the MDGs and that the deliberations at UNCSD should give equal weight to each of the three pillars of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. The world cannot afford to choose between environmental protection, economic growth and social equity. Stress was placed by several delegations on the need to accelerate the convergence between the environmental pillar and the social and economic pillars.
7. To renew political commitment to sustainable development, delegations and stakeholders called for a rekindling of the “spirit of Rio”. Many highlighted the importance of engaging all stakeholders at the national and local levels and, in particular, the youth, with one referring to UNCSD as “Rio for 20-somethings”.
8. Many delegations reiterated that the sustainable development principles and commitments articulated in Stockholm in 1972 and Rio in 1992 remain valid today, but some delegations suggested that they reflect the realities of the 20th century not the new millennium. Others insisted that, as countries had not yet delivered adequately on those commitments, renewed political commitment should be, first and foremost, about heightened resolve to implement prior commitments.
9. Many speakers called for an honest assessment of the progress and gaps in the implementation of commitments related to sustainable development, including a clear evaluation of what has been delivered in terms of means of implementation, which are at the root of a persistent implementation gap. Several countries called for attention to the removal of the implementation barriers faced by small island developing States. On the one hand, a new spirit of partnership between developed and developing countries was invoked by some delegations; on the other hand, it was noted by other delegations that

the global partnership for development of MDG8 remains elusive. The hope was expressed by many delegations that UNCSD could bridge the trust gap between developed and developing countries evident in the climate change negotiations.

10. Emerging challenges to sustainable development include the recent global crises, namely the financial crisis and economic recession, and the food and energy crises, but also climate change, biodiversity loss, desertification, water scarcity, and natural disasters, among others. It was noted by one delegation that many of these challenges predate the financial crisis and global recession.
11. Some speakers made a strong case for the co-benefits of a green economy with respect to development and social equity. It was stressed by one speaker that social equity must be central to a green economy if it is to contribute to sustainable development. Others saw a green economy as a set of policies to transition to low-carbon development. Relatedly, some speakers mentioned that a green economy should be built on clean energy, resource efficiency, and creation of decent jobs. A number of delegations observed that there is not one but various proposals for a green economy, whose costs and benefits need to be better understood. One speaker noted that the concept of a green economy has given rise to much debate and that is what is needed. Some delegations indicated what in their view a green economy should not be, namely, privatizing nature and natural assets. Other speakers cautioned against associating green economy with trade and financial conditionalities. In general, there was a sense that green economy should not be a straightjacket but a concept broad and flexible enough to accommodate a diversity of national and local approaches. Indeed, as noted by several delegations, a green economy is already being defined at the grass roots by practice on the ground.
12. With regard to the institutional framework for sustainable development, a consensus was noted on the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation among international organizations and environmental agreements. Still, divergent views exist on how to enhance the efficiency of the current UN system in the area of sustainable development. The need to examine the working of the Commission on Sustainable Development was mentioned by many delegations, as was the work being led by UNEP on reforming international environmental governance. Some referred to the need to look at a broader set of institutions, including those dealing with finance and trade, and how they could contribute more effectively to sustainable development.
13. Speakers called for a preparatory process that is transparent and inclusive, and that fully engages civil society and all Major Groups. In this regard, some speakers mentioned that public awareness and participation should be encouraged and promoted by making information widely available in the spirit of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration. New media and web tools need to be used effectively for outreach to civil society, in particular youth.

14. Several stressed the need for an efficient and focused preparatory process within the mandate of the General Assembly resolution A/RES/64/236. A number warned against duplication of other processes, especially the CSD and its multi-year programme of work, and asked how other processes could support preparations for UNCED. Some called for the establishment of an intersessional program of work involving open-ended working groups in order to deal with the difficult issues on the agenda (see Recommendations by the Contact Group on Preparatory Process contained in the Annex).
15. Delegates made a few proposals for work to be undertaken in preparation for PrepCom2, including:
 - Preparation of a roadmap and timetable for the whole preparatory process;
 - Preparation of a list of background documents to be prepared for PrepCom 2;
 - Identification of which UN agencies and programmes could provide expert input on which themes and topics to support the work of the Secretariat.

Session 1:

Assessing the progress to date and the remaining gaps in implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development

16. Many delegations observed that progress in implementing the goals and objectives of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Environment, the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development has been inconclusive and uneven. Despite some achievements on the ground, most notably on reducing poverty, improving access to education and better health in some areas, substantial challenges remain. Achievements that have been made are unevenly distributed with wide disparities across regions.
17. Several delegations noted persistent implementation gaps relating to poverty eradication, food security, income inequality, maintenance of biodiversity, combating climate change, reducing pressure on ecosystems and fisheries, access to clean water and sanitation and the full participation of women in implementing internationally agreed goals, which reflect a fragmented approach to achieving sustainable development goals.
18. It was noted by some speakers that the income and development gap between many low-income countries and the high-income countries has continued to widen, and that this poses a challenge for sustainable development.
19. Many delegations noted that no major changes have been made in patterns of consumption and production since UNCED and that fundamental changes are

indispensable to global sustainable development. They called for actions to promote sustainable production and consumption patterns with developed countries taking the lead in accordance with the Rio principles, notably that of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

20. Also mentioned by many speakers as a remaining gap is a lack of mutually coherent policies and approaches supportive of sustainable development in the areas of finance, investment, trade, capacity building, and technology transfer.
21. Many observed that efforts at achieving sustainable development goals, including the MDGs, have been further hindered by the recent financial and economic crises which have adversely affected economic performance, eroded hard won gains and increased the number of people living in extreme poverty.
22. Strong political impetus is needed to bridge implementation gaps, and Africa, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States were mentioned by several delegations as deserving special attention and support.
23. Many delegations stated that an examination of the underlying factors contributing to slow progress points to the need for enhanced means of implementation, including the strengthening of existing processes of financing for development such as the Monterrey Consensus, and a fair and equitable multilateral trade system, including a fair outcome of Doha and elimination of harmful subsidies. Technology transfer, technology cooperation, and training and capacity development were also highlighted by many delegations as essential, and several delegations called for scaled-up financial support for capacity building in small island developing States in particular. It was mentioned that human capital is central to sustainable development. A number of delegations stressed the importance of strong national leadership and strengthened national implementation to progress on sustainable development.
24. It was stated by many delegations that inadequate financial support has hampered the ability of developing countries to undertake action on sustainable development and has limited their access to modern, environmentally sound and clean technologies. Official development assistance (ODA) has lagged behind commitments in some cases, although many donor countries have substantially increased aid and have undertaken action for a more coordinated and efficient distribution of aid. It was noted by several delegations that the commitment to double aid to Africa by 2010, as agreed by the Group of Eight at Gleneagles in 2005, may not be reached. In addition to an increase in ODA, many proposed that innovative financial measures and mechanisms be fully explored.
25. Many delegations noted that high indebtedness poses a constraint for some developing countries and an effective, equitable, durable and development-oriented solution would be a positive step towards sustainable development.

26. There was wide agreement that an integrated, holistic and balanced approach to sustainable development needs to be adopted at the national, regional and international levels, one that fully accounts for economic, social and environmental aspects elaborated at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 and reiterated at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. Many noted that a refinement of strategies and sharper policy perspectives aimed at the effective implementation of the outcomes of major summits on sustainable development are needed at the national level. Many delegations noted that this in turn needs to be complemented by stronger and effective mechanisms of international and regional support as well as significantly greater financial commitments. A broader notion of rebalancing was introduced by some delegations with a view to closing gaps between developed and developing countries.
27. There was also broad agreement that all countries and stakeholders need to enhance efforts on concrete actions and measures to achieve sustainable development. Success stories and policies that have worked need to be identified and analyzed, including how best those policies fit and can be implemented in different contexts and how they can be scaled up.
28. Several delegations stressed that good governance at all levels is important for achieving sustainable development goals. The involvement of the private sector, including through public-private partnerships, is particularly important as noted by some delegations. Several delegations and Major Groups emphasized enhanced corporate social responsibility.
29. Indicators to measure progress on achieving sustainable development goals exist and have been utilized by some countries, but information and data gaps remain. A number of delegations stated that current GDP indicators are inadequate to measure the vulnerabilities of countries to the different crises confronting them, including climate change and the financial crisis. Developing vulnerability indicators and related data sets was mentioned by some delegations as a useful tool. In this regard, population related data, including demographic and health surveys and censuses, can be a valuable resource.
30. A standardized information collection guideline for countries would be useful as noted by delegations. Some delegations stated that the collection of quantitative information on financial and technology flows could be beneficial in addressing inadequate funding for sustainable development and analyzing technology transfer needs.
31. Many delegations emphasized that input by relevant UN entities, agencies and programmes, including UNDP and UNEP, on gap assessment will enhance the preparatory process and contribute positively to the UNCSD outcome. Several delegations called for improved inter-agency collaboration and coordination so that the UNCSD could benefit from the expertise and competence of different agencies, for

example UNDP on reporting and awareness-raising instruments related to poverty eradication and UNEP through assessment tools such as the Global Environment Outlook. Contributions by multilateral institutions and the scientific community to assessments on progress made and gaps in implementation would also be valuable during the preparatory process, as noted by many delegations and Major Groups.

32. Several delegations requested the Secretariat to undertake further quantitative assessments on implementation gaps and shortfalls and measures to improve the reliability and availability of indicators relevant for measuring progress on sustainable development.
33. Governments and major groups were invited to provide information by responding to focused questions pertaining to progress with and gaps in implementation, to be prepared by the Secretariat. On this basis, a synthesis report will be prepared by the Secretariat in advance of the Second Preparatory Committee (see Annex for Recommendations by the Contact Group on Preparatory Process).

Session 1:

Addressing new and emerging challenges

34. Many delegations referred to new and emerging sustainable development issues that have arisen recently such as the financial and economic, food and energy crises. Important challenges also include climate change, biodiversity, desertification, water scarcity, natural disasters and the ability to prepare for and recover from them. As noted by one delegation, globalization, while facilitating growth and poverty eradication, has also increased economic instability. These crises and challenges have impacts on standards of living, the achievement of the MDGs and the health of people in developing countries, in particular the most vulnerable.
35. Several delegations stated that, within its agreed thematic focus, the UNCSD is expected to address pertinent new and emerging issues, including with a view to increasing resilience at national and international levels, supporting efforts to cope with negative impacts, and preventing, if possible, recurrence of similar crises in the future.
36. Many noted that a number of these challenges to sustainable development are not necessarily new, but taken together with the multiple global crises, they compromise the ability of developing countries to respond effectively. Immediate and collective efforts are needed if sustainable development is to be achieved.
37. Some delegations suggested that the multiple crises call into question the prevalent global development model. A number pointed to the need for indicators of well-being that go

beyond GDP. Others called for a review of the performance of markets over the past 20 years, suggesting that they may not have been adequate to the challenges of conserving scarce natural resources, protecting the environment and promoting social development. In the view of one delegation, the ecological crises we currently face arise from our treating Earth as a thing rather than as a home, failing to recognize that we humans are part of the earth system.

38. The global food crisis has not yet been overcome and it was widely noted that hunger, malnutrition and lack of food security remain a great challenge to sustainable development.
39. Access to clean drinking water and sanitation also remains a crucial sustainable development challenge as does water availability more generally. It was noted by many delegations that a range of efforts are under way to protect increasingly scarce freshwater resources, including through improved water resources management and reduced water pollution, but that increased action is imperative. The mid-term review of progress in the implementation of the International Decade of Action “Water for Life”, 2001-2015, was cited as being important in this regard.
40. Public health and prevention of communicable diseases have also been identified by many delegations as an important area for national action and international cooperation.
41. Many delegations stressed that investment in childhood and adult education is necessary for sustainable economic growth and can contribute to supporting a green economy. Efficient education and training systems at all levels with a view to enhancing career pathways in the sciences, technology and engineering should be available to all, as one delegation stressed.
42. Mitigating climate change and adapting to its anticipated impacts involve new and emerging issues, technologies and areas for international cooperation. It was noted by several delegations that climate change poses particular challenges for sustainable development of the small island developing States. New global partnerships for transferring technologies have been proposed, notably in the context of the ongoing climate change negotiations, with a view to enhancing a global transition to a low carbon economy.
43. Many delegations observed that the numerous recent natural disasters have shown the importance of preparedness and increased international cooperation in response efforts. New information and communication technologies can inform decision making and real-time problem solving, including in times of disaster, as stressed by some delegations.
44. Continuing global biodiversity loss as well as loss of cultural diversity continues to affect prospects for sustainable development. Many resources, and in particular fish stocks, are

facing serious depletion. As noted by one delegation, the current oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico highlights the vulnerability of all countries, developed and developing, to environmental disasters.

45. It was suggested by several countries that imbalances in international economic governance should be addressed at Rio + 20, not just the G20; strengthening the competitiveness of developing countries needs attention, not only strengthening competitiveness of developed countries.
46. International migration was mentioned by some delegations as an emerging issue, limiting the development of scientific and technological capabilities in developing countries. Some delegations noted that developing country expertise and perspectives should be incorporated into scientific and technical assessments, in order to strengthen links among science, education and policy.
47. Many delegations said that there is a need for consideration of new forms of collaboration or international mechanisms that can enhance the accountability of developed countries and ensure the implementation of their commitments, whilst developing countries require more effective enabling approaches and support to enhance their sustainable development.
48. A number of delegations referred to the need to explore innovative financing mechanisms, while others pointed to a need to assess the resource mobilization potential of any proposed innovative source or mechanism of international financing.
49. Many delegations indicated that UNCSO should identify ways for the UN system to increase capacity building support for implementing national sustainable development plans and strategies in developing countries.
50. Green job creation was cited by several delegations and Major Groups as an important element of the response to the current global economic crisis, and it was stressed that workforce, including worker retraining, aspects of a green economy transition need to be adequately addressed.
51. It was widely acknowledged that effectively responding to emerging challenges requires the involvement of all stakeholders, including women and youth as well as farmers to address the challenge of food security.
52. While recognizing the importance of addressing the above new and emerging issues and challenges, some delegations noted that these can be accommodated within the thematic focus on a green economy and the institutional framework for sustainable development. On this view, the agenda for UNCSO need not be expanded.

Session 2:

A green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

Definitions and interpretations

53. There is no broad consensus on the meaning of a green economy. There is, however, a consensus that a green economy must be understood in the context of sustainable development and must be consistent with the Rio principles. Many delegations stated that there is no need to redefine sustainable development, and a green economy is not a substitute for sustainable development. In one formulation, green economy can be conceived as a means to achieving sustainable development goals, which by and large have yet to be realized. In another, a green economy is a pathway to sustainable development, or rather a set of pathways as many delegations emphasized that there is no “one size fits all” but many possible green economy, or green growth, paths depending on national circumstances, priorities and challenges.
54. Several delegations noted that a green economy, by promoting greater efficiency in the use of natural resources and energy, and by promoting new technologies for clean energy and cleaner production, can create new opportunities for economic growth. Several delegations referred to decoupling economic growth from resource use and environmental degradation as a feature of a green economy, while some delegations highlighted the need to understand better with a view to addressing the impact of decoupling on resource-based economies.
55. Several delegations emphasized the important role of the private sector in a green economy transition, contributing critical investment and technological innovation. A number of delegations noted that suitable national policy frameworks need to be put in place to drive a green economy transition, to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, and to bring economy activity within the carrying capacities of ecosystems.
56. Some delegations emphasized the contribution that a green economy can make to strengthening the environmental pillar of sustainable development by among others combating climate change, protecting biodiversity and reducing pollution with its negative impacts on health, well-being and agricultural productivity.
57. Many delegations stated that the green economy concept needs to be broad and flexible enough to be relevant and adaptable to the needs of countries at different levels of development with differing national capacities and differing priorities. As one delegation

stated, a green economy is about making more forward-looking choices whatever economy one has. Another delegation noted that the green economy framework should not be a straightjacket but a guide and support to national initiatives and policies. Many policies and measures are already being implemented at national level as well as at the grass roots which could be classified as building a green economy. Local authorities referred to the rich menu of innovative green economy policies and measures, like eco-budgeting, being introduced at the municipal level. Employing a green economy framework may be able to assist governments in taking a more holistic view of economic policies for sustainable development. If it serves that purpose, then it can prove useful to governments.

58. Reservations were expressed by a number of delegations about a particular interpretation of the concept of a green economy which was equated with the “marketization” of nature and natural resources. It was suggested by those delegations that unregulated markets have been a contributing factor to environmental degradation and thus their contribution to a solution is questionable.
59. An alternative view was proposed by one delegation, in which valuing ecosystems and their services is seen not as facilitating their further exploitation and degradation but rather as impressing upon human beings the full costs of destroying nature and the full benefits of protecting the natural resource base for present and future generations.
60. While many delegations spoke of a green economy, some referred to green growth, and in general there was no clear distinction made between them.

Green economy, poverty eradication and social development

61. Concerns were raised by several delegations about the social content of the concept of a green economy. Some noted that it seems to focus on the economy-environment interface without explicitly accounting for the social pillar of sustainable development.
62. Several delegations spoke of how a green economy transition could reduce poverty by creating new job opportunities and decent work. The importance of education and skills formation for the workforce was stressed for this potential to be realized. It was suggested by one delegation that green growth is in general more labor-intensive than “brown” growth, and should therefore lead to net job creation. Others referred to work of ILO and UNEP on green jobs, which identifies employment opportunities associated with green economy policies and measures. One speaker cited the numbers of jobs created in various ‘green’ sectors in different countries such as renewable energy. Still, concerns persist among several delegations about possible job losses in some economic sectors during a green economy transition and the need to address adjustment costs for workers and others was underlined, including through investment in job retraining and social protection.

63. The role of small and medium enterprises was stressed by some delegations, in particular with respect to job creation and innovation.
64. A number of delegations emphasized that, insofar as a green economy involves the sustainable management and use of the natural resource base, it is essential to achieving the MDGs, including the poverty eradication goal, as poor people depend heavily on that natural resource base for their livelihoods. Some delegations stressed that a green economy, in their national context, must address the need to create sustainable livelihoods, including for poor people in rural areas. Several delegations referred to the close link between agriculture and sustainable development noting the importance of food security for poverty eradication. The question of what kind of agricultural methods and technologies would be considered consistent with the concept of a green economy was left open.
65. SIDS and LDCs in particular expressed the expectation that a green economy should address their concerns of poverty eradication, reducing vulnerability and strengthening resilience. Some emphasized that a green economy was the only way forward to address challenges like climate change and its impacts.

The international context for a green economy

66. Many delegations asserted that a supportive international policy and institutional environment is essential to promoting a green economy. It was stressed that international trade is essential to sustainable development and in some countries has contributed to poverty reduction. Many delegations cautioned that international support to a green economy transition should not lead to conditionalities, parameters and standards which might generate unjustified or unilateral restrictions in the areas of trade, financing, ODA or other forms of international assistance. Rather, it was emphasized by several delegations that the multilateral trade system should foster freer trade in environmentally sound technologies and products, improved market access for developing countries, and technology transfer from developed to developing countries. Innovative financing mechanisms to support a green economy transition were mentioned by some delegations and Major Groups, including a global trust fund for a green economy.
67. Many delegations stated that international green economy initiatives must not limit the sovereign rights of countries over their natural resources as reflected in principle 2 of the Rio Declaration, and green protectionism must be avoided.
68. All stressed the need to reaffirm sustainable development and the Rio principles as well as other sustainable development outcomes since Rio.
69. A range of proposals were made by delegations and Major Groups on what could be achieved at UNCSD with regard to a green economy.

70. Several delegations stressed that UNCTAD should focus on concrete actions, policies and measures that support the achievement of the Rio and Johannesburg agendas and the MDGs. Some mentioned that impacts on the achievement of the MDGs should be a criterion to assess proposed policies for a green economy.
71. Some suggested that UNCTAD should aim to produce a set of principles to guide a green economy transition, a roadmap for that transition, and a well-stocked tool kit which countries at different levels of development and with differing national circumstances could use to guide them on a green economy, green growth path.
72. Others said that UNCTAD must go beyond agreeing principles to practical implementation, and for that purpose there was need to consider the means of implementation, including trade, technology transfer, capacity building, and financial resources. Many stressed the importance of sharing practical experience and lessons learned on building a green economy.
73. Some delegations called for the UNCTAD to reach consensus on a global green new deal, with a clear indication of: the investments needed – both public and private – for developing countries to realize a green economy transition; the policies needed to support and stimulate such investments, which would be at the discretion of individual countries.
74. A related proposal was advanced by a number of countries for a “green stimulus package” for developing countries, including small island developing States. This would include new and additional financing and technology transfer. Relaxation of intellectual property rights was proposed by some countries, while others argued that this would stifle innovation.
75. Several countries made the link between a green economy and sustainable consumption and production. Some mentioned that the Conference could contemplate the adoption of the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns which is expected to be negotiated at CSD19. One delegation noted that stimulating the global economy in a way that promotes sustainable consumption and production could be a “win-win”.
76. Several delegations requested that UN DESA, UNEP and other relevant organizations cooperate to prepare a study to be available for PrepCom2 which would assess both the benefits and the challenges and risks associated with a green economy transition. It was suggested that such a study could be undertaken with the assistance of a panel of economists and scientists from developed and developing countries. Among the issues which the study should address are:

- macroeconomic policy implications of pursuing a green economy transition;
- potential loss of competitiveness of some industries, sources of comparative advantage of some countries;
- risk of “green protectionism”, legitimation of certain ‘green’ subsidies which could distort trade;
- potential contribution of a green economy to poverty eradication through the creation of sustainable livelihoods.

Some suggested that this work could include a compilation of existing experiences and good practices with green economy policies and measures in different countries. It was also emphasized by some delegations that in this and other work the Secretariat should draw upon the substantial body of existing work within the UN system such as that of UNEP on a green economy as well as that of other international organization such as the OECD green growth strategy, avoiding duplication.

77. Also, several delegations requested the Secretariat to prepare documentation for PrepCom2 which would shed further light on the range of policy options and policy mixes which could be used by countries embarking on green economy pathways, referring to the list of seven areas contained in the Secretary-General’s report, namely:

- Internalizing externalities into prices to reflect true environmental and social costs;
- Sustainable public procurement policies;
- Ecological tax reforms;
- Public investment in sustainable infrastructure—including public transport, renewable energy, or retrofitting of existing infrastructure and buildings for improved energy-efficiency—as well as natural capital, to restore, maintain, and where possible, enhance the stock of natural capital;
- Public support to green innovation, R&D on environmentally sound technologies;
- Strategic investment and development policies to lay the foundation for socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic growth;
- Social policies to reconcile social goals with existing or proposed green economy policies.

78. There were calls by many delegations to the United Nations system to support the Conference Secretariat with staff seconded from United Nation agencies (UNEP, UNDP and others), and to the Secretariat to work in cooperation with international financial and trade institutions in the preparations for the Conference.

79. One delegation announced the creation of a new Global Green Growth Institute which will develop country-specific green growth models, and indicated that the GGGI looks forward to collaborating with the UN system on analytical work relating to assessment of green growth/green economy strategies and policies, particularly in developing countries.

Session 3:

Institutional framework for sustainable development

80. An effective institutional framework for sustainable development was generally agreed to be crucial in ensuring the full implementation of Agenda 21 and the follow-up to the outcomes of the WSSD in meeting emerging sustainable development challenges. Sustainable development was highlighted as important in achieving the MDGs.
81. Delegations therefore agreed that the 2012 Conference should ensure renewal of political commitment and many delegations called for redoubled efforts to ensure that institutions currently involved in implementing the sustainable development agenda within the United Nations system become more efficient and effective, through improved synergies and with the provision of adequate resources.
82. Lack of progress on the sustainable development agenda was attributed by many delegations to the diffuse, fragmented nature of the existing architecture for sustainable development, which resulted in increased incidence of duplication and poor coordination.
83. Divergent views were expressed on the best way to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the sustainable development architecture within the UN system. On one hand, strengthening of the profile of the environmental dimension of sustainable development was considered desirable. On the other, the importance of preserving balance among the three pillars was emphasized. The need to promote greater convergence among the environmental, social and economic pillars was underscored.
84. In this regard, one delegation defined its expectations for UNCSD as follows: addressing the current imbalance at the global economic governance level; restoring the institutional balance between the three pillars; strengthening implementation on all three pillars; and providing a strong and predictable financial basis for action.
85. It was broadly agreed that the UN should provide stronger leadership and a more coherent framework to support both policy formulation and implementation of sustainable development objectives. Many delegations emphasized that discussions on the institutional framework for sustainable development should be guided by chapter XI of the JPOI.
86. Many delegations stressed that the provision of new and additional resources is crucial to enhance the United Nations capabilities in the area of implementation. In this regard, to ensure the predictability and adequate funding for the effective implementation of all mandated development activities, including those related with sustainable development, it was suggested that resources for development from the regular budget of the United Nations should be increased.

87. Many speakers reaffirmed that the Commission on Sustainable Development is the high-level intergovernmental body responsible for sustainable development and the principal forum for the consideration of issues related to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. Many delegations however underscored the need to strengthen its role and effectiveness, particularly as a forum for promoting dialogue and for the provision of policy guidance.
88. Several delegations reiterated that the Commission should become more forward-looking and action-oriented, enhancing its implementation capacities including by considering measures emanating from the CSD-18 session. It was noted by many delegations that an enhanced role for the CSD would include not only reviewing and monitoring progress in the implementation of Agenda 21, but also ensuring coherence in implementation of sustainable development objectives through the promotion of initiatives and partnerships.
89. Many delegations recommended that the role and working methods of the CSD should be revisited, making it more interactive and exploring a more dynamic framework for future needs while respecting its Multi-Year Programme of Work.
90. Delegations and major groups also underscored the important role played by the Commission in facilitating the meaningful participation of civil society through its major groups programme, and the valuable contribution to implementation made through the promotion of multi-stakeholder partnerships was also underscored.
91. There was also a request from some delegations to address the need for the fuller integration of CSD decisions into the work programmes of other UN bodies.
92. Several delegations called for more effective inter-agency coordination to ensure greater information sharing and cooperation among all UN entities within the sustainable development framework. Some referred to the historical precedent of an interagency coordination mechanism on sustainable development. One delegation proposed that a clear distribution of work between the different instruments and coordination bodies would help avoid unnecessary and unproductive overlaps and competition, while flexibility should be maintained to allow for the participation of all relevant institutional stakeholders.
93. Several delegations emphasized the need to strengthen and enhance coordination and cooperation among existing bodies and structures rather than to create new ones. Others suggested consideration of creating a unified framework for sustainable development, giving due consideration to the possible roles and functions of the CSD, ECOSOC, UNEP, and others.
94. Some delegations and Major Groups called for a broader embrace of institutions in pursuing greater systemic coherence on the sustainable development agenda, recognizing

that the UN agencies were not the only actors in the global institutional architecture on sustainable development. In that regard, the need to engage the international financial institutions fully in the preparations for UNCSA was stressed.

95. One delegation pointed to the need to strengthen international governance of shared oceans and marine resources, including the strengthening of marine protected areas as called for in the JPOI and related capacity-building and technical cooperation for marine protection. In addition, it highlighted the need to work within the competent existing organizations and arrangements to promote sustainability of global fish stocks and mitigate the impacts of fishing activities on the global marine environment.
96. Delegations highlighted the need to address the challenges presented by the existing institutional complexity within the environmental governance framework. The strengthening of international environmental governance (IEG) within the context of the institutional framework for sustainable development was identified as being of particular concern. It was noted that the current system of IEG is characterized by incoherence, fragmentation, lack of synergies, inefficiency and ineffectiveness, resulting in duplicative processes and imposing heavy meeting and reporting burdens on developing countries in particular.
97. A strong case was thus made by several delegations for rationalization of the international environmental institutional framework. In this regard, many delegations affirmed that the consultative process inaugurated by the 11th Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council on IEG system reform was an important contribution to the debate on sustainable development governance in the context of UNCSA. Speakers expressed interest in the outcome of the upcoming 26th UNEP Governing Council Meeting, which should address recommendations on enhanced synergies among international environmental institutions, including the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). In this regard, several delegations noted the successful outcome of the simultaneous ExCOPs on chemicals and wastes as an important step.
98. One delegation suggested the transformation of UNEP into an action oriented implementation programme with sufficient resources, comparable to UNDP, not into a normative, enforcement oriented world organization comparable to the WTO.
99. A gradual approach toward governance reforms was sought by some delegations; others favored more fundamental and far-reaching reform proposals. Much interest was expressed in the IEG process, the conclusion of which would require strong political will. The importance of improved public participation in the IEG reform process was emphasized by some delegations and Major Groups.

100. Assisting developing countries in implementing environmental commitments and MEAs was seen by many delegations as a major goal of strengthened IEG, requiring capacity-building, financial resources, technology transfer, information sharing and more effective review and monitoring systems.
101. Some delegations also emphasized the need for rationalizing sustainable development decision-making and for implementing actions at the national and local levels in line with the principle of subsidiarity.
102. Focus was placed by many delegations on the need for strengthened scientific and technological capacity; support for the development and strengthening of local and national institutions within the sustainable development framework; support for the development of national sustainable development strategies; and the need for increased funding, particularly in developing countries. The needs of the very poor and vulnerable were highlighted.
103. Speakers also highlighted the importance of ensuring that institutional frameworks for sustainable development at the national level are made part of the UNCSD process. Among the suggestions made were the establishment of multi-stakeholder national councils of sustainable development and their integration into national decision-making processes, as well as the establishment of dedicated institutions to promote an integrated approach to sustainable development.
104. Many delegations emphasized the need for a stronger institutional framework for sustainable development imbued with a sharper policy perspective and giving greater emphasis to implementation. In order to facilitate greater convergence and coherence of UN system activities on sustainable development, it was suggested that synergies within existing frameworks such as the UN strategy for system-wide coherence: Delivering as One, be explored and pursued, with a view to enhancing coordination and more efficient implementation. The need for adequate funds to support the international institutional framework for sustainable development was underscored by many delegations. It was suggested that a role for the GEF in this regard be explored. One delegation further suggested that traditional international cooperation should be improved and complemented by a new paradigm that will strengthen the autonomy of recipient countries and include other forms of cooperation such as south-south and triangular cooperation.