Still Waiting for Delivery

A Review of Progress and Programs in the 10-Year Framework

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The 18th UN Commission on Sustainable Development calls for a review of progress on the implementation of 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development’s mandate to develop a 10-year framework of programs on sustainable consumption and production. Still Waiting for Delivery contributes to this review from a civil society perspective.

This report draws from a wide range of views and perspectives from different parts of civil society, compiled within a single narrative, a single snapshot looking back over the past decades. One objective of Still Waiting is to remind us and policymakers of the discussions and understandings that have already taken place, lessons learned so that we do not have to repeat this process with each new cycle of meetings. This task includes reminders of promises and commitments made years ago, perhaps forgotten but nevertheless embedded in our history. Our task is to not lose this history but build upon it.

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the International Coalition for Sustainable Production and Consumption (ICSPAC) released our first report Waiting for Delivery: A Civil Society Assessment of Progress Toward Sustainable Production and Consumption. This report was presented at the ICSPAC roundtable discussion, “The World in 2012: Towards a 10-Year Plan to Achieve Sustainable Production and Consumption,” held at the Sandton Center, Johannesburg, South Africa on August 27, 2002.

At that time ICSPAC and the NGO Caucus on Sustainable Production and Consumption (SPAC Caucus) lobbied for the idea of the international community’s commitment to a 10-year work program to address unsustainable production and consumption patterns -- presuming that this 10-year period would begin in 2002 and its progress would be reviewed in 2012. Little did we know that the next ten years would mostly involve long and expensive discussions about the gravity of the problems, the urgent need to take action and the various options that could be considered as part of a “10-year framework of programs” that would be decided upon not at the beginning but towards the end of the decade. Some, having participated in the previous decade of discussions, have viewed this 10-year period of more discussions as procrastination, an unwillingness to take action, an ironic element within the “Plan of Implementation.” Some, especially those entering the discussion in more recent years, have simply found the “10-year framework” puzzling in its ambiguity. Still others have rallied around it as a positive and tangible step forward, a innovation to be promoted. Then there are those who not see any tangible step or innovation, but are actively struggling to create it.

Hopefully, during the next two years, the gravity and urgent need to take action will finally take hold and motivate the participants of the 18th Session of the CSD to produce the programs of support that the global movement towards sustainable production and consumption needs from its leaders and fellow stakeholders.

Still Waiting for Delivery draws on a series of interviews and discussions as well as responses to an open-ended questionnaire about progress and possible programs to further progress, the lively
exchanges and recommendations produced by the NGO Forum at the 2007 International Experts Meeting on the 10 Year Framework in Stockholm, the nine major group papers submitted to the CSD, the many meetings and reports organized by the Marrakech Process Secretariat at UNEP and UNDESA, as well as the rapidly expanding research and analysis addressing the many facets of production, consumption and the quest for sustainable economies taking place around the world, both in and outside of governments and the United Nations. *Still Waiting for Delivery* may not reflect everyone’s views but it does attempt to reflect our common interests and possibilities.

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Among its other tasks, the delegates to the 18th Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development will be expected to review progress on the 10 Year Framework of Programs on Sustainable Consumption and Production. For many of those following this process, the session addresses a much bigger question:

What is the status of the global community’s efforts to change the unsustainable production and consumption patterns driving so many of the worlds’ major social and environmental crises?

Criteria to evaluate progress

To effectively review progress requires a clear understanding of the original aims and objectives of the activity being evaluated. Unfortunately, one of the problems of the 10-Year Framework of Programs on Sustainable Consumption and Production has been a lack of clarity about exactly what it was that was supposed to be developed, when it was supposed to be delivered, who was to be held responsible for developing it, or by what criteria to evaluate progress. Thus the 18th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development confronts a major challenge, particularly for those delegates and observers who were not part of the process formulating this mandate in Johannesburg eight years ago.

While juggling time to discuss and negotiate the text with four other major issues (mining, transportation, waste and chemicals), CSD delegates need to consider both the context and stakes involved in reviewing progress on the 10-year framework of programs (10YFP) as well as agreeing on their evaluation criteria. Four points should be considered:

1. Focus on implementation of the 10YFP. It is important to note that the task identified by CSD18 is not to review progress towards the “overarching objective” of sustainable consumption and production per se. Such a task would require much more time than what was allotted for this session. Rather, the task defined for CSD18 is to review progress in implementing the mandate for developing the 10YFP -- the mandate to develop not simply a “framework” but programs of support to initiatives changing production and consumption patterns.

Instead of focusing on the implementation of the WSSD mandate, there is a strong temptation for CSD delegates to direct the discussion to other questions and concerns, to consider examples of progress among the diverse global movement of initiatives and practices, or to address different challenges to achieving sustainability in different regions and levels of society -- rather than focus on the UN’s progress on its mandated task to provide specific programs supporting those initiatives and practices in the rest of the world.

However, if the session does not manage to stay focused on this specific task of reviewing progress on the 10YFP, it risks losing the critical opportunity of this CSD session to provide the support it promised the world in 2002 -- not to mention understanding and addressing the obstacles to this support.

To use this time repeating many of the same discussions that have taken place during the past 40 years without taking meaningful and strategic action is to waste the opportunity that this CSD cycle offers. The UN needs to deliver what it promised, even if it is almost a decade later.

2. No framework or programs. The most immediate observation is that, after eight years, the 10YFP has not been developed. One question frequently asked but without clear answers, until more recently, was the starting point of the “10-year” period. Initially, most assumed it started in 2002; when the discussions moved away from the development of programs or framework to other activities, such as the Task Forces, the timeline shifted to one that would instead begin in 2012.

The fact of almost a decade going by without producing a “framework of programs” nor any clear programs of support places an additional challenge before the 18th CSD -- to not simply review but to resolve the questions about what it should be and what it should accomplish. Although one of the objectives of the Marrakech Process was to develop the 10YFP, the obvious conclusion of this review will be that it
is now left to the 19th CSD session to finally implement the task agreed to at the 2002 Summit.

Thus, one perception already held by many within civil society is that instead of providing the support which was expected throughout this current decade, the UN and government members responsible in those years for implementation simply put it off to the future. Those governments that wanted to act instead developed their own initiatives, the Task Forces. As to the actual “framework of programs,” the many practitioners around the world needing support for their work have had to wait and wonder.

Instead of investing time and resources into strengthening the capacity of those groups and individuals actively working to change production and consumption patterns around the world, the UN and its governmental and intergovernmental members have spent their time talking about it -- then asking the world to support that process.

3. The UN needs to implement its mandate. For the world to take seriously UN and governments’ statements about the urgency and “overarching” priority of changing production and consumption patterns, the CSD 18-19 cycle needs to produce meaningful programs supporting the efforts and practices of the many groups around the world already working hard to change those production and consumption patterns. This is the heart of the task. The “framework” is simply the skeleton that provides the institutional legs for these programs to stand and move forward.

4. Reversing the trends. For both the 10YFP and the overarching objective of achieving sustainable production and consumption, the ultimate criteria for assessing progress lies in the degree to which the worsening social and environmental trends, driven by unsustainable production and consumption, are reversed.

Context of the 10YFP

One of the main purposes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development was “to expedite the realization of the remaining goals” in the “full implementation of Agenda 21” and in the outcomes of the UN conferences and agreements since 1992. Rather than start over again from scratch, the 2002 Summit was to produce a Plan of Implementation for those earlier agreements.

Recognizing that the UN and governments cannot do everything, that such implementation requires a “global partnership” with the world’s stakeholders, the 10YFP mandate was, for many people, to provide active and meaningful support to those thousands of stakeholders engaged in practices to change production and consumption patterns locally, nationally, regionally and globally, in each region and in all economic sectors. The mandate was not to provide a top-down, UN-led global strategy and plan for the rest of the world to simply follow but to provide practical support to those already engaged and demonstrating leadership in this ambitious effort in their countries and regions.

It is therefore important to fully appreciate the nature and diversity of these practices, strategies and awareness as they have evolved over these past decades, practices involving many different people and organizations throughout the world in understanding and changing production and consumption in its many aspects and impacts.

From Earth Day to Earth Summit 1970 - 1992

After the first Earth Day in 1970 more than 20 years of international debate transpired regarding the relationship between environment and socioeconomic development, a controversial exchange eventually leading to the historic Earth Summit in 1992. There in Rio de Janeiro the nations’ policymakers and civil society acknowledged the major cause of the continuing deterioration of the global environment to be the “unsustainable pattern of consumption and production.”

Across those decades public understanding has slowly evolved regarding the underlying role of unsustainable
production and consumption patterns as the drivers of global problems such as biodiversity loss, the food and water crises, climate change and the widening gap between rich and poor. In contrast to the rest of the century, the graphs of post-war economic growth with its social and environmental impacts appear like a huge tidal wave overtaking our future.

In 1962 many citizens became aware of the health and environmental impacts of economic growth in Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring*. With greater access to food came the impacts of modern agriculture’s use of pesticides and chemicals on surrounding wildlife, ecosystems and human health. This book, described as “the single most effective catalyst for environmentalism,” represented a courageous act of citizenship that “changed the way Americans and people around the world looked at the reckless way we live on this planet.”

By 1970 the collective voice of citizens spoke out on the first Earth Day calling for leadership to address the disastrous impacts of consumerism and an economic system out of balance with the environment and under increasing pressure from growing population. This was followed by a wave of campaigns, legislation and institutions aimed at protecting ecosystems as well as human health and quality of life.

Although the 1972 *Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment* did not specifically mention the term “consumption” per se, the historic Stockholm conference clearly highlighted the disastrous effects of resource depletion and environmental degradation due to pressures from growing population, technology and industrialization. In the same year the Club of Rome report, *Limits to Growth* provided the landmark reference for the controversial debate that continues to rage today.

In 1973 OPEC launched its oil embargo driving up prices as well as focusing the world’s attention on the insecurities of its fossil fuel dependence. In that same year, E.F. Schumacher’s *Small is Beautiful* warned that our industrial society’s addiction to fossil fuels and nonrenewable resources has put us on a collision course. If we are to change course we need to “thoroughly understand the problem and begin to see the possibility of evolving a new life-style, with new methods of production and new patterns of consumption.”

In other parts of the world, awareness of these impacts of blind economic growth moved from words to action. In the Garhwal Himalayas, the “tree huggers” of the Chipko movement took steps to protect their traditional lifestyles and environment against the rampant deforestation resulting from the world’s growing demand for resources. In the Brazilian Amazon Francisco Chico Mendez and others formed a human chain to protect the forest from encroaching chain saws. His assassination and the targeting of other environmental activists highlighted the deadly seriousness of this conflict, bringing sustainability and human rights together in the public debate.

As the number of ecological and human disasters and threats continued to mount through this period, governments began passing new environmental laws and creating new regulatory agencies and ministries as scientists began developing tools to better understand the problem and identify solutions (e.g., material flow analysis, IPAT, ecological footprint, life cycle assessment, ecological economics) providing the concepts and principles for increasingly dramatic debates on carrying capacity, growth and progress.

By 1987, the opening paragraph of *Our Common Future: The Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development* lamented that:

Each community, each country, strives for survival and prosperity with little regard for its impact on others. Some consume the Earth’s resources at a rate that would leave little for future generations. Others, many more in number, consume far too little and live with the prospect of hunger, squalor, disease, and early death.
In addition to providing the world with its most widely known definition of sustainable development -- addressing needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs -- the Brundtland report identified a challenging paradox which continues to confront the global community more than two decades later, noting “the failures that we need to correct arise both from poverty and from the short-sighted way in which we have often pursued prosperity.”

In response to these steps towards a long-sighted way, the 1980s also featured a dramatic wave of political environmental backlash and prominence of deregulatory ideology in parallel with a string of technological and social innovations in ecoefficiency and environmental awareness. By the 1990s, the topic of sustainable consumption and production, along with “sustainable development,” would become one of the world’s most important and challenging controversies.

**Rio strategy on consumption and production**

Many people look back to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) or Earth Summit as a historic turning point in bringing the concepts of sustainable development and sustainability into mainstream public discourse. Agenda 21 was described as the “blueprint for action for global sustainable development into the 21st century.” A key part of this blueprint is the need for “States to reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption” which Principle 8 of the Rio Declaration explained is necessary “to achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people.”

Agenda 21 then outlined “a multipronged strategy focusing on demand, meeting the basic needs of the poor, and reducing wastage and the use of finite resources in the production process,” reducing the “excessive demands and unsustainable lifestyles among the richer segments” while enabling all people with “the opportunity to earn a sustainable livelihood.”

This strategy included the following priorities:

- Promote efficiency in production processes.
- Reduce wasteful consumption.
- Develop domestic policy frameworks “that will encourage a shift to more sustainable patterns of production and consumption.”
- Expand or promote databases on production and consumption and develop methodologies for analyzing them.
- Reinforce values that encourage sustainable production and consumption patterns, considering new concepts of wealth and prosperity, reflected in new systems of national accounts and other indicators.
- Encourage the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries.

While government delegates, industry representatives and credentialed NGOs struggled with each other over the final wording of the Agenda 21 chapters, some complaining that the text was too demanding, others that it was being watered-down, another discussion was taking place just miles away. There an estimated 17,000 NGO participants convened the parallel Global Forum, where the “Treaty on Consumption and Lifestyle” and other alternative agreements were being forged.

At this Forum NGOs identified six principles (revalue, restructure, redistribute, reduce, reuse, recycle) to be put into practice, and called for “collaboration between grassroots, national and international social movements and NGOs” for implementation.

While “the broadest participation and active involvement of the non-governmental organizations and other groups should be encouraged,” Agenda 21 explained, “its successful implementation is first and foremost the responsibility of Governments.” Governments in Rio also agreed that “in the follow-up of the implementation of Agenda 21 the review of progress made in achieving sustainable consumption patterns should be given high priority,” particularly “an assessment of the progress achieved in developing these national policies and strategies.”

In assessing governments’ progress in meeting its commitments, civil society plays a critical role. This is especially true for the objectives and commitments of Agenda 21.

**From Rio to Johannesburg 1992-2002**

One of the first steps in implementing Agenda 21 was the creation in the following year of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). The purpose of the CSD was clearly described in Agenda 21:

> In order to ensure the effective follow-up of the Conference, as well as to enhance international cooperation and rationalize the intergovernmental decision-making capacity for the integration of environment and development issues and to examine the progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national, regional and international levels,
a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development should be established in accordance with Article 68 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Among its main functions, the CSD is

To monitor progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and activities related to the integration of environmental and developmental goals throughout the United Nations system through analysis and evaluation of reports from all relevant organs, organizations, programmes and institutions of the United Nations system dealing with various issues of environment and development. To receive and analyze relevant input from competent non-governmental organizations, including the scientific and private sectors, in the context of the overall implementation of Agenda 21. To enhance the dialogue, within the framework of the United Nations, with non-governmental organizations and the independent sector, as well as other entities outside the United Nations system.

1993: Reviewing the role and impact

As to implementing Agenda 21’s objectives to address consumption and production, the first session of the CSD described this as one of the “critical dimensions of sustainability,” pointing out that

The transition to sustainability will depend crucially on an international economy that supports key environment and development goals, effective steps against poverty (particularly in developing countries), changes in consumption patterns and measures to ensure compatibility between demographic dynamics and sustainability.

Noting that “consumption patterns are not the subject of intergovernmental discussion at present, although specific areas of consumption are discussed in some contexts,” the first CSD session suggested that “the high-level meeting may wish to consider more specific processes to give practical expression to the recommendation in Agenda 21 that reviewing the role and impact of unsustainable production and consumption patterns and lifestyles and their relation to sustainable development should be given high priority.” Moreover, the final report from CSD-1 announced “since the Commission was the appropriate intergovernmental forum for addressing issues related to unsustainable production and consumption patterns and lifestyles in their relation to sustainable development, it should take a leading role in that area.”

CSD-1 also pointed out that individual governments’ reports to each session of the CSD’s multi-year programme of work should include “measures taken, including targets for changing unsustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles, and progress achieved.”

1994: Actions must be taken

In January 1994, the government of Norway held a Symposium on Sustainable Consumption in Oslo, focusing on the developed countries, asking: What can and should each sector of society do? What can and should Governments do nationally? What can be achieved through international cooperation?

The Symposium pointed out the need for “a detailed analysis of the relationship between production and consumption patterns and their environmental, economic and social impacts” and called for studies of “trends in and damage from patterns of consumption and production” and on “the effects that consumption and production patterns in one country have on other countries.” Based on those studies, “priorities must be set so that the most damaging effects of unsustainable consumption patterns can be addressed.” In its report to CSD-2, the Symposium stressed “in the chain from design and raw material extraction through use to final disposal, actions must be taken at the points where they are most effective,” while also calling for studies “on the relative effectiveness of a spectrum of instruments for changing unsustainable patterns” and for governments to “publish periodic reports on progress.”
That May, the Second Session of CSD noted that at UNCED “the issue of changing consumption patterns was for the first time formally placed on the agenda for multilateral negotiations,” then pointed out that “the main economic agents whose behaviour as producers or consumers should be the target of policy measures are individual households, business and industry, and Governments, especially in developed countries.”

CSD-2 then called for “a unique international forum for fostering multilateral negotiations and promoting action in the area of changing consumption and production patterns.” CSD-2 also reaffirmed that “national authorities should endeavour to promote the internalization of environmental costs and the use of economic instruments, taking into account that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution” while also accounting for the “special situation and needs of developing countries” in which “eradicating poverty and meeting basic human needs in the process of pursuing sustainable development was of overriding priority.”

In the NGO community, Friends of the Earth launched their 3-year project Towards Sustainable Europe, featuring the environmental space concept, which gradually evolved into their broader global Sustainable Societies programme.

**1995: Oslo and the International Work Programme**

**The Oslo Ministerial Roundtable**

An impressive number of major activities took place in this year. Most notable was the Oslo Roundtable Conference on Sustainable Production and Consumption, convened on 9-10 February by the Norwegian Ministry of Environment to identify the key elements for an international work programme, again highlighting the need for the developed countries to “take the lead” and “put its own house in order,” to be presented at the CSD’s third session that spring.

It is important to consider how later understandings regarding the global challenge of changing production and consumption patterns have been shaped by this focus on the responsibility of the “developed countries,” which “concentrates on guiding the consumption of goods and services so that the life cycle of environmental damage is progressively reduced to levels within the limits of nature.”

One outcome of the Oslo Roundtable was the following proposed working definition of *sustainable consumption* as the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimising the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generations. Note that this definition is not about the system of production and consumption but strictly about consumption -- the “use of goods and services.” In the Oslo Roundtable, despite being about “sustainable production and consumption,” this “focus on the new opportunities for environmental improvement provided by targeting the consumption side of the equation” was intentional, representing one particular perspective and approach to the broader debate.

The approach is based on influencing the decisions that are taken along the life cycle of a particular good or service by citizens, industry and governments, so that environmental damage is progressively reduced to levels within natural limits. The aim is to expand the opportunities for end-use consumers -- whether individuals, companies or public agencies -- to make sustainable consumption choices. Taking this approach channels attention onto the goods and services that people require to meet their needs. This then places the production sector in the appropriate role of serving world needs in a sustainable fashion.

This emphasis on the end-use of goods and services rather than on changing the overall system continues to be a controversy within the evolving discourse. Today, 15 years later, many continue to argue for focusing on the end-use consumption focus rather than a broader systemic approach. One concern is that many important social and other dimensions are given less consideration, such as the role of sustainable livelihoods, fair trade, advertising and marketing reform, socially responsible investment, producer responsibility and corporate accountability. Some have characterized the debate to be a “western” discussion, not adequately addressing the needs of the poor and the one billion people outside the consumer class, fearful of “sustainability” being another neocolonial phrase used to justify western economic dominance.

Nevertheless, the Oslo Roundtable made a major contribution to the process of implementing Agenda 21’s call for action and efforts “to define a policy agenda on sustainable production and consumption,” presenting its views on the unique roles of each of the key players: civil society, labour, business, governments (local authorities and national) and the intergovernmental agencies, and developing a proposal to the third CSD for an international work programme on sustainable production and consumption.
CSD-3

In April, the third session of CSD devoted a significant part of its agenda to the topic of changing consumption and production patterns. It noted the range of policy options available, including legislation and standards (command-and-control measures), fiscal and pricing policies (economic instruments), education and awareness campaigns (social instruments), and public expenditures on complementary facilities and infrastructures and technology policies, and considered some of the examples of strategies and activities being undertaken by different countries.

The session especially highlighted the "integrated life-cycle approach" which shows resource production and consumption as a multistage process, with each stage associated with certain types of environmental degradation and social and economic impacts. This approach was applied in the analysis of resource consumption and production trends within specific sectors: energy, metals and minerals, food and agricultural products, and forest products.

"Given existing physical infrastructure and lifestyles," the SG report warned, "achieving sustainable consumption and production patterns may take years or decades." Thus there was the call for governments to undertake projections and perspective studies "so as to better appreciate the consequences of present policy stances on resource consumption and production and the possible impact of changing these policies." Citing the research and modeling tradition going back to the Club of Rome report, CSD-3 discussed the more recent projections of climate change and ozone depletion through the year 2030 being carried out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, as well as the input/output data flows examined by the World Model pioneered by Wassily Leontief and maintained at the Institute for Economic Analysis, and the OECD's analysis of CO2 emissions and climate change through its General Equilibrium Environmental model (GREEN). "Without the necessary data on the trends in the environment and ecosystems, policy-making is likely to be impaired," the CSD-3 report cautioned, calling for improved environmental monitoring, resource accounting and sustainable development indicators.

Overall, CSD-3 identified an impressive array of measures, research, policy instruments, and activities taking place, in development and proposed, addressing various aspects of sustainable production and consumption, while acknowledging the need for "agreement on an appropriate conceptual and methodological framework for a more systematic and standardized study of consumption and production issues," and agreed to the proposed multi-year work programme.37

In addition to these activities and discussions at CSD-3, the NGO Caucus on Consumption and Production lobbied for adoption of a revised UN Consumer Guidelines with a new focus on sustainable consumption and production.

Rosendal: Clarifying the Concepts

That July, the OECD and Norwegian Ministry of Environment organized a workshop in Rosendal, Norway, "Sustainable Consumption and Production: Clarifying the Concepts," contributing to the OECD's 1995-96 Work Programme, examining the utility of a number of key concepts in the effort to "improve the conceptual basis for policy development in OECD countries." In this pursuit, one conclusion was that there is a hierarchical relationship flowing from the core concept of carrying capacity (and related concepts like the ecological footprint), through strategic approaches (e.g., ecoefficiency, viewed as "the most promising strategy"), to tools for action (e.g., green accounting, ecotaxes/price reform, eco-design).

However, concerns were also voiced that "the distributional issues raised by the use of these concepts are politically very sensitive" and that "their value for setting normative objectives needs further exploration." Indicative of this sensitivity was the concern about the 'ideological baggage' of the limits-to-growth controversy going back to the 1960s, which remains a political problem."15 Fifteen years later, this limits-to-growth controversy continues to be a political problem.

Seoul workshop: Policy measures

That September, in Seoul, the Republic of Korea, the Government of Australia, UNDP, CSD, UNDP and OECD organized a workshop on "Policy Measures for Sustainable Consumption and Production." This meeting drew on the experience of a country that experienced rapid economic growth in the 1960s with its consequential environmental impacts. The workshop examined a range of different policy measures in relation to different environmental trends and impacts, noting the limitations of various policies (e.g., unfair impacts of ecotaxes on the poor) and the complexity of identifying the appropriate policy mix within individual countries (leaving aside that of the global economy and economic regions). One obvious conclusion: Not all policy instruments are appropriate to all situations and decision makers must be guided by local conditions.

Another important theme in the Seoul workshop was the idea of "political acceptability" for the choice of instruments, which of course concerns not only stakeholders but the
government and political party and ideology in power. Cost-effectiveness is certainly a quality to be considered, which leads to the controversial question about the trade-offs among political, financial, social and ecological costs and the difficulties in getting institutions to accept the responsibility of internalizing social and environmental costs traditionally externalized and ignored.

Acknowledging the trend away from regulatory “command-and-control” policy instruments, the workshop pointed out inherent problems with economic instruments, such as the tendency for these policies to be adopted only after environmental damage had occurred. Another concern raised was that developing countries had been mainly left outside the studies on the various instruments and the lack of resources among developing countries for collecting data.\textsuperscript{40}

The workshop examined examples of various policy instruments targeting end-use energy consumption, waste management, water consumption, urban land-use planning, and also looked at the question of the respective roles of different stakeholders: business (as agent of change in markets), governments (action plans for greening government; green purchasing), NGOs (leveraging credibility for campaigning and advocacy), and individual citizens (need information and education).

\textit{1996: Launch of the work programme}

In this year the UN reported on the first year of the International Work Programme, on each of its five elements:

1. \textit{Identifying the policy implications of trends and projections in consumption and production patterns}

   - Industrialized countries are achieving greater energy and material (metals and minerals) efficiency, but these productivity gains have been largely offset by volume growth and rising absolute consumption levels.

   - Developing countries, with the exception of some in sub-Saharan Africa and economies in transition, were experiencing much higher rates of economic growth than the developed countries -- with rates of resource consumption rising in turn.

   - Problems with trend analysis regarding inadequate data and understanding of interlinkages between economic activities and social/environmental impacts.

   - Launch of collaborative initiative to develop a modelling framework enabling long-term projections of socio-economic and environmental trends at the global and, in some cases, regional level.

   - “Consensus is emerging that industrialized country policies should first focus on improving the efficiency of energy and material flows and reducing their harmful impacts. Eco-efficiency is winning acceptance in government and industry as a politically and economically feasible strategy for modifying unsustainable consumption and production patterns.”\textsuperscript{41}

2. \textit{Assessing the impact on developing countries of changes in consumption and production in developed countries.}

   - Increasing concerns raised by developing countries “seeking to maintain or expand their export markets for raw materials, semi-processed goods or finished products,” especially about cradle-to-grave assessment of products and processes which may result in “inappropriate environmental demands being applied to developing country exports at an early phase of their life cycle.”\textsuperscript{42}

   - Eco-labelling also has caused concern as a potential trade barrier.

   - Studies by UNCTAD conclude there is considerable scope for developing countries marketing environmentally preferable products (EPPs) such as agricultural fibres.

3. \textit{Evaluating the effectiveness of policy measures intended to change consumption and production patterns.}

   - Command-and-control, despite de-regulatory trends, has proved effective in relation to certain kinds of production development, especially through its technology forcing role.

   - Increased emphasis on demand side measures (influencing purchasing decisions of consumers) has led to greater exploration of economic and social instruments (information, codes of conduct, voluntary initiatives).

   - Methodologies for evaluating the effectiveness of policy instruments, especially across national boundaries, remain problematic.

   - Policy makers’ interest in demand side measures raises questions about the “effectiveness and legitimacy of government action to influence people’s aspirations and lifestyles.”\textsuperscript{43}
• Achieving significant shifts in the longer term require
greater internalization of environmental costs in the price
of goods and services -- with information and education
fostering a climate of acceptance regarding the wider
benefits.

4. Progress made in implementing voluntary commitments
to achieving sustainable development goals that have an
especially high priority at the national level.

• “There is a need for a more comprehensive overview of
progress that takes into account different national pri-
orities and policy objectives within the broad production
and consumption agenda. The overview should provide
a systematic review of progress achieved by developed
countries on such key issues as energy and materials ef-
ficiency and should illustrate in a more general manner
changes in production and consumption patterns in de-
veloping countries that contribute to environmentally and
socially sustainable economic development.”

• Work is currently under way to develop an informa-
tion base on government policies and actions by major
groups in order to report to the Commission on new de-
velopments and to assess the impacts and effectiveness
of new measures over time. The information base will be
organized to identify key objectives of sustainable con-
sumption and production and to report on broad strate-
gies adopted to achieve them.

• OCED intends to include consumption and production
patterns in its policy performance reviews, beginning in
1996. World Bank is considering the establishment of a
database on national environmental policy measures.

5. Revision of the UN guidelines for consumer protection.

Following the Commission’s decision to revised the
Guidelines, the Secretariat began coordinating a process
for this revision including consultations with different
stakeholders.

Brazilia: North-South vision

Late in November the governments of Brazil and Norway
organized a symposium in Brasilia to “identify the key
elements for a shared North-South vision” on the issue
of changing consumption and production patterns. The
meeting reaffirmed that industrialized countries have a
responsibility in “taking the lead” and that “providing the
goods and services required to reduce poverty will require
lifestyle change among the affluent in North and South.”

Regarding the common agenda for all countries in their
pursuit of sustainability, the dialogue noted that “new
ways of meeting needs while respecting nature have a
special place in developing countries where the urgency
to increase consumption is greatest.”

One concern that continues to be raised is that “the
drive for environmental sustainability does not become
an instrument of increasing North-South inequalities,”
that “protectionist measures should not be used in the
name of the environment.” In general, for both North
and South, “new cultural reference points for success
are needed to replace the notion that increasing material
consumption equates with progress.”

1997: Rio+5

This CSD session as well as the UN General Assembly
Special Session looked back at the previous five years
with regard to the objectives raised in Agenda 21 at Rio,
including progress on the five objectives in Chapter 4:

1. International efforts to promote patterns of
consumption and production that reduce environmental
stress and will meet the basic needs of humanity.

• Five years after the Earth Summit there have been
many enthusiastic and ambitious efforts by a number
of governments, the CSD, OECD and other institutions
and stakeholder to clarify and define concepts, develop
a conceptual framework as well as an effective global
policy framework, analyses and discussions regarding
the role of different stakeholders, the different types of
policy instruments and strategies and their relative ef-
nctiveness at different levels and addressing different
sectors and problems, and to understand and address
the differentiated needs and responsibilities of different
countries and regions, particularly regarding the differ-
ences between developed and developing countries.

2. Developing a better understanding of the role of
consumption and how to bring about more sustainable
consumption patterns.

• According to CSD-5’s progress report, the work
on changing consumption and production patterns
over the past five years has resulted in a consensus
that the most promising and cost-effective policy
strategies are those that aim at cost internalization
and improved efficiency in resource and energy use.
These approaches are also recognized as most
effective in combination with specific time-bound
targets and objectives.
3. Promoting efficiency in production processes and reducing wasteful consumption in the process of economic growth, taking into account the development needs of developing countries.

- The paradox of improvements in awareness and technology being overtaken by increases in absolute consumption and production, i.e., economic growth, will become increasingly prominent as one of the critical challenges in the coming years. Rising CO2 emissions is a source of deepening concern.

- Integrated life-cycle analysis continues to provide a useful approach to product policy and design, targeting the environment impacts at each stage in the product’s life. Producer responsibility policies are of special interest in addressing the end-of-life phase of products.

4. Developing a domestic policy framework that will encourage a shift to more sustainable patterns of production and consumption.

- While various countries were establishing national councils and policies on sustainable development, no country had yet developed a domestic policy framework to develop and guide national strategies promoting sustainable production and consumption.

- It is also clear that despite better understanding of production and consumption and policy options, many governmental policies in sectors such as agriculture, finance, trade, tourism, energy and transport “do not adequately reflect an appreciation of how they shape consumption and production patterns.”

5. Reinforcing both values that encourage sustainable consumption and production patterns and policies that encourage the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries.

- The continuing rise of eco-labels was highlighted as an indicator of a significant shift in values. The CSD-5 report noted the contributions of Friends of the Earth’s Sustainable Europe campaign and the Global Action Plan (GAP) in helping individuals and households expand and act on their awareness of their lifestyle impacts.

**SPAC Caucus**

During this time, NGOs at CSD directed their attention to three concerns with the current discourse: (1) the continual reduction of the broader topic to simply “consumption,” (2) developing country delegates and NGOs viewing this as a “Northern” issue treating lifestyles as more important than livelihoods, and (3) the tendency to put the ultimate responsibility (i.e., blame) for the cycle of unsustainable patterns on the consumer (i.e., demand, despite the fact that the demand from one billion people for clean water and livelihoods are neglected). This discussion led to agreement on naming the caucus “Sustainable Production and Consumption” (i.e., SPAC) and emphasizing the essential linkage between lifestyle and livelihood and the system nature of the topic. Thus the origins of the acronym “SPAC” in contrast to “SCP.”

The SPAC Caucus further identified its priorities in its collective statement calling for governments “to place sustainable production and consumption at the heart of economic policy.” They explained that

This shift in emphasis is especially necessary, considering the trend towards globalization and the emphasis on private investment as the source of financing for sustainable development. Responsibility for achieving sustainable production and consumption needs to extend beyond environment ministers to also become a responsibility for ministers of finance, trade and other government sectors.

As to the coming years and internal debates, the SPAC Caucus further developed its common position and priorities:

- By 1999, the CSD should establish time-bound, measurable, sectoral and overall targets for achieving international sustainable production and consumption goals. CSD should also regularly monitor, evaluate and report on national and international progress in reaching those targets. In turn, by 1999 each country should establish and periodically report to CSD on progress implementing its national plan to achieve sustainable production and consumption. These plans should incorporate appropriate indicators and concepts (e.g., environmental space, ecological footprints) and should establish time-bound, measurable targets for each economic sector (e.g., energy, transportation, food, chemicals, weapons) as well as government itself (e.g., environmentally sound purchasing.)

**UNGASS**

In June the UN General Assembly held its Special Session (UNGASS) to assess progress in the five years since the Earth Summit, acknowledging that in this time food production was rising and air and water quality was improving in many developed countries, with the majority of people enjoying longer and healthier lifespans. Yet despite “progress in material and energy efficiency, particularly with reference to non-renewable resources,
overall trends remain unsustainable.” For the planet as a whole “the environment has continued to deteriorate” as “the number of people living in poverty has increased, and gaps between rich and poor have growth, both within and between countries.”

In response the General Assembly agreed to “reconfirm the political commitment to sustainable development” and to “make a stronger commitment at the global level” to issues including changing production and consumption patterns. The GA also made a point to also reaffirm the belief that “sustained economic growth is essential the economic and social development of all countries,” that “through such growth...countries will be able to improve the standards of living of their people.” While qualifying this to mean growth that will “benefit all people” being “guided by equity, justice and social and environmental considerations,” the concepts of carrying capacity and limits to growth were not included.

The section on changing consumption and production patterns re-states and re-affirms many statements from Chapter 4 in Agenda 21, that “all countries should strive to promote sustainable consumption patterns and a high priority to be given to the review of progress in achieving sustainable consumption patterns, and that national policies and strategies are needed. The General Assembly report mostly noted some of the policy instruments and themes that have been part of the discussion, without making any new commitments or decisions, with the exception of “a socially responsible process of reduction and elimination of subsidies to environmentally harmful activities.” The section ends with a call to give “balanced consideration to both the demand side and the supply side of the economy in matching environmental concerns and economic factors, which could encourage changes in the behaviour of consumers and producers.” However, the tendency to place the emphasis on end-use demand and “sustainable consumption” rather than a broader systemic approach also runs through the text, highlighting the contradictions and difficulties in thinking and acting in a collectively coherent way about this issue.

As to the “worsening trends,” it was perhaps no coincidence that this 1997 was also the year that WWF began its Living Planet reports on the global ecological footprint, charting the relentless growth of humanity’s impact on the global ecosystem.

1998: Guidelines, indicators and VIAs

Revising the Consumer Guidelines

In January, the UN Secretariat convened in Sao Paulo, Brazil the Interregional Expert Group Meeting on Consumer Protection and Sustainable Consumption to discuss revision of the UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection to include new sections on sustainable consumption. The meeting focused on issues related to sustainable consumption and “did not review or revise the existing text of the guidelines” but rather identified places where the new material could be integrated.

The meeting made a clear distinction between consumption and production, pointing out that “sustainable consumption is an essential part of sustainable development and closely tied to sustainable production,” that sustainable production “concerns the supply side, focusing on the economic, social and environmental impact of production processes,” while sustainable consumption addresses the demand side, focusing on consumers’ choices of goods and services... to fulfill basic needs and improve the quality of life.” The focus here for the Guidelines, however, was specifically on consumption.

The discussion about the Guidelines and ways in which governments could improve national consumer policies continued at the UN in April at CSD-6, in conjunction with a thematic focus on “industry and sustainable development,” which would be expected to be primarily about sustainable production. Perhaps telling as to the challenge, the CSD-6 report does not once mention the term “sustainable production” in contrast to mentioning “growth” 13 times,
One outcome of this discussion was that the Commission took up the NGO Taskforce proposal for a review of voluntary initiatives and agreements, calling on industry, trade unions and NGOs to identify and recommend the elements of such a review.

The SPAC Caucus was also organizing its own advocacy priorities within the CSD process, highlighting the need “to move beyond efficiency to sufficiency” and to promote sustainable livelihoods as well as lifestyles, that these are intertwined. The Caucus agreed on the need for a balanced north-south perspective, putting the overcoming of the gap between rich and poor at the top of policy priorities and calling for “equitable access to resources while accounting for ecological limits.”

**Indicators of consumption and production**

In March, the Division for Sustainable Development organized a workshop, chaired by Diane Dillon-Ridgley, concluding a year-long process of consultations to identify a core set of indicators to measure changes in consumption and production patterns. These covered key resources (energy, materials, water, land) and consumption clusters (mobility, consumer goods and services, buildings and house-keeping, food, recreation).

**Voluntary initiatives and agreements**

Another major theme in the discussion was the positive role of “voluntary initiatives,” cited eight times. This was not discussed as one of several possible approaches to achieving sustainability goals, with a consideration of its various strengths and weaknesses, but was uncritically presented as an accepted solution to be promoted and expanded by governments, the UN and industry. Yet research studies, such as by the OECD, have pointed out some of the weaknesses of the voluntary model, that

First, regarding goal ambitiousness, the evidence points to the central role of industry in the target-setting process, the scope for free-riding, and the uncertainty over regulatory threats. Second, in relation with the implementation stage, negotiated agreements seem to perform poorly due to non-enforceable commitments, poor monitoring and lack of transparency.

Yet the CSD-6 report enthusiastically calls for governments to “encourage the wider dispersion of voluntary initiatives on the part of industry in both the formal and informal sectors,” that “these voluntary initiatives reflect a change in the way in which business perceives its social responsibilities.” The banking and accounting scandals of the 1990s would later put such enthusiasm into a more realistic perspective.

At this time, however, the NGO Taskforce on Business and Industry challenged the idea of voluntary initiatives and corporate responsibility as insufficient without balancing this approach with corporate accountability mechanisms. The NGO Taskforce campaign specifically highlighted the important role of corporate accountability within sustainable development, that the two concepts and approaches need to go together. Later, this pairing of corporate responsibility and accountability was endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, included throughout the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, including the chapter on consumption and production.

CSD-7: Implementation of the work programme

The 7th Session of CSD took place in April, with the
Commission mostly repeating and reaffirming various clauses and priorities from Agenda 21, Chapter 4 and later reports, that developed countries should take the lead but all countries should participate and benefit from the process. That governments, private sector and all other major groups have a role to play and need to take action. More timely however is the statement that both poverty eradication and changing production and consumption are “the overriding issues of the Commission’s work programme” and should be integrated into the future themes of the CSD and that these two issues should be given “due regard” at the comprehensive review of the CSD’s 10th Session in preparation for the 10-year review of progress made since UNCED.

The problem with such a review of progress, however, is that there have been no established targets or measures to evaluate. Thus much time and text devoted to “reviewing” is spent describing activities and discussions, not analyzing actual progress in achieving strategic objectives. Establishing targets, measures and monitoring mechanisms remains an objective in itself.

One focus of CSD-7 discussions, based on the Secretary General’s earlier review paper, was the International Work Programme that was now in motion, the product of so many meetings and discussions in those early years.

1. Trends

- Energy and natural resource consumption is steadily growing, driven by economic development and population growth, compounded by new needs and aspirations.
- Food production and consumption has grown, especially of meat and fish. Overfishing and water pollution present threats to future productivity. Growth of cattle adds greater competition for grains, driving prices higher. Cattle also are a source of methane contribution to climate change.
- Reductions in energy and materials consumption per unit of production offset by increases in the volume of production and consumption. Declining oil prices have driven increases in fossil fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.
- Renewable energy, still a small share of commercial energy, is becoming an important growth market.
- Motor vehicles, accounting for 15 percent of fossil fuel consumption, are growing by 16 million per year.
- Hybrid cars and alternative fuels are being developed and marketed.

2. Policy measures

- With the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) the UN Division for Sustainable Development set up a database on policy instruments for changing consumption and production patterns.
- OCED, Economic Commission for Europe, and European Environmental Agency had conducted several analyses of economic instruments.
- Major obstacles to tax strategies for sustainable consumption and production are political opposition to taxes and concerns about international competitiveness.
- Subsidies for harmful practices remains one of the major obstacles to sustainable consumption and production, estimates ranging from $650 billion to $1.5 trillion per year -- substantially greater than the entire estimated cost ($600 billion) for implementing Agenda 21. However, strong opposition to reforms by “generally privileged and political influential” beneficiaries.
- Eco-efficiency identified by OECD as promising policy strategy for business, governments and households. Factor-10 Club calls for energy and material use per unit to be reduced in industrialized countries by factor of 10 over the next 30 to 50 years. Needs to be adapted to particular sectors, products and processes.
- Voluntary initiatives and agreements continue to be promoted although some skepticism, as from OECD study mentioned earlier. Dutch “covenants” found more effective than regulatory process. Public grading systems of company performances. Certification for following standards (e.g., ISO) have motivated many companies. NGO Taskforce on Business and Industry convinced the Commission to call for a review of voluntary initiatives and agreements, followed by a meeting in Toronto later that year to identify elements.
- Indicators of trends needed for effective policy-making and evaluation of progress, especially progress in meeting targets. Methodologies for the indicators identified in the 1998 workshop being developed, with testing at national level planned.
- Environmental accounting and valuation explored
by a number of countries introducing “green national accounts” as satellite accounts to conventional national accounts. World Resources Institute and others estimate a minimum value of $33 trillion per year for ecological services not normally measured in GDP — significantly more than the $25 trillion annual total for conventional global production of goods and services.\textsuperscript{58}

- Public procurement policies being developed by a number of governments, local authorities and international organizations.

- Efforts to strengthen sustainability values have focused on education, awareness-raising and consumer information. Product labeling on product impacts is an important mechanism for enabling informed choice. Development of eco-labels has slowed since the 1980s, with some exceptions in East Asia and Northern Europe. Advertising and media are important elements. Over a lifetime, the average US consumer spends more than 1,000 hours watching 150,000 advertisements as US companies spent more than $100 billion on advertising in 1997.

3. Impacts on developing countries

- Concerns of developing countries of limits to exports due to environmental standards, eco-labeling, life cycle analysis, extended producer responsibility and eco-efficiency efforts, that demand may also be reduced. On the other hand, shifts in developed country consumption patterns offer new opportunities to developing country enterprises. In general, however, the environmental impacts of globalization not well understood.

4. National and local commitments

- Meeting in Vienna organized by ECE and Austrian government to explore sustainable consumption promoted by local authorities, with cities as starting points.

- National procurement policies a logical starting point for many countries.

5. Consumer guidelines

- Revised guidelines can provide a useful framework for national consumer policy. Consultations continue on draft.

Future work

- Agreement that further work is needed to assess the effectiveness of policy instruments and mixes.

- Further development of indicators needed.

- Consumption and production patterns to be cross-sectoral theme structuring discussions of future CSD sessions.

2000: Hunger is unsustainable consumption

CSD-8 focused primarily on sustainable agriculture, finance and land. The NGO SPAC Caucus strategy was to work directly with the Sustainable Agriculture Caucus to ensure integration of sustainable production and consumption as a conceptual and strategic frame for discussions and advocacy.

2001

CSD-9 focused on the sustainable production, distribution and use of energy. Here the discussion examined progress towards “sustainable energy.”

ICSPAC and NASCA

In the year before the WSSD, two new civil society initiatives were launched; one global, the other regional.

International Coalition for Sustainable Production and Consumption (ICSPAC). To better prepare for the upcoming WSSD, members of the NGO Caucus on Sustainable Production and Consumption agreed to create a network to support civil society communications and advocacy. This new network, the International Coalition for Sustainable Production and Consumption (ICSPAC) is modeled after
the Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) and its supportive relationship with the Women’s Caucus. In each of the World Summit preparatory meetings, ICSPAC organizes roundtable discussions specifically focusing on the theme of production and consumption and UN plans for the next ten years dealing with this topic.

North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance (NASCA). In the region most often cited in graphs comparing its notably higher per capital consumption of resources, a number of civil society organizations and government representatives met in Lowell, Massachusetts to form a network to address that situation.

2002: Confronting the “implementation gap” at the WSSD

In its review of progress in the decade since the 1992 Earth Summit agreements, the 2002 UN World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) reported that despite improvements in eco-efficiency and environmental awareness, these gains were overshadowed by worsening environmental, social and economic trends.59 These trends, the review explained, are the result of relentlessly growing production and consumption patterns -- along with the lack of political will to confront this challenge. As the UN press release for the report put it

Attempts to promote human development and to reverse environmental degradation have not, in general, been effective over the last decade. Too few resources, a lack of political will, a piecemeal and uncoordinated approach and continued wasteful patterns of production and consumption have conspired to thwart efforts to implement sustainable development, or development that is balanced between people’s economic and social needs and the ability of the earth’s resources and ecosystems to meet present and future needs.

Addressing this “implementation gap,” the WSSD identified changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns as one of the overarching objectives of sustainable development60 next to protecting natural resources and eradicating poverty. This represents a historically important precedent in the evolution of the definition of “sustainable development.”61

WSSD also mandated the “development of a 10-year framework of programmes in support of national and regional initiatives to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production.”62

During the WSSD meeting in Johannesburg, ICSPAC organized a roundtable entitled “The World in 2012: Towards a 10 Year Plan to Achieve Sustainable Production and Consumption.” At this meeting ICSPAC released the report Waiting for Delivery: A Civil Society Assessment of Progress Toward Sustainable Production and Consumption. At the very same time this meeting took place, government delegates agreed to change the language of the “10 year program of work” to “10 year framework of programs.”

Now looking back from the perspective of the 2010 review, there stands the question to what degree the “lack of political will” and “piecemeal and uncoordinated approach,” given the 10YFP mandate, was overcome or remains a problem.

2003: Launch of the Marrakech Process

The following year, in response to the WSSD’s call, the UN Environment Program and UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs launched the “Marrakech Process” with the aim of bringing together the expertise and leadership to develop this “framework of programs” -- although it was not clear about what programs were to be developed, the nature of the timeline or the framework.

The launch took place 16-19 June 2003 in Marrakech, Morocco, co-chaired by M’hamed Elmurabit, Secretary of State for the Environment of Morocco, and Swedish Ambassador Viveka Bohn. Elmurabit opened the meeting by contrasting the situation of people of the world unable to meet their basic needs with the “waste, pollution, overexploitation and depletion of resources associated with the lifestyles of the rich countries.”63 Viveka Bohn reinforced this point that sustainable development’s goal of a better quality of life for all requires increased consumption for the poor -- and different consumption by the rich -- but
ensuring that what we produce and consume do not have negative effects on human health and the environment. She then pointed out the need to identify national priorities and areas where countries need international support, the need for increased coordination and cooperation among international organizations, and for monitoring and assessment to identify gaps in implementation.

Eager to be “moving from policy debates to practical action,” as UNDESA Director JoAnne DiSano put it, participants broke into four parallel working groups: (1) human settlements, (2) policy instruments and analytical tools, (3) promoting sustainable consumption patterns, and (4) tools for changing production patterns. The discussions were notably rich in ideas and insights, perhaps even a bit overwhelming as to identifying priorities for future action.

Instead of focusing on the practical question of what kinds of international programs would be most useful in supporting national and regional initiatives, then turning to the task of developing and implementing those programs, the 1st International Experts Meeting interpreted the WSSD mandate instead as “a long-term process to provide input to the intergovernmental decision-making process.”

Here the critical target audience for supportive action was not practitioners in civil society, the scientific community and business but governments and intergovernmental agencies.

Rather than focusing on the task of developing and promoting a set of useful and practical programs and a conceptual and administrative framework to encourage and support national and regional civil society and business initiatives throughout the world, as well as national government policy initiatives, with criteria to monitor and assess progress, the 1st International Experts Meeting instead described the mission of the Marrakech Process as an ongoing intergovernmental advisory process, “supported by informal task forces or roundtables...with participation of experts from developing and developed countries, to promote progress on the 10-year framework.”

In short, instead of developing programs to encourage, support and promote national and regional initiatives, the task was seen as encouraging, supporting and promoting the development of the 10-year framework, or rather the newly created UN initiative, the Marrakech Process.

Regional Consultations

While the three International Experts Meetings stand out in defining the Marrakech Process and its many activities, it is more difficult to realize the expanding scope of discussion within the different regions and countries, each grappling with their own differentiated understandings, needs and responsibilities. After Johannesburg, key regional consultations of 2003 took place not in Europe but in Latin America (in Buenos Aires and Managua) and in Asia-Pacific (in Yogyakarta and Seoul).

From these meetings came the Latin American & Caribbean Regional Strategy on Sustainable Consumption and Production, which called for a Regional Council of Experts, capacity building within government institutions and the production and financial sectors, environmental awareness campaigns, pilot projects (such as those involving youth), and development of financing mechanisms.

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Afterwards, we see an increasing number of national and regional meetings discussing not simply the development of the 10YFP but the broad range of questions, concerns and options recognized as part of the increasingly familiar concept and rapidly expanding discourse of sustainable production and consumption, or as dubbed by the Marrakech secretariat, “SCP.” Between 2003 and 2009, 22 regional meetings/roundtables were organized in the context of the Marrakech Process.

2005: Costa Rica and the Task Forces

One of the developments of the Marrakech Process most often heralded has been the Task Forces. These were launched at the 2nd International Experts Meeting on the 10YFP in San Jose, Costa Rica, co-chaired by Vice-Minister Allan Flores, Ministry of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica, and once again by Ambassador Viveka Bohn, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Sweden. In the opening session Ambassador Bohn once again reminded participants of the global context, of the “stark inequities in the consumption of the world’s resources” and the need for “a more even distribution of consumption and production and more equitable and sustainable development in and between countries.” The challenge, she explained, is “to provide more people with a better quality of life without undermining the natural resource base and destroying the ecosystems on which we all depend.”

In addition to the various sessions reporting on the regional meetings and working groups on various themes, the main outcome of the Costa Rica meeting was the task forces, described as “informal groups of countries or organizations to work on specific issues of sustainable consumption and production,” in which each task force “would have a lead country, which would initiate the work and provide resources to ensure the participation of developing countries.” The meeting announced the creation of task forces on

- **Sustainable Lifestyles** (Sweden) – focusing on sustainable consumption patterns related to lifestyles and culture

- **Sustainable Products** (United Kingdom) – to raise awareness on product policy and eco-design, reporting also to the G-8

- **Cooperation with Africa** (Germany) – in conjunction with the African 10-Year Framework Programme approved by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), sharing experience between and among cooperation partners and African countries, and promoting the integration of SCP in development planning and policies

- **Sustainable Public Procurement** (Switzerland) – to promote understanding of the issue, exchange experience, identify best practices, and develop links between governments, NGOs and other actors.

These were later followed by task forces on

- **Education for Sustainable Consumption** (Italy) – highlighting the links between education and sustainable consumption, aims at stimulating individuals’ awareness and at empowering them to choose socially responsible, resource efficient and environmentally friendly lifestyles through their consumption choices.

- **Sustainable Buildings and Construction** (Finland) - to support the development of innovative local and national policies that will mainstream sustainability in construction, use, maintenance and renovation of buildings. The priority has been to address how the public sector can promote energy efficiency, energy savings, access to energy and use of renewable energy in the built environment.

- **Sustainable Tourism** (France) - to promote sustainable tourism through the development of support tools; to present new initiatives and support existing ones that may inspire pilot projects and good practices in other countries.

The Costa Rica meeting also emphasized the importance of national strategies and action plans, which could be integrated into or complementary to national development plans or national and regional strategies for sustainable development. UNEP and UNDESA were requested to develop non-prescriptive guidelines to support national SCP strategy development.

The Costa Rica meeting also called for Cooperation Dialogue Sessions between SCP experts and development cooperation agencies in order to identify funding opportunities for SCP activities.

UNDESA was also asked to maintain and develop a database on international SCP activities.

**Oslo Declaration and North American Call for Action**

On August 29, 250 scientists endorse call to European Commission for stronger support for research on sustainable consumption. This was the “Oslo Declaration” which led to the creation of SCORE.
Also that year, NASCA and representatives from several networks engaged in sustainable production and consumption practices met in Washington, DC, generating the public statement of commitment, “Production and consuming in North America: A Call for Action and Leadership on Sustainability,” which was in turn taken as a message of mutual support to civil society networks in other regions.

CSCP and Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

2005 also saw the founding by UNEP and Wuppertal Institute of the Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP). Director Michael Kuhndt explained that “the CSCP has the task of making concrete the goals agreed on at the Johannesburg Summit, of developing action strategies and of implementing tangible projects.

"At one CSCP event, Arab Hoballah, Head of the UNEP Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch announced

Governments have an important role to play in providing a policy framework that both enables business to invest in more sustainable products and services and supports consumers to lead more sustainable lifestyles. The 10YFP should define an international agreement on the actions of all parties towards sustainable consumption and production in the next decade at a concrete level. Governments need to accelerate their efforts to mobilise public awareness in order to achieve a momentum by 2011.

This same year also saw the release of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment report, which called attention to the role of ecosystem services to human quality of life, as well as the changes to ecosystems from human activities in the past 50 years, calling special attention to the dramatic degradation of ecosystems.

2007: 3rd International Experts Meeting

Sweden welcomed the Marrakech Process for this next stage of the global discussion about the 10 Year Framework, gathering its third meeting of international experts just outside Stockholm. Co-chaired by Swedish Environment Ambassador Erik Hammarskjold and Ye Ruqui, Senior Advisor, State Environmental Protection Administration, People’s Republic of China, the main task for participants at the Stockholm meeting was “to provide comments and inputs to the proposal for the 10YFP,” said UNEP DTIE Director Sylvie Lemmet, who then identified three priorities:

1. to define clear decoupling targets for the year 2020, as well as indicators to measure progress on SCP, and
2. to define the key programmes that should be included in the 10YFP, and
3. to develop more implementation and cooperation mechanisms beyond the existing task forces.
Two new implementation/cooperation mechanisms introduced in Stockholm were the Business Forum and NGO Forum, each held previous to the Experts Meeting opening.

The views of the Business Forum were perhaps best summed up by Jacqueline Cote from the World Business Council on Sustainable Development as “achieving sustainability through the market.” In addition to innovation, eco-efficiency, partnerships, improvement of market framework conditions, and informer consumer choices, she stressed the importance for governments to “provide national and international frameworks that allow businesses to operate efficiently across borders, and support business through provision of basic infrastructure, as well as raising public awareness about sustainable products.”

The NGO Forum recommendations agreed to by the group, were delivered by Uchita de Zoysa, including:

1. Identify the specific programs of the 10YFP, clearly defining and identifying targets, timetables, and action needed to reverse worsening social and ecological trends by 2021.
2. Organize a comprehensive multi-stakeholder review of efforts, success and failure to implement the Agenda 21 objectives and action commitments on production and consumption agreed by governments at UNCED.
3. Identify and analyze the national barriers to develop national SCP strategies.
4. Develop a clear set of guidelines ensuring civil society and other stakeholder participation.
5. Establish a broader global stakeholder dialogue with greater outreach.
6. Establish a process to define corporate accountability and its relation to corporate responsibility.

One objective of the meeting was to discuss an initial draft outline of a 10-Year Framework of Programmes posed in a background paper. This discussion highlighted the need the Framework to be flexible and applicable to all regions according to their priorities and needs; it could bring together the demand for SCP support from countries and regions with the supply of technical and financial services from UN and other institutions; that there should be a “mapping of existing initiatives, programmes and policies to inform the refinement of the 10YFP with a clear indication of goals, policies and actors.”

However, as the NGOs pointed out, in this “draft outline of a 10YFP” there were no programs nor was there a proposed framework. Instead of focusing on the pragmatic task of developing a number of useful program services and products to support and build capacity among engaged practitioners, the “10YFP” idea had reified into a more abstract goal embodying a wide range of aims and priorities, taking on more of the characteristics of a grand UN action initiative in itself.

The NGOs further offered a short presentation of practical programs that would be supportive of a broad range of initiatives promoting SCP. The programs were fairly straightforward: Research, funding, technical support, database, training.

The meeting ended with the announcement of the creation of a Marrakech Advisory Committee that would act as an advisory body for the Marrakech Process as a whole.

**SCORE/civil society conference on the 10YFP**

In Milan that same year members of SCORE and other civil society groups met to discuss the idea of the 10 Year Framework on SCP as well as the paper “Sustainable Consumption and Production: A Framework for Action.”

**2008: Guidelines for National Strategies**

In this year UNEP published its very helpful report, *Planning for Change: Guidelines for National Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production*. By that time several countries had developed national SCP strategies or policy approaches, thus a collective pool of experience continues to evolve. Although the need to develop “domestic policy frameworks that will encourage a shift to more sustainable patterns of production and

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**Ten steps in developing a national SCP programme**

1. Establish an advisory group
2. Conduct a scoping exercise
3. Set the institutional framework
4. Select the priority areas
5. Define objectives and set targets
6. Select policies and initiatives
7. Obtain official approval of the programme
8. Implement the programme
9. Document, monitor and evaluate
10. Sustain and improve.

From *Planning for Change* (2008) UNEP
consumption” was acknowledged in 1992 as one of the key Agenda 21 objectives, it was not until after the WSSD that such national frameworks or programs began appearing, with the United Kingdom and Japan leading the way.

2010: Review of the 10YFP at CSD-18

In 2010 the task of developing and approving the framework of programs is now directed to the governmental delegations participating in the 18th and 19th sessions of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Delegates are being informed by a public draft paper containing a matrix or “template” of policy and action categories, with recommendations to view these from a lifecycle perspective. However, the nature of the task still remains unclear to many as the time for decisions and commitments draws near.

A proposed 10YFP approach

Given the mandate of the WSSD in 2002, the CSD in 2010 has a profound responsibility and obligation to finally deliver the framework of programmes supporting the global movement of initiatives, organizations and individuals working to change the production and consumption patterns driving so many of the world’s problems today. The challenge is great, given the complexity of the topic and the constraints on time, money and patience.

Yet there are practical ways forward. In Stockholm in 2007 civil society groups discussed this challenge and recommended an approach, which is further elaborated here. The approach is fairly straightforward and for many people a practical response to the confusion and frustration so many have expressed regarding the need to deliver a useful resource to the world community.

This approach involves looking at the situation first from the perspective of people and organizations in communities around the world trying to change production and consumption patterns. Of course they are not targeting the same patterns, but are dealing with thousands of different situations and targets for change. They are not looking to be told how they should talk about it and are not necessarily interested in promoting the Marrakech Process, yet are often in great need of help and encouragement in implementing their practitioner approach to the problem, their initiatives, projects and campaigns.

These practitioners represent different stakeholder groups from business to academia to consumer rights and health advocates to evangelical environmentalists, mayors, teachers, students, the list goes on. They target a range of different problems caused or driven by unsustainable production and/or consumption patterns – climate change, biodiversity loss and ecosystem decline, children’s environmental health threats, hunger, economic insecurity. They aim their strategies and practices at targets within different economic sectors, e.g. food, energy, transportation, water. They also draw on a wide range of different practices, policy instruments, and tools – sometimes promoting the practices and policies themselves to empower those applying them in specific strategic interventions. These actions, strategies, and practices make up the thousands of initiatives aimed at changing production and consumption patterns, and together making up the global movement towards sustainable production and consumption.

What role should the UN play in relation to this global movement? As the leader? As the arch central strategist, planner and manager? That could be a great mistake. The role of the UN and international institutions is not to lead and direct this movement from the top down but to encourage and support it through the very programs of support which the WSSD mandated in 2002, international programs aimed not to direct them but to help them in way, that improve their effectiveness in accelerating the shift to sustainability.

The approach presented here begins not with defining a “framework” but with identifying and understanding these initiatives targeting different stages and dimensions of production and consumption for change.

Drawing from the life cycle approach but starting not with the product and its impacts but rather beginning with the impacts back to the system of products, production and consumption which different groups are targeting for...
change, We can identify a wide range of familiar policy instruments and practices but understood in the context of active initiatives and strategies developed by organizations and networks. It is these communities of practice which we aim to identify and to build relationships of cooperation and collaboration. Our priority is to help to build and support communities of action, communities of practice.

In the figure above, we see clusters of familiar policy tools and practices targeting different invention points within a basic production/consumption cycle. These are each associated with a specific community of practice, sometimes taking shape as policy networks, sometimes as public interest campaigns, sometimes the tool box in a project or organization.

To provide effective and meaningful support and to gain understanding of these communities of practice and action, the UN and international communities need to develop first a program for the ongoing mapping of these initiatives and practices throughout the world, tracked through research and monitoring, building knowledge through an evolving and accessible public database. Knowing what other groups are doing and what practices are considered “best” or useful is a need continually expressed by such organizations. There are already a number of different efforts to identify and map sustainable production and consumption patterns. The question however is to what degree these efforts communicate and collaborate with each other. A UN program that brings together groups and experts engaged in different aspects of SPC mapping would be a great service.

In turn, most organizations have a great need for scientific, political, cultural, technical and other types of knowledge but do not have the resources to conduct that research or contract consulting services. The UN however has a long track record of developing research programs and services for such constituencies. With regard to production/consumption patterns, there is not only a great need for research and information, but also a need to know what kinds of research is and is not being conducted. A mapping of research activities focused on production and consumption would in itself be an important resource for many organizations and initiatives.

Overall, initiatives focused on practicing voluntary simplicity, researching happiness, lobbying for public right to know, encouraging socially responsible investment, and hundreds of other types of initiatives could all more or less benefit from the UN’s development and management of a cluster of basic global support programs, as illustrated in the table below.
However, these programs do not have to be developed and administered through a top-down hierarchy, which can be extremely inefficient. Rather, given the diversity of needs and complexity of approaches, one of the most creative approaches is through the UN partnership system, encouraging and perhaps brokering a number of different alliances and relationships among experts and practitioners to collaborate in designing and managing each of these different programs – as partnerships.

The following section explores some of these program/partnership ideas as possible proposals to consider for the next year leading into CSD-19.
Proposed programs and partnerships
Proposed programs and partnerships

The following presents a list of proposed programs which, if developed and implemented by members of the UN and international community, could provide desperately needed support to the many national and regional initiatives and efforts around the world working to promote sustainable production and consumption.

Each program involves a number of different partners, each bringing their particular expertise, knowledge, and other resources to the task.

The idea is for these groups and individuals to work together to develop and provide tools, products, information and support services to aid and improve the effectiveness of those many other groups around the world addressing specific parts and impacts of the production/consumption system within different sectors and at different levels.

The overall goal of this exercise is to collaborate and cooperate in reversing the current trends toward environmental, social and economic crisis resulting from unsustainable production and consumption patterns.

The idea for this effort originated in 2007 within the NGO Forum at the 3rd International Experts Meeting on the 10 Year Framework, when the discussion turned to the question of the “missing framework and programs” and a return to the original meaning of the WSSD mandate. The ideas presented here also focus on the possibilities offered through UN Partnership Program, which encourages such collaborations and offers the opportunity to develop and showcase new ideas and actions to promote sustainability.

Note: The following proposals and ideas here are still in a developmental stage and need your help and suggestions. Where there is sufficient interest in working together, we will develop these ideas further in the coming year for presentation at the CSD-19 Partnership Fair in 2011. Many of the “potential partners” are suggestions and have yet to be directly engaged in this effort.
Program 1

Global Sustainable Production and Consumption Research Program

An International Collaboration and Exchange Among SPC Researchers and Institutions

A wide range of research and analysis on production, consumption and sustainability has and continues to be conducted throughout the world, responding to the need for the knowledge necessary to address the range of environmental and social crises shaped and driven by production and consumption patterns.

In *Agenda 21* called on governments, private research and policy institutes, regional and international economic and environmental organizations to conduct research efforts to

- expand or promote databases on production and consumption and develop methodologies for analysing them;
- assess the relationship between production and consumption, environment, technological adaptation and innovation, economic growth and development, and demographic factors;
- examine the impact of ongoing changes in the structure of modern industrial economies away from material-intensive economic growth;
- consider how economies can grow and prosper while reducing the use of energy and materials and the production of harmful materials;
- identify balanced patterns of consumption worldwide, which the Earth can support in the long term.

While there was "growing recognition of the importance of addressing consumption" this had "not been matched by an understanding of its implications." The 1992 report noted that economists were questioning traditional concepts of economic growth but that "more needs to be known about the role of consumption in relation to economic growth and population dynamics in order to formulate coherent international and national policies."

Key research topics identified by the 1995 Oslo Ministerial Meeting on Sustainable Consumption and Production as part of its recommended International Work Program on Changing Consumption and Production Patterns included:

- identifying the policy implications of future trends in consumption and production;
- assessing the impacts on developing countries of changes in consumption and production patterns in developed countries; and
- evaluating the effectiveness of policy instruments.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development further specified the need to

- promote increased research and development in the field of various energy technologies, including renewable energy, efficiency and advanced energy technologies, including advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, both nationally and through international collaboration; strengthen national and regional research and development institutions/centres on reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy for sustainable development.

Unfortunately, although these and other topics remain extremely pertinent to policy decision-making today, and despite the numerous research projects and studies that have been taking place, there is insufficient institutional coordination and integration of these research efforts on production and consumption patterns and collaboration among institutions in a single UN research program on sustainable production and consumption.

There is also a need for monitoring and sharing information about these research initiatives as well as their results and products, as well as to identify key questions and areas where new research is needed. This work could be facilitated through coordination among and communication by key research networks and organizations.

In 2005 the Industrial Ecology Programme of the Norwegian University for Science and Technology hosted a 3-day seminar on "Sustainable Consumption: The Contribution of Research," in order to "take stock of the current research in order to develop a common research agenda and a proposal for a research infrastructure." This aim came to fruition in the SCORE project.

Various efforts in the past have been made to identify regional if not international research agendas, the evaluation of which might serve as a starting point for this international program. The program proposed by ICSPAC as part of the 10-Year Framework could develop a special research fund for qualified project proposals. The program could also foster joint research collaboration among partners and other research groups.
Program 2

Mapping the SPC Movement: A Global Partnership

A Multi-regional Inventory and Online Database of Sustainability Initiatives

Need

Throughout the many meetings and discussions about sustainability practices, someone usually points out the need for an easily accessible, online database and inventory of the various initiatives and "best practices" around the world addressing different production and consumption problems. These examples and case studies represent models, experience, inspiration and lessons essential to those practitioners interested in solutions but not “reinventing the wheel.”

Various scholars and research groups have compiled case studies and reports on many of these initiatives, policy instruments and approaches. The 1st International Experts Meeting on the 10YFP introduced a “Survey of International Activities on Consumption and Production Patterns,” then asked to be expanded, made more comprehensive and available to all countries. Yet there is still no comprehensive central, international public source of sustainable production and consumption initiatives available. In order to provide meaningful support to the wide range of regional and national initiatives promoting sustainable production and consumption throughout the world, the United Nations is best situated to provide a timely, valid and comprehensive global inventory of those initiatives. However, the need is not simply for a long list of project titles and contacts, but linked to a more in-depth understanding and appreciation of these activities, areas of focus, constituents, and the contribution they strive to provide, as well as their particular needs and the challenges they confront.

Another need, more realistic to consider in this age of social networking, is for the possibility of active communicative linkages among those initiatives identified in this central database. Thus, there is a need to explore not only the passive identification of initiatives, but how these identified initiatives might in turn be able to connect with each other.

Approach

A global online database of these initiatives, along with relevant information about them, drawn from national surveys and inventories, provides the foundational base for all other global and regional support efforts. Because of the great number of initiatives worldwide, not to mention language and political differences, this global online database should be built up from a modular series of regional and national databases, each of these serving the more particular, differentiated needs of those particular regions and countries -- while maintaining a common set of informational categories allowing coherence and exchange with an integrated global database.

The challenge for a global online database is to provide an effective structure, procedures, and technical support for coordinating this series of geographic databases into a functional international online database. This effort requires coordination among a range of cooperating research and statistical agencies, advised by consultation with user groups and expert bodies.

Beyond the initial database of individual initiatives, there also needs to be ongoing mapping efforts which describe the different types of initiatives and especially the different communities of practice which have evolved, linking different practitioner and others working within specific areas of focus, tools and strategy. This mapping effort should begin with identification and profiles of these communities of practice.
Program 3

Partnership on Financing Sustainable Production and Consumption

Collaboration among finance and investment experts, donor agencies, and financial institutions to explore approaches for SPC initiatives to acquire the funding they need.

Need

One of the top priorities continually raised by sustainability practitioners is adequate funding to meet the costs of these practices. This program focuses on the needs, options, and the range of strategies for shifting public and private financing and investment priorities towards sustainable production and consumption initiatives. The program could be linked with other financing for sustainable development efforts, and could coordinate with financial and funding institutions.

Agenda 21 pointed out the need to “identify ways and means of providing new and additional financial resources, particularly to developing countries, for environmentally sound development programmes and projects in accordance with national development objectives, priorities and plans and to consider ways of effectively monitoring the provision of such new and additional financial resources.” This identification and monitoring is clearly needed to support the various sustainable production and consumption initiatives.

Approach

The idea is to establish a partnership of funding experts, donor agencies and financial and investment analysts who agree to come together, communicate and pool their knowledge and perspective in surveying, assessing and offering ideas and advice on the challenges and possible strategies to mobilize and re-direct the resources needed at different levels and circumstances to encourage and empower sustainable production and consumption initiatives. This could take the form of a single public meeting once a year at the UN to discuss agreed topics, or possibly involve a more active communications and collaboration throughout the year.

The UNEP Finance Initiative describes itself as “a global partnership between UNEP and the financial sector” whereby “over 170 institutions, including banks, insurers and fund managers, work with UNEP to understand the impacts of environmental and social considerations on financial performance.” The Partnership on Financing SPC would, however, start off as a much more informal public dialogue among those with the interest and experience in financing sustainable development initiatives, turning their attention to the challenge of financing sustainable production and consumption initiatives.

Microfinance projects have been demonstrated to provide local economic empowerment that could also promote local community sustainability.

The 1997 Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 specifically called for actions “to internalize environmental costs and benefits in the price of goods and services,” for “shifting the burden of taxation onto unsustainable patterns of production and consumption,” and for a “socially responsible process of reduction and elimination of subsidies to environmentally harmful activities.” The Partnership could review past and current efforts towards these changes, as well as consider current efforts to redirect institutional purchasing, guide private and institutional investments according to socially responsibility principles, and other ways of steering these financial flows more towards sustainability.

The Partnership might also consider the possibility of establishing a joint-fund for exploratory grants providing seed and support funding for pilot and on-going projects promoting sustainable production and consumption aims.
Program 4
Measuring Progress on Sustainable Production and Consumption

A global partnership of experts and practitioners exchanging and collaborating on creation of knowledge to operationalize sustainability values in decisions and practice.

When the WSSD identified sustainable production and consumption as one of the overarching objectives of sustainable development, it did not identify or define the indicators for measuring progress towards this global objective. For policymakers and the public to effectively assess how close or far the world is in attaining this objective we need meaningful measures and benchmarks of progress.

Much work has already been done in this area, involving several different disciplines, methodologies and technologies cutting across countries and regions. In 1998, UN DESA presented its report on “Measuring Changes in Consumption and Production Patterns: A Set of Indicators.” More recently, in 2008, the French government created the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress. The following year, the European Commission released its communication “GDP and Beyond: Measuring Progress in a Changing World.” Indicator work on consumption and production goes back decades, with the famous IPAT formula a key historical marker.

One important contribution of the 10 Year Framework of Programs could be through an international program which consolidates this work, knowledge and expertise, taking into account the differentiated needs, responsibilities and capacities of countries and regions in identify and developing appropriate measures.

One of the ongoing needs of sustainability practitioners, researchers and policymakers continually raised over the years is for relevant and reliable indicators and measures of sustainable production and consumption, especially for assessing progress towards that objective, from the household and community level to the national, regional and global. Much work has already been done within and outside the UN system, from the work on Pressure-State-Response to the development of ecological footprint and national well-being indicators. A valuable result of a new UN program on Indicators and Measurement for Sustainable Production and Consumption, drawing on previous and current research and practice, as well as sponsoring and coordinating new research and development, would be the consolidation, distribution and promotion of knowledge and expertise with consideration to national and regional needs, concerns and capacities.
Program 5

Partnership for Common Knowledge on SPC
Clearinghouse Program to Make Information on SPC Accessible to Everyone

Need

An enormous amount of research papers, theoretical articles, databases, books, videos and other sources of information and knowledge about sustainable production and consumption is continually being generated throughout the world. This information is extremely important to practitioners, yet there is no centralized or easily accessible source to find this information.

Approach

A basic bibliography of important articles and books on sustainable production and consumption could be produced and made available online, made more useful through search functions drawing on an extensive subject and author index. This bibliography could be the foundation upon which to build a more extensive online knowledge base of information on sustainable production and consumption topics.

A number of key research agencies and organizations and academic institutions could collaborate as partners in conducting the necessary literature searches, database development, search functions and translations.
Program 6

Global Stakeholder Dialogues on Sustainable Production and Consumption

A series of multi-stakeholder dialogues addressing the key issues of concern

Need

There is a strong need for local, national, regional and global dialogues among the major stakeholders on production/consumption topics and issues of concern. These dialogues represent an essential element in encouraging and coordinating cooperation and collaboration among these groups, especially where interests, objectives, methods and definitions may differ. “Sustainable consumption and production” is not an ideology specified, directed and enforced from above, but represents a broad field of differentiated interests, perspectives, capacities, understandings and approaches in changing the ways we produce and consume goods and services.

The need for dialogue is essential, not in developing consensus results in generalizations and platitudes that mask critical differences among stakeholders, but in identifying areas of agreement as well as differences in priorities, objectives, and recommendations for policymaking and investment of resources.

Approach

This program represents a partnership among UN agencies, governments, and Major Groups representing trade unions, women, indigenous peoples, local authorities, business and industry, farmers, youth, science and technology, and non-governmental organizations. These groups will work together in consultation with governments and civil society groups to develop an agenda of critical topics and questions that need to be addressed in the immediate term and coming years.

These topics will be explored in a series of multistakeholder dialogues held at the UN and various international and regional meetings and events, with the objective of identifying common aims and understandings as well as critical differences in interests and viewpoints among the stakeholder groups, with attention to regional and other perspectives. One of the objectives of these dialogues is to identify key research questions which can be directed to the SPC Research Program for further consideration, comment and exploration.
Endnotes


16 Ibid: para 3.
19 United Nations (1992). Agenda 21, §3.4
20 Agenda 21, §4.17(b)
34 IISD, Oslo Roundtable on Sustainable Production and Consumption, www.iisd.ca/consume/oslo000.html
42 Ibid: para 18.
43 Ibid: para 34.
46 Ibid: para 38.
48 Ibid: v-vi


55 NGO Caucus on Sustainable Production and Consumption (1997) “Preparations for UNGASS.”


61 This joins the original Brundtland Commission report's emphasis on “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” and the 1995 Summit on Social Development’s definition as “the framework for our efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people” involving the interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of economic development, social development and environmental protection.

62 The NGO SPAC Caucus and International Coalition for Sustainable Production and Consumption (ICSPAC) lobbied especially for a 10-year work program on sustainable production and consumption.


64 Press release, “Governments and business urged to launch strategies for sustainable consumption and production beyond Kyoto,” 22 November 2006, Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production.

65 This revision of the original WSSD mandate, which calls for programs supporting regional and national initiatives, is reflected on the official UN Marrakech Process website, where the JPOI mandate is incorrectly quoted in its referral “towards a global framework of action on sustainable consumption and production” -- which is actually nowhere in the JPOI.


71 OECD (2002). Indicators to measure decoupling of environmental pressure from economic growth. SG/SD (16 May, 2002); OECD (2003). Environmental indicators: Development, measurement and use.
