

# earthsummit2012

## Summary of responses of Major Groups to Secretary General's Questionnaire for Rio+20

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**STAKEHOLDER  
FORUM**

## INTRODUCTION

This paper is a synthesis analysis of all submissions from Major Groups to the UN Secretariat for UNCSD 2012, or 'Rio+20'.

This synthesis report is published to enable governments to better understand the submissions made by Major Groups. All analysis has been undertaken by Stakeholder Forum, all interpretations are Stakeholder Forum's, therefore any perceived misinterpretations are those of Stakeholder Forum.

## PARTICIPATING GROUPS

Access Initiative (TAI), European Students Forum (AEGEE), Assemblée des Chambres Françaises de Commerce et d'Industrie (ACFCI), Association 4D (A4D), Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC), Baha'I International (Baha'I), Belgian Federal Council For Sustainable Development (FCSD), Major Groups, Brazilian Forum (MGBrazF), Earth Partners Foundation (EPF), European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils (EEAC), European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), France - Helio International (FHI), Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Integrative Strategies Forum (ISF), International Centre of Comparative Environmental Law (CIDCE), International Council for Science (ICSU), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), One Earth (1E), Stakeholder Forum for a sustainable future (SF)<sup>1</sup>, Sustainable Development Commission (SDC), Water Culture (WC), Women Major Group (WMG), World Aquarium and Conservation for the Oceans Foundation (WACOF), World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO), WSPA, WWF International, Youth and Children Major Group (YChMG)

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<sup>1</sup> Stakeholder Forum's comments do not express their own opinions but those of UK stakeholders who contributed to a UK consultation in relation to the questionnaire for the Secretary General's Report. The same is the case for the Sustainable Development Commission, who conducted a multi-stakeholder dialogue in Edinburgh.

## GREEN ECONOMY IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ERADICATION

The following issues were raised and policy recommendations put forward in relation to the Green Economy in the context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication

<b>Carrying Capacity and Ecological Limits</b> - Living within the carrying capacity of the Earth, recognition of the achievement of basic needs and livelihoods within ecological limits, and a move away from economic expansion, especially in developed nations, under a framework of contraction and convergence guaranteeing geopolitical stability	One Earth, Stakeholder Forum, EPF
<b>Valuation of ecosystems and natural resources</b>	NRDC, EPF
<b>Recognition of risks associated with valuation of ecosystems</b> , and the potential for bias towards particular sectors	Brazilian Forum
<b>Support of sustainable agricultural systems that respect animal welfare</b> , transition to organic agriculture in developed and developing nations	NRDC, WSPA, GEN, ITUC
<b>Sustainable management of natural resources across all sectors</b> – including land and water management, energy and renewable energy, sustainable construction, clean transport, resource efficiency	One Earth, SF, EEAC, ISF
<b>Sustainable production and consumption</b> , including the reorientation of marketing instruments towards sustainable lifestyles	Stakeholder Forum
<b>Defining new macro and micro economic metrics and models</b> based on ecological economics, taking a holistic approach	NRDC, 1E, SF, SDC
<b>Tax, incentives and regulation</b> – rigorously enforced environmental laws, taxation based on environmental impact, personal carbon quotas	Stakeholder Forum
<b>'Triple bottom line' measurements of progress</b> – economic output, environmental impact and social development	SF, One Earth
<b>Tackling poverty and unfair distribution</b> – allowing a green economy to serve the interests of the poor, recognition of the connection between ever-increasing wealth and environmental destruction	1E, ACFCI, EPF
<b>Education</b> – focusing on enhancing awareness of and understanding of sustainable development, foster education actions that are guided by the principle ethical enterprise, promote education at all levels and skills partnerships	Brazilian Forum, SF, ICSU
<b>Ethical enterprise</b> - business and the private sector should recognize responsibilities to deliver a green economy, recognizing ethics in production processes, provision of incentives for companies and consumers to engage in sustainable consumption and production	Brazilian Forum, IGES, SF
<b>Reappraising the 'three pillars' approach to sustainable development</b> – social and economic pillars as subsets rather than complements to environmental foundation	EPF
<b>Enhancing resilience</b> – strategies for a green economy should be part of	EEAC, One

a more general strategy to promote resilience	Earth
<b>Inequality and inequity</b> – green economy should aim to reduce inequality and inequity, including intergenerational equity and the guaranteeing of resources for future generations	SF, EEAC
<b>Green jobs</b> – the creation of decent green jobs should be a major objective of the green economy	ITUC
<b>Just Transition</b> – a transition to a green economy will involve some winners and some losers, as jobs and methods of production will change. As economies pass through retrenchment it is possible that many jobs will be lost and there is no guarantee that a green-based economy will provide sufficient replacement jobs (despite the obvious opportunities in this area). Processes and policies must be in place to minimize social impacts and protect and support those affected	ITUC, EEAC, Stakeholder Forum
<b>Internalization of environmental externalities</b> , allowing higher security in investments, priced through taxes, negotiable quotas and mandatory regulations	ACFCI, ITUC, WMG, WSPA
<b>International Currency Transaction Tax</b> – also known as the Robin Hood Tax, Tobin Tax	ETUC, ITUC
<b>Global regulation of the financial sector</b> , including the abolition of tax havens and adopting a 100% reserve in the banking sector as opposed to the current fractional reserve banking system	ITUC, ETUC, One Earth
<b>Tax reform</b> to change the taxation base from jobs and investments to natural resource use and pollution e.g. carbon tax –	ACFCI, SF, 1E, WMG
<b>Beyond GDP</b> - Overcoming or reconsidering GDP as wealth or success indicator	WWF, IGES, SF, ITUC, SDC, ISF
<b>Public policies, regulations and interventions that enable sustainable business, lifestyles and choices</b> and help to remove unsustainable choices from the market place – feed-in tariff, eliminating subsidies that result in environmental damage and biodiversity loss, providing affordable retrofitting opportunities, assisting small and medium enterprises to adapt to the green economy and disseminating good practices, eco-labeling and certification.	ACFCI, IGES, WWF, One Earth, Stakeholder Forum, WMG
<b>Customs duties</b> to prevent from unfair competition due to lower environmental regulations in exporting countries	ACFCI
<b>Public sector stimulus</b> for the green economy, including green public procurement	ITUC, WMG, 1E, WSPA
<b>Reforming international institutions to advance the green economy</b> – including reform of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) so that it serves to promote fair and sustainable trade, as well as World Bank and IMF reform to 'green' development and protect the most vulnerable	One Earth, ETUC, ITUC
<b>Polluter pays principle</b> and 'extended producer responsibility principles to be mainstreamed	EPF, GEN
<b>Fostering eco-innovation</b> as well as community-led initiatives	ACFCI, SF, GEN

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE

<b>Convention on Principle 10 of Rio Declaration</b> – an outcome of Rio+20 should be the agreement to establish a global Treaty on Principle 10, building on and learning lessons from the Aarhus Convention –	TAI, SF, WRI
<b>Strengthening of international environmental law and UNEP</b> – strengthened international laws on the environment are necessary, with associated judicial institutions to monitor and enforce multilateral environmental agreements, and with an enhanced role and mandate for UNEP	The Access Initiative
<b>Synergies and coordination</b> – achieving sustainable development requires synergized and coordinated governance. This requires enhancing synergies across international environmental institutions and clustering Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), which can also cut costs, enhance efficiency, ensure better transfer of knowledge, information and promote synergies implementation. UNEP can play an important role at this level, as well as in synergizing environmental activities across a range of UN agencies and civic groups, as well as catalyzing multi-country action	WWF, IGES, CIDCE
<b>International Court for the Environment (ICE)</b> – an international court for the environment should be established to deal with questions and disputes of International Environmental Law	ICE Coalition, Stakeholder Forum
<b>Governance at multiple levels and across sectors</b> – capacity building for collective decision-making at the local level is critical, to promote feelings of solidarity within local communities. Improved cooperation across national government, private sector and universities can also help to enhance capacity building	Bahai, IGES
<b>Assessment criteria</b> – success of sustainable development governance to be assessed by specific criteria, including integrated arrangements, mechanisms, capacity building and engagement	SDC
<b>Strengthening Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD)</b> – stronger mandate for promoting sustainable development across economic sectors, international agencies and the UN family (including the World Bank and IMF)	ETUC, CIDCE, Stakeholder Forum
<b>Establishment of a World Environment Organisation (WEO)</b> – a significantly 'upgraded' UNEP	Stakeholder Forum
<b>Inter-Ministerial Dialogue and Collaboration</b> - ministries often work on dedicated portfolios. Unclear mandates, low accountability, competition for funds, conflicting interests, the absence of institutional mechanisms for joint work and collaboration, also reflected in the UN system. WMG propose the French <i>Grenelle de l'environnement</i> as an example of coordination and enhancement of environmental commitments	WWF, WMG
<b>Stronger, credible and accessible science base</b> with greater capacity to interact creatively with other parts of the UN system, inform the great number of separate multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and to support capacity development on environmental matters in developing countries and other member states	ACFCI, CIDCE, ETUC
<b>Redefine sustainable development to reflect the profound</b>	EPF.

<b>interconnectedness of three inextricably inter-related aspects:</b> environmental sustainability, social justice and spiritual fulfillment, acknowledging the opportunity of indigenous societies to help the so called developed world to evolve	
<b>Strengthen Sustainable Development Councils as an organizational form</b> , emphasizing the local level and making use of the Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool	EEAC
<b>Non-financial strengthening of institutions</b> - further resources should be committed by national governments, but it should be possible to strengthen existing international institutions by non-financial measures such as strengthening their mandates, streamlining their internal governance and procedures, or merging, combined with the more efficient use of financial resources	IGES
<b>Enforcement</b> – there is a clear lack of enforcement of international sustainable development commitments, compared to trade rules and regulations through the WTO. The International Court of Justice could be given compulsory jurisdiction on matters concerning SD. The expansion the mandate of the UN Security Council, by including environmental issues and their security related issues	YChMG
<b>Alternative indices and measurements</b> - ISF calls for the adoption by countries of different integrative sustainability indices, such as Bhutan’s measure of national happiness or their ecological footprint. ICSU proposes the use of WWF’s Living Planet Index, UNEP’s Natural Capital Index and Eurostat’s Environmental Pressure Indicators. One Earth calls for a global index measuring human and ecosystem wellbeing rather than economic growth as an end goal	ISF, ICSU, One Earth
<b>Governments are guarantors of the public good</b> , playing a central role in changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns. They should therefore set strict ecological and social boundaries along which a market economy should function, as opposed to a laissez-faire approach. Values such as transparency and participation need to be upheld to allow citizens to engage in decision making	One Earth
<b>Convergence of three pillars</b> – lack of balance in addressing all three pillars simultaneously is due to interest groups succeeding in overemphasizing any one of them at the expense of the other two (IGES). Furthermore, environmental concerns often come in second to economic concerns (NRDC, WWF and GEN). In all discussions the social pillar is often marginalized (A4D)	IGES, NRDC, WWF, GEN, A4D
<b>Civil society and community action</b> - give more responsibility to civil society groups that are active on environmentally relevant information, looking at the Transition Towns approach as a good model	IGES, EPF, SDC
<b>Women</b> - emphasizing the full involvement and engagement of girls and women	Baha’I, WMG

## EMERGING ISSUES

<b>Risk of Conflict</b> - if the move towards a green economy and sustainable development does not happen at this crucial point in time, the risk of global conflict will increase considerably. If a response to climate change is left unresolved, more and more parts of the world will become uninhabitable, and issues of food and water security will become an increasing challenge	Stakeholder Forum
<b>Increased natural disasters</b> , biodiversity loss, climate change, ecosystem degradation, food crisis, water scarcity, energy scarcity and wasteful patterns of consumption and production	All groups
<b>Global financial crisis</b> - The current global economic climate risks international commitments on the green economy not to be matched with the needed resources for implementation, due to increasing competition for funds. Furthermore, the current focus on rebuilding 'old' economies to recover from the financial crisis may distract efforts toward building a new green economy -	SF, SDC
<b>Cooperation needed to save the planet, not competition</b> - the discourse on the green economy might adopt the principles of the current economic model which is preoccupied with the potential 'loss of competitiveness'. Cooperation is needed to save the planet, not competition	Stakeholder Forum
<b>Lack of or insufficient real political will or leadership</b> – to take forward necessary changes to achieve sustainable development	TAI, GEN, ETUC, FHI, CIDCE, ICSU, NRDC, SDC, WMG, WWF, YChMG
<b>Population stabilisation</b> – political commitment is required to make this happen due to pressure on natural resources, as combined with increasing consumption	GEN, YCHMG
<b>Private versus public power</b> - the current conflicts of interest between the private sector, communities and individual citizens must be addressed	Stakeholder Forum and EPF
<b>Risk of rising levels of migration</b> , coupled with increasing unwillingness of countries to accept new migrants	CIDCE, Baha'I
<b>Growing levels of national debt</b> , limiting countries' ability to make decisions and act in a timely and effective manner	Baha'I
<b>Increasing individuality</b> , loss of strong communities and lack of community building, more and more people give their attention to their own groups rather than rely upon Governments or others	EPF, Baha'I
<b>Ecosystem collapse</b> through chronic poisoning of planetary systems	EPF
<b>Increasing affluence</b> across formerly developing countries leading to increasing consumption, especially in Asia-Pacific	IGES
<b>Evolution of 'Green Collar Institutes'</b> in every country, to lead on planetary protection	EPF
<b>Education</b> - introduction of 'eco-literacy' as core curriculum in schools, greater funding needed for science and education to create a scientific culture among an educated society at all stages of development	EPF, IGES

<b>Land struggles</b> as a result of large scale acquisitions and differing approaches to growth and development, conflict in countries that lack basic infrastructure	WMG
<b>Failure to account</b> for the value of natural resources and ecosystems in government and business decision making and investment	WWF
<b>'Addiction' to economic growth</b> , whilst policies should be turning to economic security rather than growth as an ultimate priority and objective	EPF, ISF, WWF
<b>National Sustainable Development Strategies</b> and similar tools must be given a much higher political/policy priority and allocations in the national budgets	ICSU
<b>Fair governance of globalization</b> as opposite to today's market fundamentalism, fostering social dimension and decent works	ITUC
<b>Move away from nationally focused bipartisan interests</b> on areas such as the economy, instead being based on global community issues in the long term development	NRDC
<b>Transportation</b> remains a huge and increasing challenge, especially with regards to the movement of goods between cities and rural areas	SF
<b>Phasing out subsidies</b> for the fossil fuel industry	SF

## POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FROM UNCSD 2012

<b>A compromise to a new world status</b> similar to that of the Club de Rome report in 1972	A4D
<b>A North-South</b> agreement about access to the new development	A4D
<b>Starting a negotiation process with the International Labour Organization</b> in order to set the social protection bases	A4D, ITUC
<b>An increased sense of urgency</b> and 'war-time' like drive to shift immediately to a sustainable system of living based on ecological principles	EPF
Concrete target for scaling up the initiatives related to green & decent jobs	ITUC
<b>A capitalization of the enthusiasm captured by green economy</b> in a way that reinvigorates global commitment to sustainable development, therefore pushing green economic development to the top of the economic development agenda while addressing significant obstacles to poverty eradication	WWF, YCHMG
<b>Adoption of new measures</b> progress beyond GDP across all States	WWF
<b>Setting a global price</b> for GHG emissions	YChMG
<b>Establishing steady, sufficient flow of technical and financial aid</b> to developing countries	YChMG