

Commission on Sustainable Development
Nineteenth session
2-13 May 2011
Item 3 of the provisional agenda
Thematic cluster for the implementation cycle
2010-2011 (policy session)

Policy options and actions for expediting progress in
implementation: interlinkages and cross-cutting issues

Report of the Secretary-General

¹ E/CN.17/2011/1.

Summary:

Strong interlinkages and interlocking relationships among the five issues exist in this thematic cluster. Policies and measures aimed at one issue may have co-benefits for other issues and should therefore be considered through an integrated approach in order to achieve long-term progress. Risk assessment and risk reduction are relevant for both chemicals and hazardous waste management. Over transport connects nerve centres of economic activity and human population, with high relevance to transportation of chemicals, minerals and waste. Significant adjustments to policies and management practices will be needed in all these four sectors to shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns. Such interlinkages are highlighted in the present report with a view to developing a menu of policy options and measures of optimal

9. Energy is another important link across this

14. Owing to their small size and their geological, topographical and climatic conditions, small island developing States (SIDS) are a group of countries which are faced with major constraints in terms of the quantity and quality of freshwater resources. This is particularly true of low-lying coral islands, where groundwater supplies are limited and protected only by a thin, permeable soil. Thus, contamination of water supplies by improper waste disposal or management of agricultural chemicals poses a particular problem for SIDS. Likewise, the dependence of their economies on marine resources and coastal tourism means that marine waste – whether from local land-based activities, transported across the seas or originating from ships – also poses a threat to local economies.

15. The Pacific Hydrological Cycle Observing System was established in 2007 to build the capacity and infrastructure of Pacific small island developing States. A Resource Book and a Handbook on Integrated Water Resources Management in Small Island Developing States, which gather input and experience from SIDS in the Caribbean, the Pacific and the AIMS Region, will be published by UNEP in 2011.

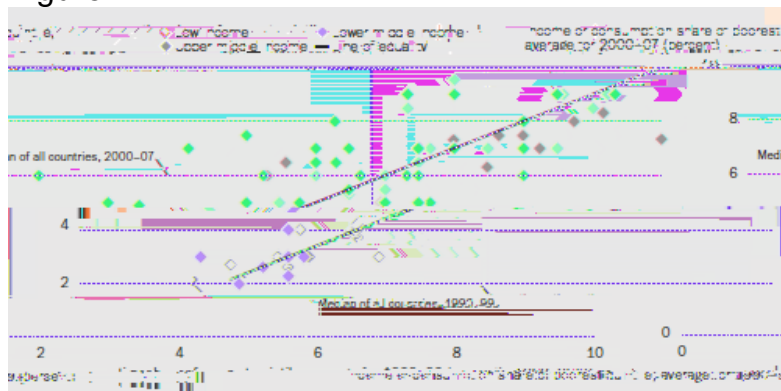
III. Cross-cutting issues

16. A key challenge for the future is how to maintain upward convergence of living standards together with downward convergence (or shrinkage) of ecological footprints.

17. Current unsustainable use of natural resources at a global level is endangering not only the state of the environment, essential ecosystem services and biodiversity, but also human health and well-being of present and future generations. It is, therefore, necessary to change consumption and production patterns in order to address challenges of poverty eradication, long-term food security, climate change and biodiversity loss. The sustainable consumption and production agenda is very broad, but resource and energy efficiency improvements are at its heart. It also includes measures to improve safe management of chemicals and hazardous waste as well as to minimize waste and maximize recycling, and to support sustainable mining practices and sustainable transport systems.

18. The poorest 20 percent of the population accounts for just 6 percent of total income or consumption. Since 1990 that share has increased most in low-income countries but it has tended to shrink in upper middle-income countries. (See Figure 2). It is necessary that consumers in developed countries and wealthy consumers everywhere take the lead in moving towards sustainable patterns of consumption. Production systems also need to move towards sustainable patterns of resource use with reduced pollution and waste. Developed country enterprises chart the way forward, supporting their suppliers and partners around the world with technology and know how.

Figure 2



Source: World Development Indicators 2010, World Bank

19. Enhancing human and social capital through education and inclusive social participation, cost-effective, reliable and affordable infrastructure services including sustainable transport, strengthening sound management of chemicals as well as hazardous and solid waste by emphasizing prevention and managing natural resources in an integrated and holistic manner will result in development that will benefit the overall prosperity of society. This also requires strengthening an enabling environment for implementation including through participatory decision-making by all stakeholders including women, access to finance and global and regional markets, improving educational opportunities and adequate access to information available to experts but also to the general public in order to minimize health and injury risks from chemicals, waste, mining and transport.

20. All five current themes relate to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Thus, sound management of chemicals can reduce child mortality (Goal 4) and improve maternal health (Goal 5). Annually more than 3 million children under 5 years die from preventable environment-related causes. Elimination of the use of mercury in health care and consumer products, moving away from solid indoor fuels, use of insecticide treated bed nets, improved water and sanitation systems, traffic slowing measures and a host of other interventions successfully reduce children's environmental related deaths and suffering in many countries. Therefore, a global plan for action has been called for by the WHO Third International Conference on Children's Health and Environment, to be developed by WHO and UNEP.

21. Sound management of chemicals lead to improved human and environmental health, increased economic security, and income opportunities. UNEP has joined forces with UNDP in a partnership aimed at integrating the sound management of chemicals into development plans such as poverty reduction strategy papers and strategies to meet the MDGs. This involves establishing the

⁹ <http://www.ceh2009.org>

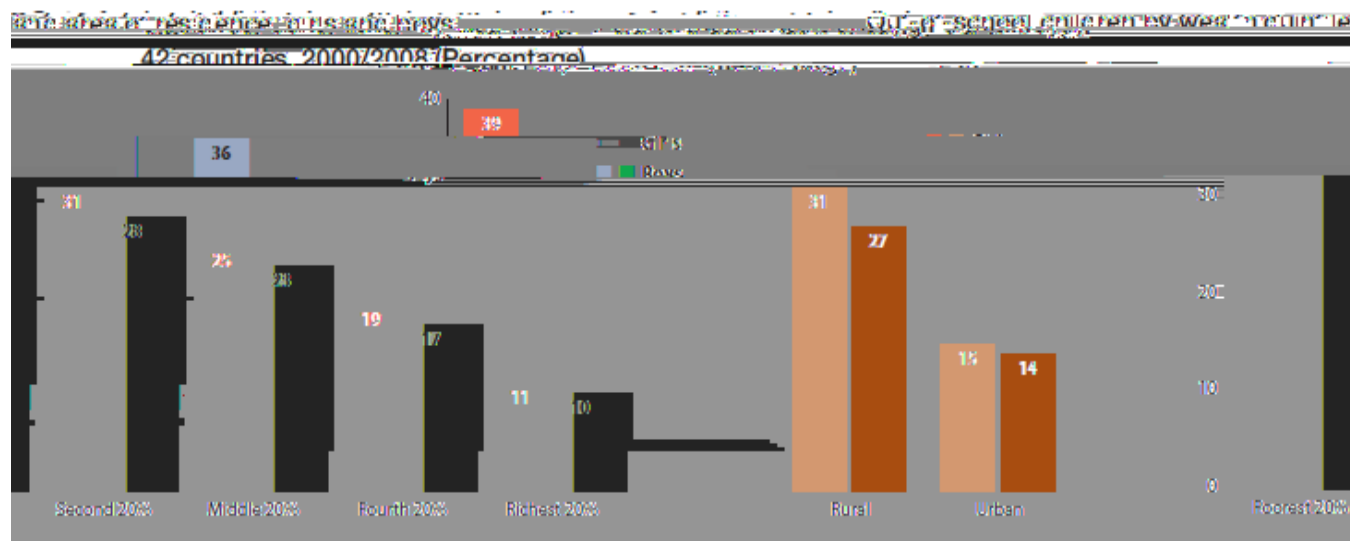
links between poverty and sound chemicals management and identifying the policies and programmes needed to bring about pro-poor chemicals management. It also entails looking at potential chemical risks arising from the implementing sections of the development plans, aiming to mitigate such risks at the planning stage.

22. Waste management especially the part connected to sanitation and safe drinking water contributes to environmental sustainability (Goal 7).

23. The small island developing States face particular problems of waste in view of their low environmental and socio-economic carrying capacities. Current waste management practices have resulted in degradation of coral reefs, seagrass beds,

of girls enrolled in schools is lower. Schools may be hard to reach, and many households prefer to fund the transport cost for boys to attend schools

Figure 3



Source: MDG report 2010

27. Statistical analysis of the relationshi

Figure 5



Source: Trends Report DESA/DSD, New York 2010

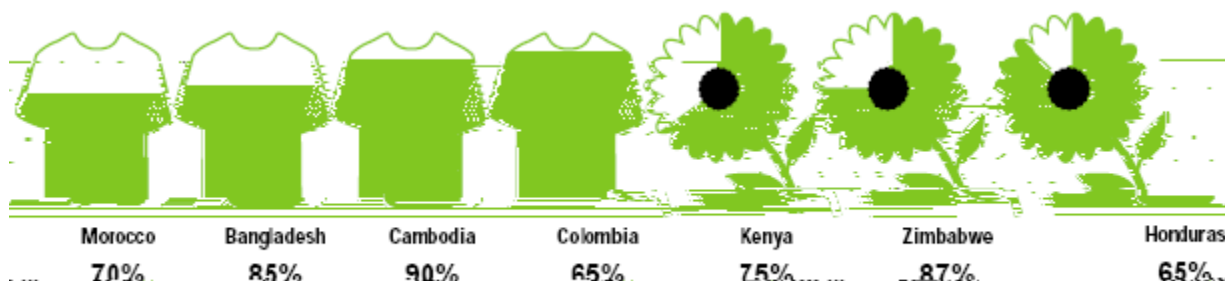
29. Volume of transport matters most to economic activity but transport mix is as important for the environment. Developing countries now account for the majority of greenhouse gas emissions from electricity and as well as industry, while developed countries still account for a majority of emissions in the transport and building use sectors.¹⁵ Switching to more sustainable modes of transport in developed countries thus has a larger immediate potential to contribute to climate change mitigation in particular and pollution reduction generally. In future, most private transport growth will be in developing countries, so they too will need to stimulate rapid growth of public and other low-emissions transport.

30. SCP also contributes to poverty eradication and development in a number of ways. For example, greater efficiency in resource use and re

37. Gender is another important cross-cutting issue, which interlinks the five themes. For example, women tend to leave a smaller ecological footprint than men due to their more sustainable consumption patterns. Men's lifestyles and consumer patterns, whether they are rich or poor, tend to be more resource-intensive and less sustainable than women's (Johnsson-Latham, 2006). Impressing a more feminine footprint would result in a smaller impact on the environment. Women are more likely to recycle, buy organic food and eco-labelled products and place a higher value on energy-efficient transport. They make more ethical consumer choices, pay closer attention to issues including child labour and sustainable livelihoods and are more likely to buy socially labelled

Figure 6

Women as share of total workers in Export Production of Clothing and Flowers



Source Gender and Sustainable Development, OECD, 2008

41. Governments can promote more sustainable corporate behaviour through supporting sustainability reporting systems and international instruments. Some countries such as France and Sweden are moving to make reporting mandatory. More companies are now publishing corporate sustainability reports to inform consumers and other stakeholders of their environmental and social values and practices at home and abroad. While the CSR approach to promoting sustainable production – focused on large multinational corporations – is gaining ground, it is only gradually trickling down to small- and medium-scale enterprises along global supply chains. Many goods are still produced using underpaid child or female labour, environmentally-damaging processes or neglecting basic health and safety rules. On the positive side, multinational companies are increasingly being held accountable for the production impacts of their suppliers, including the environmental, safety and health, and worker rights dimensions. No international codes of conduct are addressing reporting and monitoring of how a company's product range supports sustainable production along the global supply chain.

42. Education is another important cross-cutting issue, especially in the area of consumption and production patterns. Rethinking and revising formal and informal education from pre-school to university to include more principles, knowledge, skills, perspectives and values related to sustainable consumption is important now and in the future. Value changes and changes in world views generally occur only gradually, so what is done by way of education today may only show tangible benefits some time in the future.

43. One recent commentary highlights the challenges facing educators and education in the coming decades, noting: "... we need educational culture and practice adequate

holistic and comprehensive manner. It aims to develop a policy framework for resource efficiency, with a view to decoupling economic growth from resource use and environmental impacts throughout the product life cycle. The 10 YFP can allow for coordination and cooperation between new and existing initiatives on SCP, as well as provide a platform for sharing, replicating and scaling up good practices, and supporting the development of policy partnerships and capacity building to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production. The programmes for the 10YFP, which could emerge from CSD19, could focus on key SCP policies and cross-cutting programmes as well as programmes specific to given stages of the life cycle. Programmes could be envisaged for inclusion on the current themes of waste management, transport, chemicals and mining.

IV. Means of implementation

46. Over the past two years, the world has witnessed the emergence of multiple global crises related to food, fuel and finance. Instability in energy and commodities markets, global food shortages and water scarcity have, most recently, been overshadowed by a financial and economic crisis whose recessionary impacts continue to be felt in many parts of the world. Adding to the situation's complexity is climate change, a phenomenon that is exacerbating the impact of these crises. The effects are felt worldwide and have specific implications for the achievement of sustainable development and the MDGs. While it is clear that the international community and national governments face multiple and serious challenges, the situation also presents genuine opportunities to make a dramatic shift from "business as usual".²⁷

47. The world economy is recovering from severe downturn, but the recovery is still very fragile and uneven. The global jobs crisis has not subsided, as can be seen from persistent high unemployment rates in the major developed countries and increased rates of underemployment and vulnerable employment in many developing countries.

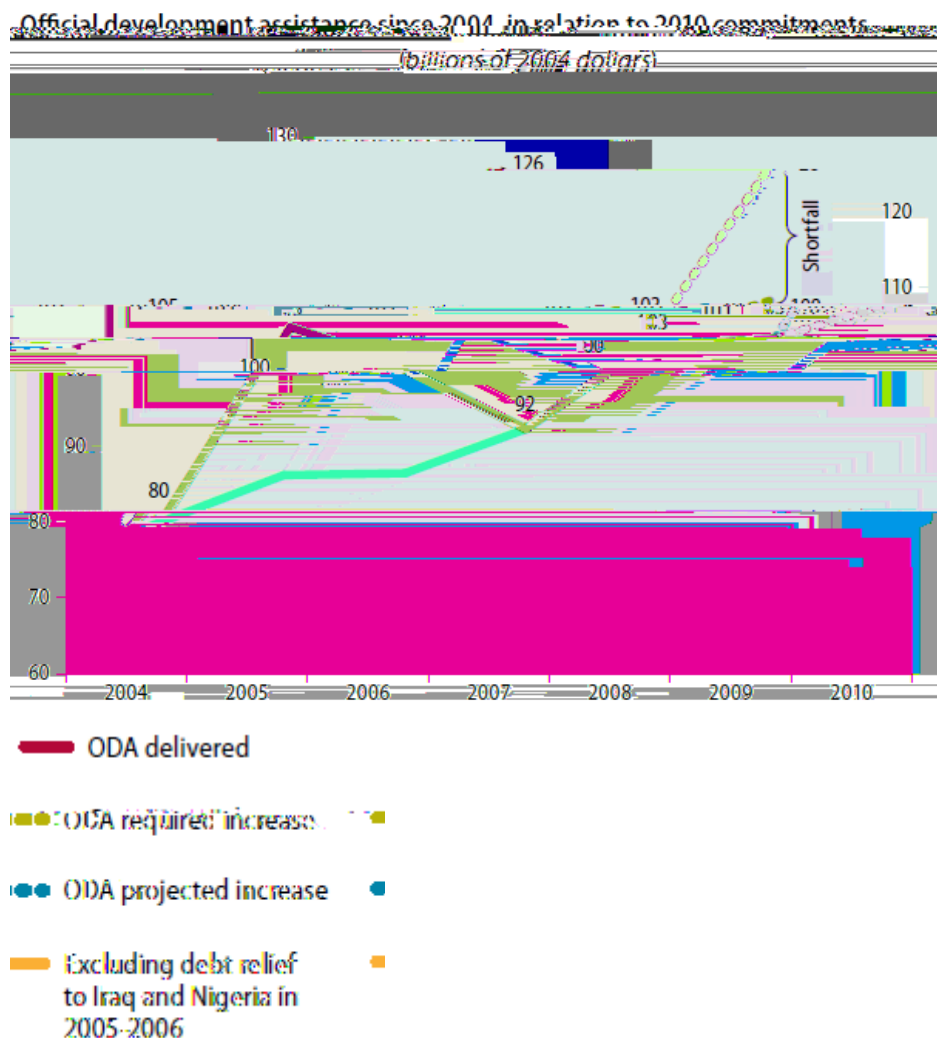
48. The perceived need among many donor countries to start fiscal consolidation sooner rather than later could add resource availability under further pressure at a juncture where sustained support to progress on the MDGs is crucial. The prospect of concluding a development-oriented Doha Round in the near future still seems highly uncertain. Improved access to new technologies has become increasingly pressing, especially those technologies necessary for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

49. Based on the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) secretariat's preliminary estimates for 2009 and its review of aid budgets for 2010, DAC members as a whole were not on track to meet the 2010 aid volume targets (see Figure 1). Indeed, OECD has projected that total

²⁷ See UNEP/GCSS.XI/10/Add.1, 14 Dec. 2009.

ODA in 2010 will fall \$18 billion short (in 2004 prices and exchange rates) of the updated Gleneagles target. Translated into recent 2009 prices, the shortfall is \$20 billion. No intermediate targets have been adopted for the years after 2010, leaving the United Nations target as the remaining applicable benchmark, against which the delivery gap in 2009 is \$153 billion.²⁸

Figure 7



Source: MDG Gap Task Report 2010

50. The global financial and economic crisis increased the need for many developing countries to secure substantial additional quick-disbursing financial support. The international community responded with substantially increased funding and reform of multilateral financial facilities. In the case of the IMF, in January 2010, countries that qualified to draw concessional resources were given enlarged access to a simplified set of

²⁸ MDG Gap Task Report 2010

facilities. Multilateral development banks also sharply boosted lending in the face of the crisis. In particular, the International Development Association of the World Bank committed \$14 billion in loans in 2009, a 20 per cent increase over 2008²⁹.

51. Delivery on aid targets for LDCs has been disappointing. The most recent data show the overall DAC ODA effort to be 0.09 per cent of donor GNI in 2008, well below the lower bound target of 0.15 per cent³⁰. Due to persistent calls to scale up, aid to Africa has been growing significantly, but not enough to meet the Gleneagles target. To meet that target, Africa's ODA in 2009 would have had to exceed \$61 billion.

52. Two other groups of countries, small island developing States (SIDS) and landlocked least developed countries (LLDC), require special developmental attention. According to OECD data, SIDS received almost \$4 billion in ODA in 2008, an amount that has grown relatively slowly over the past decade (3.2 per cent annually, on average, in 2008 prices and exchange rates). LLDCs received almost \$25 billion in ODA in 2008, reflecting an increase of 9 per cent annually since 2000 due to the fact that Ethiopia and Afghanistan are in this group as the second and third largest aid recipients in the world³¹.

53. The most recent comprehensive survey of the implementation of the Paris principles—national ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability – has shown that, of 12 numerical targets contained in the Paris Declaration, the target of signing and coordinating 50 per cent of technical assistance projects with country programmes had been achieved in 2007. Donors had also made good progress towards the goal of untied aid. Further, from 2005 to 2008, developing countries had made good progress in improving their public financial management systems (36 per cent of countries had improved their score for public financial management, against a target of at least 50 per cent). Yet, much less progress had been made towards the remaining targets, in particular regarding the use of local country systems, the predictability of aid flows and the reduction of the transaction costs of providing aid.³²

54. Another focus of attention has been ODA transparency. Lack of relevant and timely information on aid flows impedes the ability of Governments to plan, budget and evaluate the impact of aid in their countries. Together with governmental financial transparency, ODA transparency strengthens domestic accountability and the participation of citizens, let alone parliaments, in decisions about programmes and projects, and also facilitates holding Governments to account for development results.

55. A need for mutual accountability is also very important, but according to data available, by the end of 2009, only seven countries had established fully functioning

²⁹ See OECD, "Development aid rose in 2009 and donors will meet 2010 aid targets," 14 April 2010

³⁰ MDG Gap Task Report

³¹ Ibid

³² OECD, 2008 Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration: Making Aid More Effective by 2010, Paris, OECD, 2008

mutual accountability mechanisms³³ and resultant changes in provider behaviour have been uneven. Country-level experiences³⁴ show that national aid policies and joint performance frameworks can help improve mutual accountability

56. Regarding south-south cooperation, Governments of developing and transition economies that inform the OECD of their aid effort reported about \$9.6 billion of assistance in 2008. Governments of transition economies in Eastern Europe provided over \$800 million, and Turkey provided almost that amount. While this accounts for only about 10 per cent of DAC bilateral aid, the volume has been growing strongly. For example, the flow of aid grew by almost half in constant prices and exchange rates from 2006 to 2008. In addition, it appears that roughly at least another \$2 billion has been provided by non-reporting countries, primarily by China but with substantial aid also having been provided by India and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Significant contributions in aid have also been made by Brazil, Nigeria and South Africa. Furthermore, despite the strain of the global financial and economic crisis on many of these providers, it is likely that total contributions rose again in 2009. If pledges are kept, it is thought that aid flows could reach \$15 billion in 2010³⁵.

57. Our current economic model is consumption-led, production-driven, and GDP-measured. It has clearly improved

production practices reduce resource use and result in less pollution. Likewise, spurring demand for more sustainable products through the promotion of sustainable consumption can create new markets for businesses adopting sustainable production practices, resulting in increased revenue streams and new jobs.

59. Industries producing basic materials such as iron and steel, chemicals, cement, aluminium, and pulp and paper—are among the most energy-intensive industries. It may be difficult to regard these heavy industries as potentially “green.” However, reducing their environmental impact, and especially their carbon footprint, is a critical task. Increased use of secondary materials rather than raw materials offers substantial energy savings. Equally, transport, which is vital for daily economic activities is a source for many environmental, economic and social costs. These include congestion, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, resource depletion, damage to human health and well-being through air pollution, noise, and traffic accidents.

60. Concerns have been raised in various international fora, and in particular in the context of the CSD and preparatory work for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, that green economy measures adopted unilaterally or differentially could lead to pressures for green trade protectionism, possibly in the form of green standards, subsidies, and border tax measures.

61. On the other hand, a transition to a green economy can present trade opportunities for developing as well as developed countries in certain economic sectors. Brazil, for example, has a strong comparative advantage in bio-ethanol. Examples of such opportunities include the rapidly growing global markets for organic agriculture and biodiversity-based products that can create both economic and environmental benefits. Moreover, trade financing and trade facilitation may play an important role in assisting developing countries to access global markets for green goods and services. It is essential to explore the linkages between trade and green economy to ensure that the multilateral trade system can foster freer trade in environmentally sound technologies and products, improved market access for developing countries, and technology transfer from developed to developing countries, whilst also avoiding green protectionism.

Trade can play a critical role as a connector between sustainable production and sustainable consumption, two essential aspects of a transition towards a green economy. A well functioning international trade system could foster greater access to markets for environmentally-friendly and environmentally-enhancing goods and services. Such market creation and market access have the potential to benefit all countries, developed and developing countries alike.

62. Market-driven product information tools such as voluntary labelling and standards provide one mechanism for tackling unsustainable consumption and

production patterns and practices. These tools provide information about product externalities to consumers whose willingness to pay for more sustainable products create a market incentive to producers. Standards and labelling can thus constitute a useful policy tool for governments to achieve sustainability objectives in a more flexible and acceptable manner than some forms of command-and-control regulation. With increasingly globalized supply chains, they have potential for profound influence on the global market structure and functioning. It is imperative that their wider use be accompanied by support measures to assist small-scale producers in developing countries to obtain certification at affordable costs.

63. To increase the effectiveness of consumer information tools as a global market tool for continuous environmental improvement and social progress, there is a need for a more systematic and harm

69. The Partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV) with a Clearing House housed by UNEP, was launched at the WSSD to assist developing and transitional countries to reduce vehicular air pollution through the promotion of lead-free, low sulphur fuels and cleaner, more efficient vehicles. PCFV has around 120 partners from government, civil society, the private sector, international organisations and institutions of higher learning. It has used a global - regional - national approach, in which a global consensus is first developed (for example, in respect to the importance of phasing out leaded fuel), then regional awareness-raising workshops are held, to build consensus within a region, after which the global and regional recommendations are presented at the country level.

V. Towards a Coherent and Robust Framework for Implementation of CSD-19 Decisions: possible elements

70. As is well-known, the ultimate goal of sustainable development is steady progress towards a future of universally shared human well-being and prosperity within the finite resources of the planet. Sustainable development is based on the knowledge that there is an ultimate limit to the growth of material consumption, but no limits to improvements in quality of life, prosperity or social well-being. The ultimate goal is to achieve the development transition — to raise the living standards of poor countries and households, which will need an increase in material consumption to meet their basic needs — while ensuring that critical ecosystem limits are not crossed. Accelerating growth in living standards of the poor, while decelerating or reversing the impact — in particular of high-income consumers — on the natural resources of the planet, will need to proceed in tandem. This will depend on a global decoupling of growth in economic activities (production and consumption) from the negative environmental impacts which too often accompany them.

71. Sustainable consumption and production together with poverty eradication and protecting the natural resources are at the heart of sustainable development, as the JPOI notes. The SCP agenda encompasses important aspects of the challenges in each of the thematic areas of the current CSD cycle: chemicals, waste management, transport and mining. Thus, a 10YFP on SCP can be useful in bringing coherence and coordination to initiatives aimed at improved resource efficiency, de-linking of economy and environment, and waste and pollution minimization across these as well as other themes and sectors.

72. The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) is the principal policymaking institution for sustainable development at the global level. Among other contributions, the Commission has actively solicited the participation of major groups in policymaking and promoted a particular institutional form, multi-stakeholder partnerships, to implement sustainable development.

73. The most important challenge is how to implement CSD decisions. A number of steps have been undertaken since the cycle (CSD16/17), including policy dialogues on implementation at the CSD regular sessions and follow-up from the Chairs of the previous cycles.

74. This current CSD cycle offers a unique opportunity to learn from recent experiences and build coherent programmes