World Summit for Sustainable Development

International Eminent Persons Meeting on

Inter-linkages

Strategies for bridging problems and solutions to work towards sustainable development

Working Group TWO

Summary Conclusions

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1. The World Summit for Sustainable Development should recognize that MEAs represent an evolving system and as such they constitute an on-going process. Consequently, countries should be prepared to review the present arrangements as required and to develop them further in order to respond to new scientific findings and changing socio-economic and environmental conditions.

2. The WWSD should make a strong recommendation towards universal membership in all MEAs.

3. While MEA negotiations should continue to be the responsibility of states, they should be transparent and benefit from an open participation of major groups, ensuring that they bring into the process the results of as wide as possible consultations of citizens from around the world.

4. MEAs should be considered and actively used as instruments for sustainable development, by integrating them fully into socio-economic development planning processes at all levels.

5. MEAs should also be considered as instruments for peace and security and be used to the maximum extent possible to enhance the processes in this area.

6. Contracting parties to MEAs should undertake in depth revisions of national legislation to make it compatible with MEA tenants and requirements, ensuring that the MEA enforcing mechanisms are embodied in national law and regulations.

7. The WSSD should take decisions to launch a process of clustering of the sustainable development- related conventions on the basis of the following five clusters:

   - **Cluster 1** Conventions related to biodiversity
   - **Cluster 2** Conventions related to oceans and seas
   - **Cluster 3** Conventions related to fresh water, forests and lands
   - **Cluster 4** Conventions related to the atmosphere
   - **Cluster 5** Conventions related to chemicals and hazardous wastes
8. Within each one of these clusters, in particular in the case of Cluster 1, sub-clusters should be established for groupings of regional seas conventions, river basins conventions, etc.

9. Inter-linkages and practical coordination (e.g. date of meetings) among clusters should also be considered, as appropriate.

10. Within each cluster, the following issues should be considered:

10A - Coordinated design and execution of scientific assessments and technological development and diffusion

i) scientific assessments should be independent from political bias;

ii) they should be, as much as possible, regionally based, even when they are of a global outlook; mobilizing data and expertise at the national level in order to strengthen information and capacity for decision-making at national and regional levels;

iii) assessments should be interdisciplinary and solutions oriented, and bridge the natural and social sciences, so that they are fully appropriate for sustainable development planning;

iv) assessments should serve the conventions needs at present but also be used for early warning purposes and as a means to anticipate long term planning needs;

v) assessments should enlist the active participation and support of the scientific community at local, national, and international levels, providing this community with an opportunity to undertake policy-relevant research, and to develop ownership and a sense of common responsibility vis-à-vis the MEAs;

vi) technology development and diffusion mechanisms should enlist the active participation of the private sector, including developing country industries;

vii) scientific assessments and technology development and diffusion processes should be sustained for the required period of time to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.

10B Institutional arrangements
i) Meetings of Bureaus and of subsidiary bodies dealing with science and technology with a view to coordinate policy issues and programmatic planning at the regional and global levels, with the participation of regional institutions and stakeholders;

ii) Co-locations of clusters in Northern and Southern UN locations should be considered as a matter of importance;

iii) A working group with appropriate geographical representation of countries that are Contracting Parties to all conventions on a particular cluster should be established to consider issues that fall in the realm of the respective COPs;

iv) UNEP host the mechanisms for MEAs inter-linkages at policy and programmatic levels. To play this role effectively, UNEP should become the global environmental authority, with predictable funding based on assessed contributions;

v) The Environment Management Group (EMG) modus operandi should be designed so as to effectively offer a mechanism for MEAs interaction with the UN system as a whole, in policy and programmatic terms. When considering the modus operandi of the EMG, the participation of stakeholders in their Issue Management Groups should be seriously considered;

vi) Periodical reports (e.g. every two years) should be submitted to UNEP GC and CSD (or any other arrangement that the WSSD may establish) on the progress made by each cluster and the challenges ahead, with recommendations for action by these bodies and/or the relevant COPs.

10C National and regional coordination

i) A unit in the PM office or equivalent should be established to ensure harmonized application at the national level and coherent contributions to the conventions in each cluster;

ii) National Councils of Multi-stakeholders should be established, possibly as part of the National Councils for Sustainable Development;

iii) When so required, countries should be assisted to carry out a needs assessment in relation to the implementation of conventions by cluster;

iv) The necessary institutional and other arrangements should be done to ensure that the MEAs-related commitments are implemented by regional and local governments;

v) Parliaments should be actively involved in reviewing the country’ performance
and problems with the implementation of conventions in each cluster. National reports should be shared with the appropriate parliament commissions;

vi) National reporting should be developed into an effective tool for national implementation instead of a burden for understaffed national agencies. The experiments with harmonized reporting initiated by UNEP should continue, with a view to develop with time the required conditions for harmonized reporting by cluster, such as harmonized data collection and assessment and agreed format by the conventions in each cluster. Harmonized reporting should be done with stakeholders participation and include peer reviews. Harmonized reporting would have financial implications that should be provided for;

vii) Education, training and public awareness should be incorporated in an effective manner in the arrangements related to MEAs implementation in each cluster according to target groups, so as to ensure public understanding of and support for the issues dealt under each cluster and the role of each cluster and its components.

10D Funding

i) Innovative and flexible funding mechanisms for conventions, including funding from the public, should be established at the international and national levels;

ii) The possibility of funding mechanisms by cluster should be explored, both to assist in the implementation of the conventions included in the cluster and the cluster as such. Contracting parties (CPs) should be encouraged to submit harmonized funding requests, and assistance provided to do so.