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POLICY DEPARTMENT
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Economic and Monetary Affairs

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**Environment, Public Health
and Food Safety**

Industry, Research and Energy

Internal Market and Consumer Protection



**Institutional framework for
sustainable development in
the context of the
forthcoming RIO+20 Summit**

STUDY



DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES
POLICY DEPARTMENT A: ECONOMIC AND SCIENTIFIC POLICY

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Abstract

This report provides an overview of the evolution and main challenges faced by sustainable development frameworks and environmental governance. Options to reform the governance framework in the context of the upcoming Rio+20 Summit are also discussed. The report concludes with recommendations to improve the governance of the sustainable development system.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

10YFP 10 Year Framework of Programmes

CEB Chief Executives Board

CoP Conference of the Parties

CSD Commission on Sustainable Development

DaO Delivering as One

DG Directorate General

EAP Environment Action Plan

ECOSOC Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

EMG Environmental Management Group

EPI Environmental Policy Integration

EU European Union

FAO Food and Agriculture Organisation

GC Governing Council

GEF Global Environment Facility

GMEF Global Ministerial Environment Forum

IEG International Environmental Governance

IFI International Financial Institution

IFSD Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development

ILO International Labour Organisation

IMF International Monetary Fund

IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

JIU Joint Inspection Unit

- JPOI** Johannesburg Plan of Implementation
- MDG** Millenium Development Goals
- MEA** Multilateral Environmental Agreement
- NCSD** National Councils on Sustainable Development
- NGO** Non Governmental Organisation
- PSC** Policy Support Component
- RIM** International and Regional Implementation Meetings
- SCP** Sustainable Consumption and Production
- SD** Sustainable Development
- SDC** Sustainable Development Council
- SDI** Sustainable Development Indicators
- SDS** Sustainable Development Strategy
- TEU** Treaty of the European Union
- UN** United Nations
- UNDESA** United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- UNDG** United Nations Development Group
- UNDP** United Nations Development Programme
- UNEO** United Nations Environment Organisation
- UNEP** United Nations Environment Programme
- UNESCO** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
- UNGA** United Nations General Assembly
- UNSDG** United Nations Sustainable Development Group
- WB** World Bank
- WEO** World Environment Organisation

WHO World Health Organisation

WMO World Meteorological Organisation

WTO World Trade Organisation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

According to the UNEP Foresight Process on Emerging Environmental Issues (UNEP 2012a), aligning governance with the requirements of global sustainability ranks as the highest priority future challenge to facilitate the transition towards a more sustainable development. On this basis, the institutional framework for sustainable development governance is one of two major topics to be addressed at the forthcoming Rio+20 Summit. The other topic is the promotion of a green economy in the context of sustainable development together with poverty eradication.

The United Nations has long been an active player in shaping frameworks for global sustainable development and environmental governance, beginning with the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 to the upcoming Rio+20 Summit. For over four decades these frameworks have evolved substantially. Achievements are numerous and include:

- the significant expansion of Multilateral Environmental Agreements,
- the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals,
- the commitment of business to sustainable development through Corporate Social Responsibility,
- the participation of civil society organisations and business in decision-making processes,
- the engagement of local, regional and national institutions in sustainable development governance (such as Local Agenda 21), and
- the creation of international scientific institutions such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the International Resource Panel.

At the European level, in 1997 the Treaty of the European Union was amended to legally enshrine sustainable development as an overarching objective of the Union. In 2001 the European Commission adopted the European Union's Sustainable Development Strategy, which added the environmental dimension to the Lisbon Strategy that was launched in the year 2000. Because the commitment to sustainable development was somewhat tentative, the Sustainable Development Strategy was re-launched in 2006. Today this strategy is the central guiding document for sustainable development in the Union.

Different strategies and European Union action programs have progressively integrated the environmental dimension of sustainability. Nevertheless, even today the link between sustainable development and economic growth in Europe remains underdeveloped. The EU 2020 Strategy specifically calls for promoting "smart, inclusive and sustainable growth", but does not embrace sustainable development as its main objective.

Current institutional framework for sustainable development

Various institutions of the United Nations system influence the governance of sustainable development. At the global level, the economic dimension of sustainable development is probably the best represented in institutional terms. The social dimension, while of a somewhat lower profile, is also well represented through a variety of governance structures.

The United Nations social agenda is fragmented into different areas (e.g. health, education, labour, human rights and gender issues) with at least one United Nations agency addressing each main topic area. Nonetheless, there is no institution bridging those diverse fields. The environmental pillar of sustainability is by far the weakest and most fragmented.

The Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Environment Programme have to date achieved only limited success in fulfilling their respective mandates and have therefore been unable to provide much needed coherence in overall governance. There are several major issues that present challenges to governance for sustainable development. Each of these are summarised below.

Issue #1: Lack of integration of the three pillars of sustainable development in global, national and local policy

Sustainable development requires the integration of the economic, social and environmental objectives in decision-making and policy implementation processes. Such integration implies both a horizontal and vertical integration of initiatives, specifically that governments and business should make their economic, social and environmental policies more coherent, while the different tiers of government should collaborate effectively to achieve common objectives.

The horizontal integration of sustainable development in public policy-making is at present insufficient. The environmental dimension is often overlooked in decision-making and therefore, not effectively integrated into other policy fields. The degree of policy integration differs from country to country and changes over time. In general, it can be said that some steps are being taken to integrate environmental concerns in other policy arenas such as trade, but these are still perceived by many observers as weak.

Vertical integration among different levels of government has also failed to be fully effective. Sustainable Development Strategies and Local Agenda 21 are examples of tools used to date to integrate sustainable development principles into national and local policy-making. Unfortunately, Sustainable Development Strategies are rarely integrated in mainstream government actions. Effectiveness could be increased by establishing and strengthening Councils on Sustainable Development among different levels of government to foster consensus building, engagement and partnership, fair processes and transparency.

By 2050 cities will host two thirds of the global population. Around 80-90% of total energy consumption will occur in urban areas. Further, Local Agenda 21 and thousands of local sustainability initiatives that began to flourish some years ago have the potential to significantly strengthen national and international efforts. On the basis of these facts, local governments will need to play a critical role not only in the integration of national sustainable development policies into urban and rural planning and management, but also in developing an inclusive governance framework.

Issue #2: Proliferation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and fragmentation of international environmental governance

The proliferation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the institutional fragmentation that surrounds these agreements is impairing coherence and leading to increasingly inefficient and inconsistent solutions. Clustering of Multilateral Environmental Agreements is one approach being recognised as a potential solution to rationalise the fragmented environmental governance system and, potentially, foster synergies between Conventions, especially in the domains of chemicals and waste.

Issue #3: The role of International Financial Institutions

International Financial Institutions such as the World Bank and the Regional Development Banks have the potential to be major sustainable development enablers and should therefore play a key role in the transition towards sustainability. The World Bank in particular has the capacity to undertake major investments that offer potential to facilitate the transition to sustainability in developing countries. Accordingly, there is a need for United Nations agencies and national governing bodies to intensify efforts to ensure that international financial institutions integrate sustainable development principles into their core operating policies.

Issue #4: Stakeholder engagement

Global governance is evolving from a state-centric system toward more open participatory systems. The participation of major stakeholder groups in general, and of local governments, civil society organisations and business in particular, is continuously growing in the decision-making process. Nonetheless, broad participatory governance cannot replace the role of governments in their role as regulators. Thus, national governments will continue to play a central role in changing consumption and production patterns, correcting market failures, protecting vulnerable groups in society, and creating a democratically legitimate and inclusive governance framework.

Issue #5: Leapfrogging towards Sustainable Consumption and Production

To change consumption and production patterns collaboration from all actors of society, including government, business, civil society and academia is required. The Marrakech Process, led by the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, supports the implementation of Sustainable Consumption and Production projects and strategies across the globe. The voluntary, stakeholder and market-driven nature of the process have to date been key factors moving the Marrakech Process forward. However, long term financing mechanisms for these programmes need to be developed and leveraged to avoid the risk of the process ending up a wish list of actions and/or niche projects.

Despite the limited success to date with mainstreaming Sustainable Consumption and Production policies and tools, meaningful steps have been taken over the previous nine years as outcomes of the Marrakech Process to identify regional priorities, and promising National Action Plans have been developed.

Issue #6: Governance of the global environmental commons

Protecting the global environmental commons remains one of the main challenges of sustainable development governance. The nature of the global commons is often incompatible with current governance regimes that are built around nation states and multilateral agreements. The protection of the global environmental commons and national sovereignty are often irreconcilable, as objectives and policy measures normally tend to reflect comparatively narrow national priorities rather than common regional or global interests. In the absence of appropriate incentives free riding behaviours ultimately lead to unsustainable demands on the environment.

Road to Rio+20: Rethinking the sustainable development governance of the 21st century

There is a common agreement that a reform of governance structures for sustainable development and environmental protection is needed to address the challenges of the 21st century. Five reform options were identified in lead up discussions held in the context of the upcoming Rio+20 Summit. These are:

- Option 1: Enhance the United Nations Environment Programme
- Option 2: Create an umbrella organisation for sustainable development
- Option 3: Create a specialised agency for the environment
- Option 4: Reform the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Sustainable Development
- Option 5: Enhance institutional reforms and streamline existing structures

In terms of the likely outcome of discussions to reform governance for sustainable development, many government and non-governmental stakeholder groups have already assumed fairly strong positions and there is little apparent common ground around which to build compromises. Accordingly, the current likely scenario is for limited progress.

Recommendations

- Nation states and institutions must be judged not by their statements, but by measurable implementation of their commitments and achievement of goals. Current frameworks for monitoring and accountability have proven insufficient to enable this goal. Therefore, accountability should be promoted by establishing a set of internationally agreed sustainable development indicators, targets and timetables.
- International Financial Institutions are key enablers in the transition to sustainability. Therefore, these organisations should increase their efforts to integrate sustainable development principles into their operations. Further, there is opportunity to improve the assessment and transparent reporting on the impact of their policies and investments.
- The ongoing discussion and lack of agreement in lead up to the Rio+20 summit suggests that many governments remain motivated to protect short-term national interests rather than common long-term goals. Long-term strategic planning and stakeholder involvement in decision-making offers potential not only to legitimise the process, but also to help develop long-term objectives and build consensus.
- Although Sustainable Development Strategies can provide a mid- to long-term vision, the linkage to government action is often insufficiently clear. In order to improve policy coherence governments could make use of different mechanisms, such as fiscal policy tools, and the creation of inter-ministerial bodies at the political and administrative levels, as examples.

- Governance research indicates that the influence and participation of non-governmental stakeholders is growing. On this basis, the apparently limited prospects for successful negotiations during the Rio+20 Summit suggests a there is merit in an increased role for non-government actors. A strengthening of governance structures beyond the nation-state and government institutions offers a promising option for success. Sustainable Development Strategies with a focus on different levels of governance are already now playing an important role in engaging stakeholders.
- In addition, consultation processes and dialogue should be encouraged to incorporate non-governmental voices, including non-conventional networks and youth communities, such as Internet forums and opinion-making blogs.
- Decisions should be taken on the basis of the best information. To this end, the science-policy linkage should be strengthened at all levels. On the one hand, social science could improve both governance and develop the necessary social innovations to increase transition management. On the other hand, natural science can improve understating of critical areas such as “planetary boundaries”, “tipping points” and “environmental thresholds”.
- At the national and sub-national levels, representatives of the scientific community could be included as members or advisors within relevant national or local bodies that deal with sustainable development issues.
- The Marrakech Process could prove to be sufficiently robust to proceed over time given the expressions of support from a large number of governments and pledges from several United Nations agencies. However, viable financing mechanisms and funding commitments remain a large and unresolved issue. To accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns, mechanisms to multiply the uptake of sustainable consumption and production practices need to be established (including cleaner production, eco-design, value chain partnerships, sustainable start-ups etc.). Green public procurement guidelines and practices should be introduced within inter-ministerial processes and be effectively disseminated along value chains. Future visions for sustainable lifestyles and planning to address unsustainable consumption trends (backcasting rather than forecasting) should be developed in order to enable effective transition strategies.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Sustainable development and governance

Although the most commonly cited definition of Sustainable Development (SD) stems from the 1987 report "Our Common Future", authored by the Brundtland Commission, there is a lack of a unified definition that unites all notions of what SD is about in the minds of the breadth of stakeholders in society. The concept of SD is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987). The Brundtland report highlights the two key points:

- the concept of "needs", in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the ability of the environment to meet present and future needs.

The first point is the most ambiguous one of the two. Particular emphasis is given to the basic needs of poor people, but there is no defined limit for how those needs should be pursued in the long run. Specifically, the Brundtland report states "sustainable development requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life", while "living standards that go beyond the basic minimum are sustainable only if consumption standards everywhere have regard for long-term sustainability. [...] Perceived needs are socially and culturally determined [...]".

As for the requirement of meeting human needs, the report states "[...] sustainable development clearly requires economic growth in places where such needs are not being met. Elsewhere, it can be consistent with economic growth, provided the content of growth reflects the broad principles of sustainability and non-exploitation of others. But growth by itself is not enough".

The idea of SD provides for differing interpretations. Lafferty (2004, as cited from Lafferty and Langhelle, 1999) identifies three core elements of the concept of SD, namely physical sustainability, generational equity and global equity. Lafferty also claims that "the 'openness of meaning' of these concepts can never be closed. The content of sustainable development is thus not fixed once and for all. Its fruitfulness is linked to continued political discourse on the concept's content and future goals [...]". It can be concluded that SD is "a normative concept, dealing with different temporal and spatial scales and with multiple stakeholders. It indicates a process of changes whereby the development goal is not clearly outlined and is subject to changes throughout the process" (van Zeijl-Rozema et al. 2007). SD is still a young and broad concept, which has been shaped and adapted by different stakeholders for their own contexts and purposes.¹

Like SD, governance is a concept that has been defined in different ways and used for different purposes (Kemp et al. 2005). Baker (2009) gives a broad description of governance, which deals with "managing, steering and guiding action in the realm of public affairs, especially in relation to public policy decision making". This report will rely on this definition, regardless of the mode of governance (i.e. hierarchy, market or networks).

¹ Further discussions on the concept of SD and its link to governance can be found in Lafferty (2004), van Zeijl-Rozema et al. (2007).

It is relevant to note that, due to the multi-stakeholder nature of SD governance, societal change can only be brought about through joint cooperation of formal and information institutions (Kemp et al. 2005). This might have been a motive behind the importance given to governance issues during the upcoming United Nations (UN) summit.

As noted by Baker (2009), the transition towards sustainability is a process without a defined target or end point, which at the same time is undertaken in a context of uncertainty related to the inter-linkages of its different dimensions. Because of these uncertainties, advanced concepts of adaptive governance are required. In this context, Steurer (2009) identifies five key governance principles:

- horizontal integration,
- vertical integration,
- participation (stakeholder integration),
- reflectivity (knowledge integration), and
- inter-generational equity (temporal integration)

Table 1 these principles and SD linkages.

Table 1: Principles of SD governance

Governance principle	Aspect of integration	Elements to integrate
Horizontal integration	Policy fields/ Dimensions of SD	Economic, social and environmental policies
Vertical integration	Spatial scales	Local, national and supranational levels of policy-making
Participation (stakeholder integration)	Originally: Modes of governance Today: Societal domains	Originally: Decision makers and stakeholders Today: State, businesses and civil society
Reflectivity (knowledge integration)	Knowledge	Knowledge from different sectors, subjects and heuristic backgrounds and policymaking processes
Inter-generational equity (temporal integration)	Time scales	Short and long term time scales

Source: Steurer 2009

1.2. From Stockholm to Rio+20: shaping the global sustainable development governance framework

Today SD is acknowledged as a guiding principle. Nonetheless, its implementation continues to challenge institutions at all levels (UN 2002). To understand the current SD governance framework it is necessary to examine how it evolved over the previous 40 years.

The UN Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 represented the first cornerstone on the path that led to Rio+20. The Stockholm Conference not only turned the environment into a major issue at the global level, but also set the basis for the current debate on the global environment and laid the foundations of the international system of environmental law (Seyfang and Jordan 2002). The representatives of 113 countries and of different UN specialised agencies that participated produced the "Stockholm Declaration on the Human Environment", comprising 26 principles, and the Action Plan for the Human Environment, which contained 109 recommendations (UN 1972). The Conference also led to the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Nevertheless, it “failed to resolve the difficult conceptual relationship between the environment and development” (Seyfang and Jordan 2002).

The World Commission on Environment and Development, chaired by the former Norwegian prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, was established in 1983 to address this issue. Following four years of work the Commission presented its report, entitled “Our Common Future”, which introduced the most widely accepted definition of SD today.

The Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 shifted the focus from the environment to the integration of the environment and development. The Summit succeeded in engaging more heads of state and enjoyed a major profile in the international media. Delegates from 172 countries (108 heads of state) and 2,400 representatives of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) attended the event. Furthermore, some 17,000 people participated in a parallel NGO forum (UN 2012a).

In Rio the world reaffirmed the commitments made at the Stockholm Conference and set out the principles for SD. There were a number of outputs from the Earth Summit including the ‘Rio Declaration on Environment and Development’ that outlines the principles of SD; the creation of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity; the adoption of Agenda 21; the agreement to negotiate a world convention on desertification; and a statement of Principles for the Sustainable Management of Forests.

Five years after the Rio Summit, the comparatively unsuccessful Earth Summit II was held in New York in 1997 (UN 1997)². Nonetheless, at the 2002 Johannesburg Summit world leaders reaffirmed SD as a central objective of the international agenda. Some 22,000 participants attended the Summit, 10,000 of which were delegates of 193 participating countries (including over 100 heads of state), 8,000 were representatives of NGOs and 4,000 were members of the press (UN 2003). The main outcomes of the Johannesburg Summit were the “Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development” and the “Johannesburg Plan of Implementation” (JPOI).

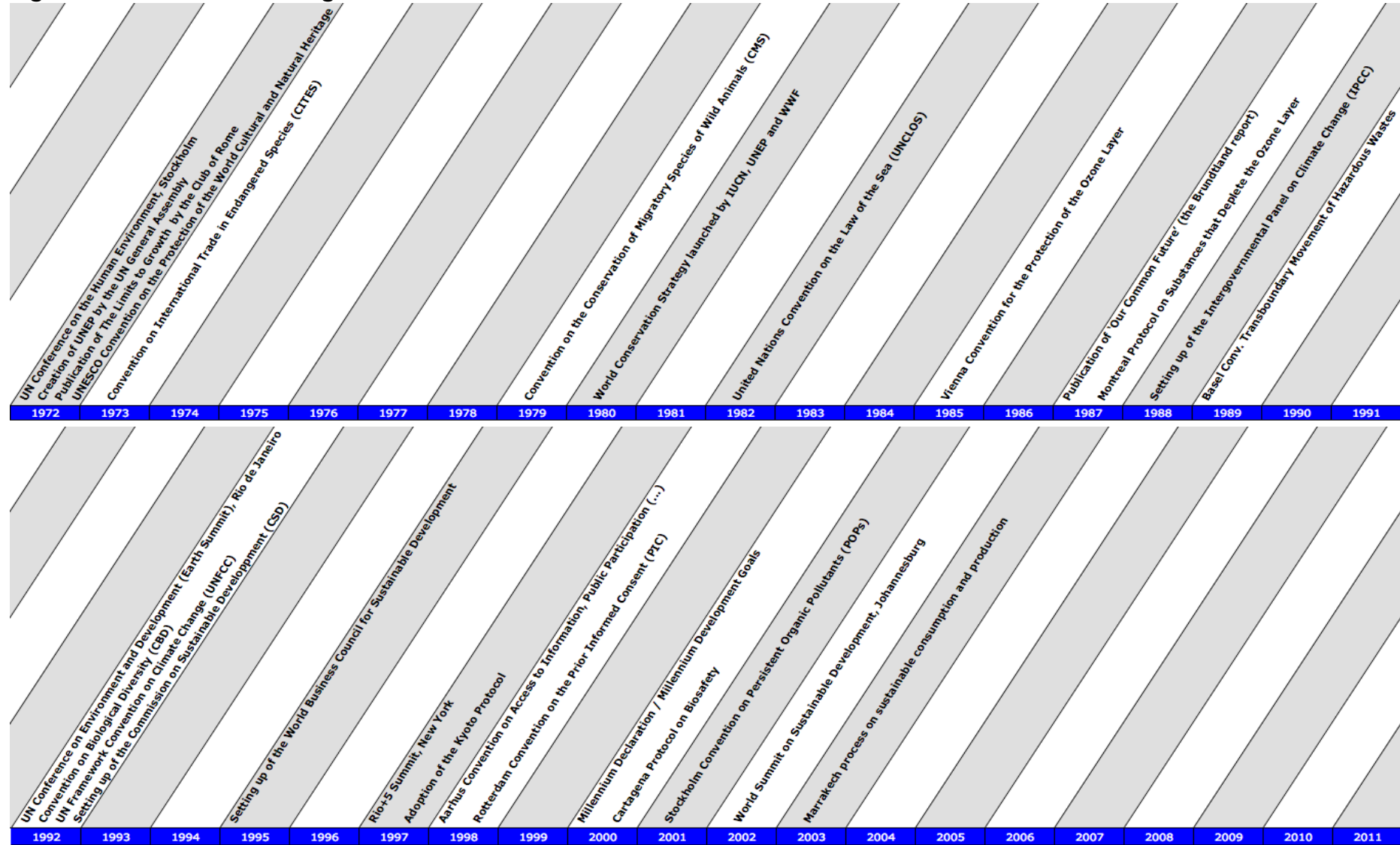
These events have been the UN response to the challenge of SD governance. Achievements of these events are substantial. These include, among others:

- a widespread expansion of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs),
- the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),
- the commitment of business to SD through Corporate Social Responsibility,
- the inclusion of civil society organisations and business in the decision-making process,
- the engagement of local, regional and national institutions in SD governance through the Agenda 21 initiative, and
- the creation of international scientific institutions such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to shed light on global problems.

A few of the most important pre-Rio+20 milestones are illustrated in Figure 1

² “The final document adopted by delegates from over 165 countries - while taking small steps forward on a number of issues, including preventing climate change, forest loss and freshwater scarcity - disappointed many in that it contained few new concrete commitments on action needed” (UN 1997). The Earth Summit II produced two main outcomes: a six-paragraph ‘statement of commitment’ and a ‘Programme of Action for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21’.

Figure 1: Milestones for SD governance



Source: Selection from UNEP 2012b, Stakeholder Forum 2012

1.3. Sustainable development in the European Union

The formal emergence of SD in European policy-making dates to 1988 and 1990 in the declarations agreed in the Council Conclusions at Rhodes (European Council 1988) and Dublin (European Council 1990) in the form of the "Declaration on the environment" and the declaration entitled "The environmental imperative".

Nevertheless, the amendment of the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) in 1992 did not legally enshrine SD as an overarching objective of the EU (Pallemaerts 2006). Rather, the treaty referred to sustainable growth with SD included as an objective of the European Union's (EU) development cooperation (*ibid.*). Although SD was not legally recognised as a guiding principle, it was also in 1992 when, through the 5th Environmental Action Programme (EAP) (European Commission 1992), the EU first committed to SD (European Commission 1999).

The amendment of the TEU by means of the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam led to the inclusion of SD as being among the main EU objectives. Article 2 of the TEU states that the EU shall set itself the objective to "promote economic and social progress and a high level of employment and to achieve balanced and sustainable development". The Treaty of Amsterdam also included Article 6 of the current version (Article 3c at the time the text was amended in 1997), which requires environmental protection measures to "be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Community policies and activities [...], in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development". The implementation of Article 6 by the Cardiff Process (European Commission 1998) has not been fully successful in this integration of SD among all concerned sectors.

In 2001 in Gothenburg the European Council adopted the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) (European Council 2001), to include environmental considerations in the Lisbon Strategy adopted in 2000 (European Council 2000). The EU commitments to the SDS were considered somewhat tentative owing to the different views of the various EU institutions on the purpose, scope and status of the SDS (Pallemaerts 2006).

Shortly thereafter, the European Commission released a "White Paper on Governance" (European Commission 2001) and, at the 2002 Barcelona European Council, a communication outlining the necessary actions to implement the EU contribution to global SD (European Commission 2002, European Council 2002). This was the basis for the EU contribution to the Johannesburg Summit in 2002 (Eurostat 2011).

In 2006 the European Council adopted a renewed SDS (European Council 2006a, 2006b), which is the current central axis of SD in the EU. Progress toward the ultimate goal of SD is measured through so-called Sustainable Development Indicators (SDIs) that form the basis of the three assessments of the SDS undertaken to date (Eurostat 2007, 2009, 2011). Likewise, the Lisbon Strategy was also re-launched in 2005 following the mixed results of a mid-term review of the process. The main focus of the renewed SDS is on the quality of life, intra- and inter-generational equity and coherence between all policy areas, including external aspects (European Council 2006b). Conversely, the renewed Lisbon Strategy focuses first on growth and employment and calls to "renew the basis of its [Europe's] competitiveness, increase its growth potential and its productivity and strengthen social cohesion, placing the main emphasis on knowledge, innovation and the optimisation of human capital" (European Council 2005). As argued by Sedlacko and Gjoksi (2009), the "techno-optimistic" vision still prevails in the renewed Lisbon Strategy, although eco-innovation and eco-technologies have increased in importance.

The European Council (2006b) states that the SDS “forms the overall framework within which the Lisbon Strategy, with its renewed focus on growth and jobs, provides the motor of a more dynamic economy”. The main targets of the re-launched versions of the SDS and of the Lisbon Strategy indeed provide a more coherent focus than previously (Sedlacko and Gjoksi 2009). Nonetheless, clarifications on the relationship between economic growth and SD remain missing (Berger and Zwirner 2008).³

In 2010 the European Commission launched the EU 2020 Strategy, which can be considered as a substitute for the Lisbon Strategy. EU 2020 shifts the focus from quantitative growth to “greener” growth (Sedlacko and Gjoksi 2009), and includes the aim of becoming a resource-efficient and low-carbon economy.

The 2020 Strategy does not place SD as an overarching objective, but does aim to foster smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (European Commission 2010). This nuance makes the link to SD somewhat ambiguous since, although the Strategy has elements that are consistent with SD (a resource efficient and greener economy), the linkage between economic growth and SD remains undefined. This linkage will determine the scale of the social and economic transformation that is required for sustainability in the EU.

1.4. Towards Rio+20 - United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

The Rio+20 Summit will mark the 40th anniversary of the Stockholm Conference, the 20th anniversary of the Rio Summit and the 10th anniversary of the Johannesburg Summit. Rio+20, which will take place on 20-22 June 2012, aims to “secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development, and address new and emerging challenges” (UN 2012b), which were identified at the first Preparatory Committee (see Table 2).

Table 2: New and emerging SD challenges

Challenge		
Financial crisis	Food crisis	Energy crisis
Migration	Water scarcity	Biodiversity and ecosystem loss
Desertification	Climate security	Health security
Globalisation	Natural disasters and the ability to prepare for and recover from them	Increased resilience at the national and global level
Achievement of the MDGs		

Source: Stakeholder Forum 2010

The Summit will address two main topics:

- a green economy in the context of SD and poverty eradication, and
- the institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD).

³ A more detailed discussion on the links between economic growth on the one hand, and the renewed SDS and Lisbon Strategy on the other, can be found in Sedlacko and Gjoksi (2009).

As highlighted by the UN (2010), the concept of a green economy “is one of the several mutually complementary constructions that have emerged in recent years to enhance convergence between the different dimensions of sustainable development”. In principle this concept seeks to “to unite under a single banner the entire suite of economic policies and modes of economic analyses of relevance to sustainable development”. However, there is currently no accepted definition of green economy. In fact, there is considerable diversity in approaches and schools of thought that embrace the concept (Stakeholder Forum 2011).

The lack of a common definition has significantly influenced the outcomes of the Regional Preparatory Meetings (Chasek 2011). Several developing countries have already indicated concerns about the implications of the misuse of the green economy concept by developed countries to impose trade barriers or influence decisions on official development assistance (ibid.). This is, in short, the current state of discussion respecting the Summit discussion topic on the green economy in the context of SD and poverty eradication.

Section 2 of this report focuses on the second Summit theme (institutional framework for sustainable development) by outlining the most important global SD governance institutions and the major challenges they face. In section 3 the potential institutional reforms to improve SD governance are explained and the positions of several states, NGOs and major stakeholder groups are explained.

The final chapter provides conclusions and recommendations to improve the framework SD and environmental governance.

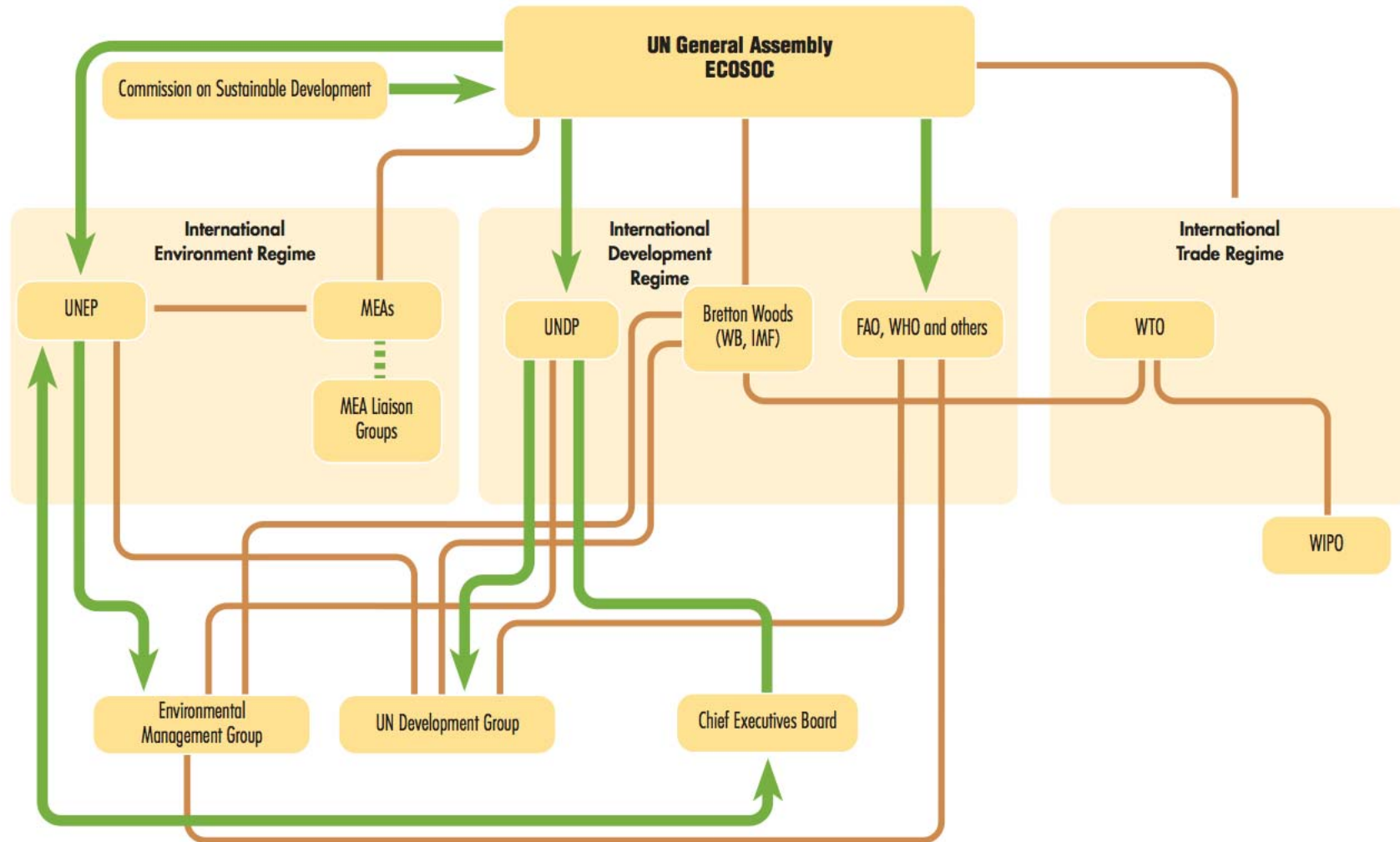
2. CURRENT INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2.1. Global institutions influencing sustainable development governance

A number of UN system institutions influence governance of SD. ANNEX 1 provides an overview of some of these bodies, namely the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), CSD, UNEP, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank (WB), World Trade Organisation (WTO), Environmental Management Group (EMG) and Chief Executives Board (CEB).

Figure 2 illustrates the main linkages between organisations with responsibility for the environment, development and trade. This section will focus on the CSD and UNEP as the two main institutions under focus during the Rio+20 Summit.

Figure 2: UN level organisations with influence over SD governance⁴



Source: UNEP 2007

⁴ Green lines represent stronger and more direct connections, while brown lines represent less direct links.
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2.1.1. Effectiveness of the CSD

The CSD is one of the main outcomes of the 1992 Rio Summit. The CSD was established as a commission of ECOSOC with a mandate to:

- review progress at the international, regional and national levels in the implementation of recommendations and commitments contained in the Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration,
- elaborate policy guidance and options for future activities to follow up the JPOI and achieve SD,
- promote dialogue and build partnerships for SD with governments, the international community and the major groups identified in Agenda 21 as key actors outside the central government that have a major role to play in the transition towards SD (UNDESA 2012).

Due to broad and vague mandate of the CSD, there is considerable room for interpretation when evaluating its effectiveness (Chasek 2000). Although the Commission was meant to play an integrative role, it “developed a rigid, sectoral agenda, often focusing primarily on environmental aspects and thus neglecting broader economic and social aspects of sustainable development” (United Nations Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability 2012).

In general terms, the CSD has failed to engage high-level government representatives, which limits its impact at the national level. In addition, its status as a commission rather than as a council (which reports directly to the UNGA) further diminishes its capacity for influence at UN level (Stoddart 2011a).

The CSD has at several times been referred to as “talk shop” (Carpenter 2002, Kaasa 2007) where already adopted international decisions were discussed and agreed. At times, the CSD was even used by dissatisfied governments as an alternative forum to try to revisit decisions that had previously been concluded in other international forums (Carpenter 2002). According to Strandenaes (2011a), the 14th and 15th sessions of the CSD, which addressed energy for SD, air pollution and atmosphere, climate change and industrial development, could be described as the lowest point of the CSD process. On this occasion, “the united efforts of the coal and oil nations made sure the outcome document was rejected by the final plenary session of CSD 15, and part of their success was in manipulating the governance structure of CSD”.

Out of the above identified mandate, the third area of competence, stakeholder involvement, is seen as the one in which the CSD has been most successful (Chasek 2000, Carpenter 2002, Kaasa 2007, Strandenaes 2011a).

All in all, the CSD process is perceived as ineffective and contributing toward the existing fragmentation of the governance framework (Carpenter 2002, Stoddart 2011a).

2.1.2. Effectiveness of UNEP

Among others, when established in 1972, UNEP was given the following responsibilities:

- to promote international cooperation in the field of the environment and to recommend, as appropriate, policies to this end;
- to provide general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes within the UN system;
- to keep under review the world environmental situation (...);

- to promote the contribution of the relevant international scientific and other professional communities to the acquisition, assessment and exchange of environmental knowledge and information (...);
- to maintain under continuing review the impact of national and international environmental policies and measures on developing countries, (...) (UNEP 2012c).

A problem of insufficient resources has impaired the achievement of all the objectives that are included in the UNEP mandate. In general terms, UNEP has been only partially successful in achieving its mandate (see Table 3).

Table 3: Summary of UNEP's overall performance

Effective	Ineffective
Monitoring and assessing the global environment	Steering global environmental governance in a coherent and coordinated way
Shaping the international environment policy framework by fostering the creation of MEAs	Establishing itself as the institutional home for many MEAs
Assisting environment ministries	

Source: Based on Ivanova 2005a

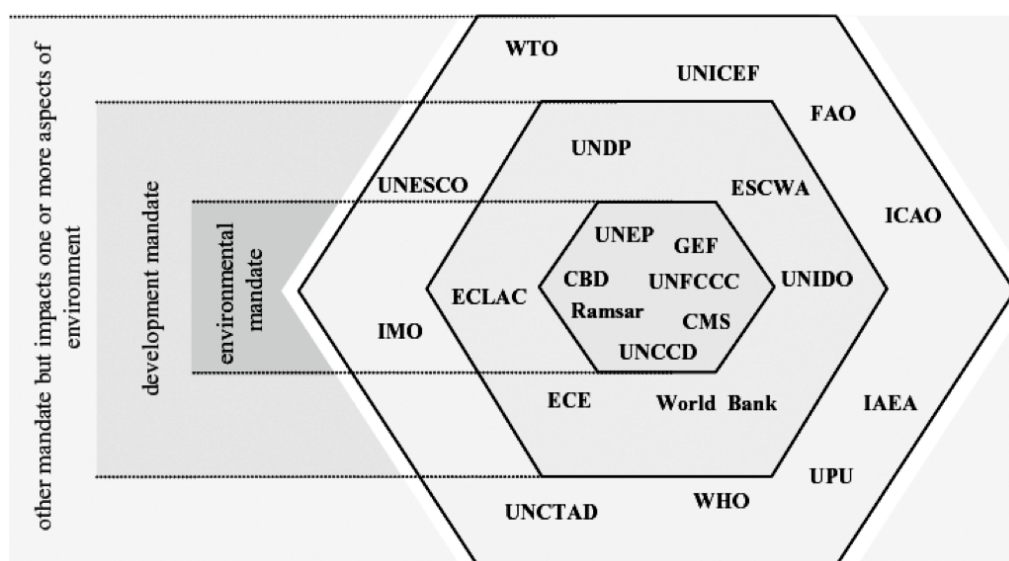
It is already difficult to coordinate all the divisions, offices and centres that directly depend on UNEP.⁵ Although beneficial to legitimise decision-making processes, the growing numbers of stakeholders coming into play creates an even greater challenge to overall coordination (Najam et al. 2006). As a result, environmental responsibilities are now spread across several bodies, including:

- specialised agencies in the UN system, e.g. World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), International Maritime Organisation (IMO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), etc.;
- diverse programmes of the UN system, e.g. UNDP and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO);
- the UN regional economic and social commissions;
- WB, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and WTO; and
- environmentally focused mechanisms such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the CSD, and close to 500 international environmental agreements (Ivanova and Roy 2007).

Figure 3 graphically illustrates the relationship between the institutions dealing directly with environmental issues, the institutions with a primarily development mandate, SD, or project implementation, and the institutions that, despite not having an environment or SD focus, have an indirect impact on one or more environmental issues.

⁵ The list of UNEP's offices is shown in ANNEX 2.

Figure 3: UN level organisations directly or indirectly affecting the environment



Source: Najam and Muñoz 2008

Najam and colleagues (2006) identify the main reasons behind the lack of success for UNEP in international environmental governance (IEG):

- the overwhelming challenge of coordination both at international and national levels;
- the weak status and role of UNEP;
- the lack of authoritative science leading international environmental policy; and
- the leadership deficit in the IEG system.

UNEP's mandate was for the organisation to "provide general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes within the United Nations system" (UNEP 2012c). Scholars like Najam and colleagues (2006) argue that UNEP was intentionally designed in a way that prevented it from fulfilling its mandate, while Ivanova (2005a) debates that UNEP was created as a body that would evolve and thus, adapt to future challenges.

Both Najam and Ivanova agree on the factors that impede UNEP in its role to coherently integrate the environmental dimension at UN level. Firstly, its status as a programme and much lower budget relative to other major institutions such as the WTO and IMF diminishes UNEP's authority and political influence within the UN system. Although the WTO and IMF have a very significant environmental impact they do not have incentives to let UNEP interfere in their competencies (Najam et al. 2006).

Other factors preventing UNEP from fulfilling its mandate include its financial structure and its physical location. UNEP's financing mechanism depends to a large extent on member states and external contributions, which allows donor countries to place self interested priorities ahead of the common good. Likewise, although UNEP's location in Nairobi can contribute to a better representation of the needs of developing countries in environmental forums, being far from the centres of decision-making in most other major policy areas reduces influence. Moreover, the North has "bred a certain resistance and hostility" due to UNEP's general South-friendly nature (ibid.).

There are bodies that were created with the aim of fostering coordination across the institutions involved in global environmental governance, such as the EMG⁶ and the Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF). Despite of the efforts of these bodies, the ultimate key actors remain the same, specifically the member states and, therefore, the main problem relates to these actors as they are the “owners” of the coordination bodies (ibid.).

Ivanova and Roy (2007) assessed the extent to which the work carried out by the international institutions represented in the EMG might interact with each other with regard to their work related to the environment. The assessment highlights that “considerable overlap and duplication of activities likely persists”.

The picture is more complex due to other internal factors such as inter-agency distrust, unclear (sometimes even contradictory) mandates and uneven allocation of financial resources across the different bodies (Najam et al. 2006). All in all, there is a mismatch between the challenge represented by the worsening of the environment and the response of international bodies.

Najam and colleagues (2006) argue that UNEP’s role as the provider of scientific information on the environment to decision-makers is not as relevant as for other bodies in their respective fields, such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) or the WTO. The main problem is related to a lack of synthesis of the information gathered, rather than the availability of information. Ivanova (2005a) highlights the lack of comparative data across countries as the main limitation of UNEP’s global environmental assessments. Nonetheless, she considers them “relatively effective[s]”.

Last but not least, Najam and colleagues (2006) refer to the lack of clear commitment from the UN member states. In fact, national sovereignty has been found to be a barrier with regard to global environmental problems, “as governments have been driven to act on the basis of narrowly defined self-interest rather than the common good” (Ivanova and Roy 2007). Furthermore, the lack of real action and commitment from the developed countries in terms of needed structural changes for a transition to SD at global, local and especially the national level, hinder the engagement of developing countries since the necessary trust is still lacking (Drexhage and Murphy 2010).

2.2. Challenges for sustainable development governance

This section outlines the most important challenges for the IFSD.

2.2.1. Lack of integration of the three pillars of sustainable development in global, national and local policies

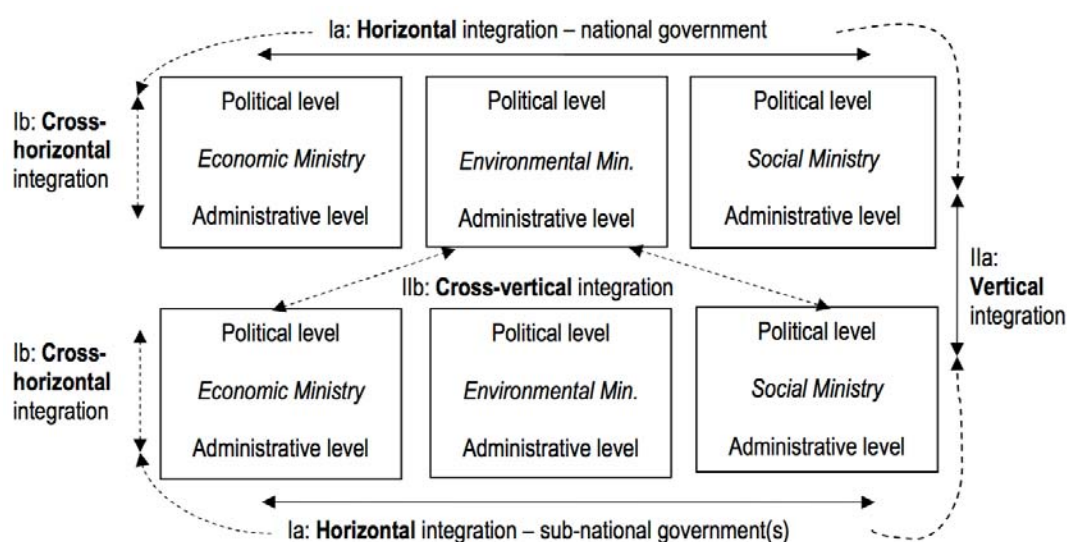
Twenty years after the 1992 Rio Summit laid down a set of commonly agreed principles intended to serve as guidance towards SD (UN 1992a), the concept of sustainability still remains vague and has thus been adapted by different stakeholders to their own contexts and purposes. Consequently, the implementation of SD remains a challenge (Drexhage and Murphy 2010). Commonly agreed SD indicators are lacking at the global scale. The MDGs can be considered a starting point, but they do not address key areas such as food security, water, energy, green jobs, decent work, social inclusion, sustainable consumption and production (SCP), sustainable cities, climate change, biodiversity and oceans, as well as disaster risk reduction and resilience (United Nations Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability 2012).

⁶ The EMG is a UN System-wide coordination body. It comprises specialised agencies, programmes and organs of the UN including the secretariats of the MEAs. It is chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP and supported by a secretariat provided by UNEP. For more information, see ANNEX 1.

During the last two decades SD has been addressed mainly as an environmental issue (Drexhage and Murphy 2010) and this is also the case in the EU (Baker 2009). In contrast, development policies have been implemented primarily from a purely economic perspective. Thus, the root conflict between environment and development policy remains unsolved: the (industrial) model of economic growth is as a universal development model not compatible with the physical boundaries of the planet (Drexhage and Murphy 2010, MacNeill 2007).

SD requires an integration of the economic, social and environmental objectives within decision-making and implementation process. This includes horizontal and vertical integration where governments and businesses make economic, social and environmental policies more coherent, with different tiers of government working together towards common objectives (see Figure 4) (Steurer 2009). The balancing of the three dimensions of SD in policy-making cannot be solved with a one-size-fits-all approach (Berger and Steurer 2009). In other words, effective SD governance requires multi-level governance, with "the distribution of authority among national governments and other decision-making authorities on different levels, but also to the *interdependence* of these different levels" (von Homeyer and Knoblauch 2008).

Figure 4: Horizontal and vertical policy integration for SD governance



Source: Steurer 2009

The **horizontal integration** of SD in public policy making is rather unsatisfactory since this is an area that "is dominated by administrative practices rather than high-profile political decisions" (Steurer and Martinuzzi 2007, Steurer 2008 cited in Berger and Steurer 2009). There is general agreement that the environmental dimension of sustainability is often overlooked and therefore, not effectively integrated in other policy fields (Najam et al. 2006). This is one of the reasons why SD has historically been seen from the perspective of the environment. Unlike most scholars, El-Ashry (2004) points out that the above statement is also valid in the inverse, specifically that non-environmental dimensions are often lacking in environmental policy making. It should be emphasized that SD "cannot be achieved without EPI [Environmental Policy Integration], but the two are fundamentally different. In practice, a focus on the more nebulous concept of SD may be insufficient to ensure that environmentally issues are fully reflected in policies" (EEA 2005a).

Integrating the environment (and development) in decision-making is indeed one of the main objectives formulated in Agenda 21 (UN 1992b).

Thus, the level of policy integration differs from country to country and changes over time (Berger and Steurer 2009). In general, some steps are being taken to integrate environmental concerns into other policy arenas such as trade (WTO and the Doha round of negotiations) and investment (c.f. Section 2.2.3). These are still perceived by many as insufficient (Najam et al. 2006). Efforts towards the horizontal integration of policies largely depend on the practice of integration by public institutions and business. Berger and Steurer (2009) outline several instruments used and institutional structures that have been created in Europe to improve the integration of SD into sectoral policies (see Table 4)⁷

Table 4: Instruments and institutional structures to foster horizontal integration

Instruments
SDSs
Departmental SD action plans
Other policy strategies (e.g. EU 2020 Strategy, the renewed Lisbon Strategy)
Sustainability impact assessments
Green budgeting
Institutional structures

Source: Based on Berger and Steurer 2009

Box 1: Integrating the environmental dimension of sustainability in EU policy making

Environmental Policy Integration in the EU

As early as 1973 the European Commission acknowledged the importance of integrating environmental matters into policy-making (EEA 2005b). The environment was and remains the dimension of SD that is less integrated into EU policies (Berger and Steurer 2009). The need for EPI was also noted in the third, fourth and fifth EAPs. The latter identified five main sectors in which EPI was urgent (namely industry, energy, agriculture, transport and tourism) and called for a bottom-up approach (Herodes et al. 2007). The European Commission attempted to implement several measures along this line, but these were seen as ineffective (ibid.). It was not until the late 1990s that EPI gained political prominence.

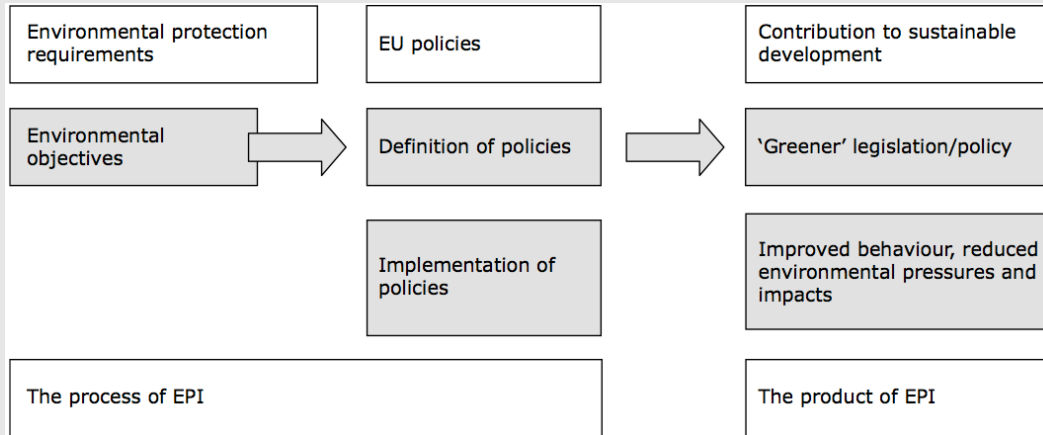
The TEU, amended in 1997 by means of the Amsterdam Treaty, stated that “environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Community policies and activities [...] in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development”. As a response, the Commission launched Cardiff Process the following year to boost the horizontal integration of the environment in the EU policy arena (see Figure 5). Nine sectors were addressed, namely, energy, agriculture, transport, development, internal market, industry, general affairs, economy and finance, and fisheries (EEA 2005b).

As highlighted by the Commission in 2004, “not all Council formations have shown the same degree of commitment to the process. Some strategies have taken the form of a fully developed set of environmental commitments, with deadlines, milestones, and reporting and review mechanisms.

⁷ A brief description of the tools is given in Berger and Steurer 2009.

Others are limited to declarations of intent through Council conclusions, more focused on how environmental policy should be pursued than on commitments for environmental integration in the concerned sectors” (European Commission 2004).

Figure 5: EPI in the EU



Source: EEA 2005b

The importance of EPI was somewhat undermined by the appearance of the SDS in 2001 and the accession of Central and Eastern European countries with poor environmental legislation in 2004 (EEA 2005b, Wilkinson 2007). Thus, a Thematic Strategy approach was taken in the sixth EAP to the detriment of the sectoral approach characteristic of the Cardiff process. Several Directorate Generals (DG) and stakeholders were involved in the process leading to the adoption of the Thematic Strategies, which are characterised by extensive recourse to soft, non-regulatory policy instruments, and with greater discretion granted to member states in the implementation of EU measures (Wilkinson 2007). The contribution of these strategies to EPI still needs to be assessed (Herodes et al. 2007).

With the 2005 Lisbon Strategy the effectiveness of EPI was further undermined through “a hierarchical procedure for supervising and keeping in check the ambitions of DG Environment and the environmental policy community” (Wilkinson 2007). In this vein, further efforts toward EPI are now focused on greening the EU budget (ibid.). As for the renewed SDS, Pallemarts and colleagues (2007) argue that it “has not been a major driver of EPI but has, at most, played a legitimising role in support of and in conjunction with other policy drivers, where these existed”.

Wilkinson concludes that unless win-win opportunities or external pressure are in place, the integration of environmental matters in other DGs is going to be rather ineffective. In this context, the EEA (2005b) makes the success of EPI conditional on the nature of the sector and its direct links to environmental impacts, and on the pressure exerted by different stakeholders.

The integration of SD within policy-making trespasses not only sectoral limits, but also local, regional and national boundaries. Global challenges such as climate change or biodiversity loss require more integrated responses than what can be provided by single governments or ministries. Therefore, **vertical integration** along different levels of government structures is necessary to properly address such problems (Berger and Steurer 2009).

At the global level, the economic dimension of SD is probably the best represented in institutional terms. The social dimension, while weaker, is also well represented through various governance structures, although this pillar is fragmented into different areas (e.g. health, education, labour, human rights and gender issues) that with representation within at least one UN agency. Nonetheless, there is no institution bridging those fields (United Nations Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability 2012). The environmental pillar is "by far the weakest and most fragmented" (c.f. Section 2.1.2) (UNEP 2011b, Ivanova 2005b referencing Speth 2002, 2003).

National governance

The first call for adopting SDSs⁸ was made in 1992 within Agenda 21. SDSs "should build upon and harmonize the various sectoral economic, social and environmental policies and plans that are operating in the country" (UN 1992b). In 1997, the Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) fixed 2002 as the deadline for their formulation and elaboration (UNDESA 2012). Five years later, the JPOI called upon states to "take immediate steps to make progress in the formulation and elaboration of national strategies for sustainable development and begin their implementation by 2005". These strategies "could be formulated as poverty reduction strategies (...) in accordance with each country's national priorities" (UN 2002). As of 2010, more than 100 countries had implemented national SDSs (see Figure 6). The UN and UNEP (although the latter to a lesser degree) have been key drivers of the process of elaborating and implementing SDSs (Berger and Gjoksi 2009).

Due to different national contexts, SDSs differ significantly between countries. UNDESA (2010a) groups them in four different types:

- The countries lacking comprehensive development strategies or these not being suitable for incorporating SD considerations, built their SDSs from scratch.
- Other countries built their SDSs based upon existing socio-economic strategies through a by adapting them to the context of SD.
- Several developing countries incorporated SD principles in their poverty reduction strategies.
- Some countries elaborated strategies whose main focus was set on the environment and the sustainable management of natural resources.

Meadowcroft (2007) states that in general terms SDSs are not integrated within the main areas of government action. Moreover, environmental sustainability tends to be the prevailing approach (Berger and Gjoksi 2009). In Europe this is due to the weaker position of environmental ministries, to which SDSs are anchored. Thus, they require support from more powerful actors to move forward SD-related issues and at the same time, they have to defend both the interest of the environment and of SD as a whole (Gjoksi et al. 2010). This statement is likely valid for most developed and developing countries.

National Councils on Sustainable Development (NCSD) can be useful institutions to foster consensus building, engagement and partnership, fair processes and transparency (UNDESA and Ministry of Environment Republic of Indonesia 2011). By 2002, there were over 100 National Councils (or their equivalent) around the world (UNDESA and Ministry of Environment Republic of Indonesia 2011).

⁸ According to UNDESA (2010a), national SDSs have five common characteristics: (1) country ownership and commitment; (2) integrated economic, social and environmental policy across sectors, territories and generations; (3) broad participation and effective partnerships; (4) development of the necessary capacity and enabling environment; and (5) focus on outcomes and means of implementation.

Particularly in developing countries, coordination of policy development and implementation across relevant agencies remains a challenge (UN 2010).

NCSOs have contributed to improved stakeholder participation and have produced national policies consistent with Agenda 21 and the JPOI. Nonetheless, they have been insufficiently funded and some have been abolished (UNDESA and Ministry of Environment Republic of Indonesia 2011).

A preliminary assessment of 19 SDSs⁹ in 2004 concluded that although “many innovative approaches and tools for strategic and co-ordinated action for sustainable development have been developed and applied”, only a “few countries are acting truly strategically” (Swanson et al. 2004). Some of the key identified challenges are:¹⁰

- monitoring the trade-offs and linkages among the different pillars of SD, as well as developing tools to learn from the monitoring process and to adapt approaches accordingly,
- increasing the influence of SDSs on national budgets.
- coordinating and promoting SD action at regional and local levels, and
- implementing a mix of policy initiatives, and in particular, environmental fiscal reform initiatives which are typically underleveraged.

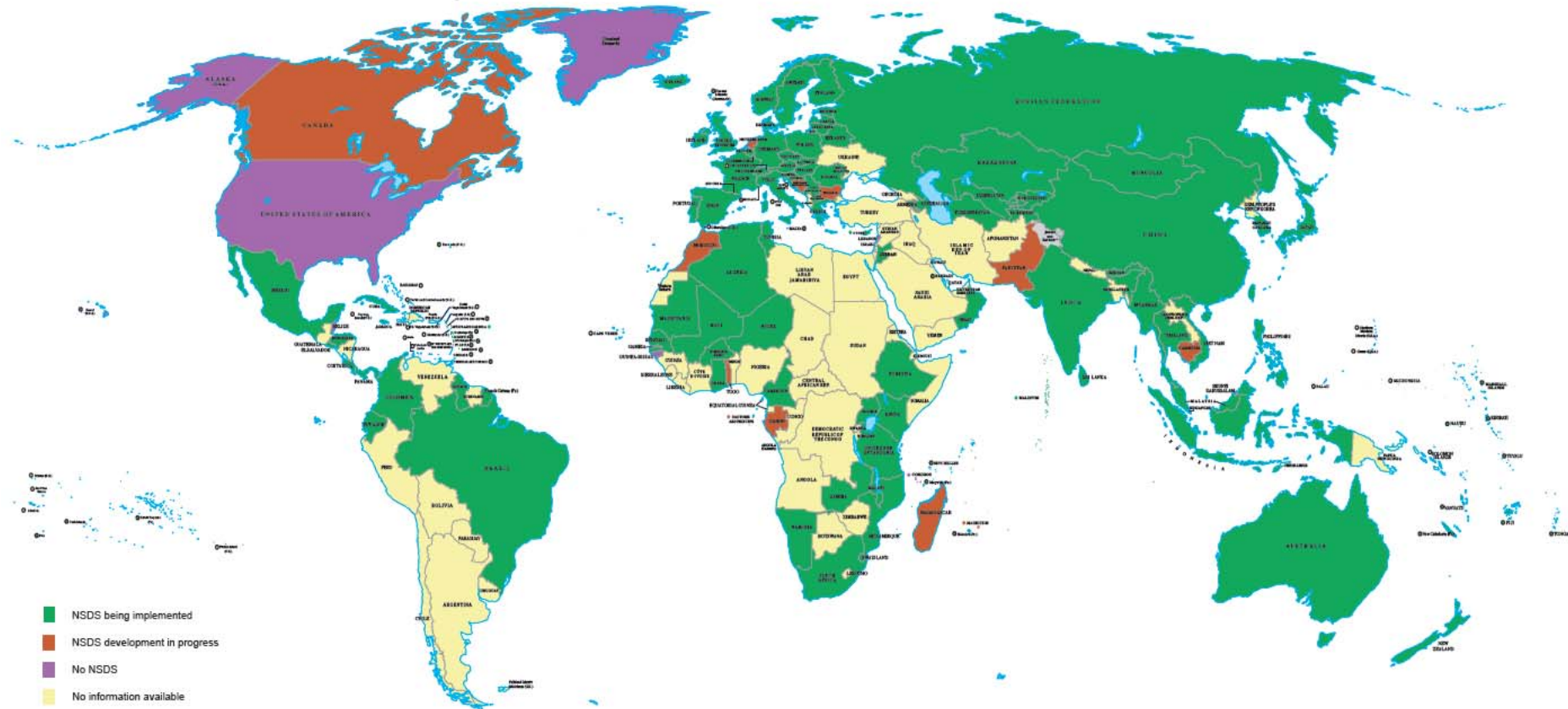
Gjoksi and colleagues (2010) compared 29 European SDSs. They stated that it is still too early to assess the degree to which SDSs have contributed to the integration of economic, societal and environmental issues at the national level. Nevertheless, they identified different barriers and challenges in Europe, including:

- the economic crisis as a main priority,
- short-term thinking,
- lack of international incentives for strengthening national SD policies,
- lack of real commitment to SD from policy-makers and the public, and
- insufficient coordination due to current institutional structures

⁹ The sample comprises the following countries: Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Denmark, Germany, India, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom as well as the European Union as a whole.

¹⁰ For a more detailed set of results, see source.

Figure 6: Worldwide implementation of SDSs



Source: UNDESA 2010b

Local governance

Local governments play a critical role not only in the integration of national SD policies into urban and rural planning and management, but also in developing an inclusive governance framework (UN 2010).

In the coming four decades, the same urban capacity will be built as in the last 4,000 years. The way in which cities are managed and redesigned will determine to a large extent the path towards SD (ICLEI 2011). By 2050 cities will host two thirds of the global population. Some 80-90% of total energy consumption will occur within their boundaries (currently they account for 70-80% greenhouse gas emissions) (Otto-Zimmermann 2011). Thus, the implementation of SD depends heavily on the commitment of local governments and stakeholders (Strandenaes 2011a). Local governments, although often overlooked and underrated in terms of influence, are critical players with capacity to adopt sustainability management plans adapted to specific circumstances. Citizen engagement is one of the many fields that could benefit from local approaches. The zero draft of the Rio+20 resolution acknowledges the importance of local governments and calls for integrating this level of government into all levels of decision-making on SD (UN 2012c).

The Local Agenda 21 movement has been one of the most prominent outcomes of the 1992 Summit in Rio de Janeiro. As of 2002, about 6,500 Local Agenda 21 plans were being implemented in 113 countries (ICLEI 2002). This number has increased considerably since that time and, in fact, many municipalities have developed strategic sustainability processes. At this point, there has been no up to date authoritative assessment of the effectiveness of Local Agenda 21. One of the main reasons for this is that the Local Agenda 21 is meant to be a long-term process and the thousands of existing strategies make this task daunting.

In addition, and often as a direct or indirect result of the Local Agenda 21 movement, thousands of local initiatives began to flourish some years ago (see ANNEX 3). Likely these local initiatives are currently among the most dynamic SD governance schemes.

Municipalities can sometimes have a greater degree of liberty in steering SD than national or EU level initiatives, for instance by means of local regulations, incentives and stakeholder partnerships. For example, in high-income nations local governments are often committed to a greater extent to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions than national governments (Satterthwaite 2010). Likewise, national governments usually do not limit car use or ownership while green mobility plans are a regular a feature of local SD strategies (Otto-Zimmermann 2011).

2.2.2. Proliferation of MEAs and fragmentation of international environmental governance

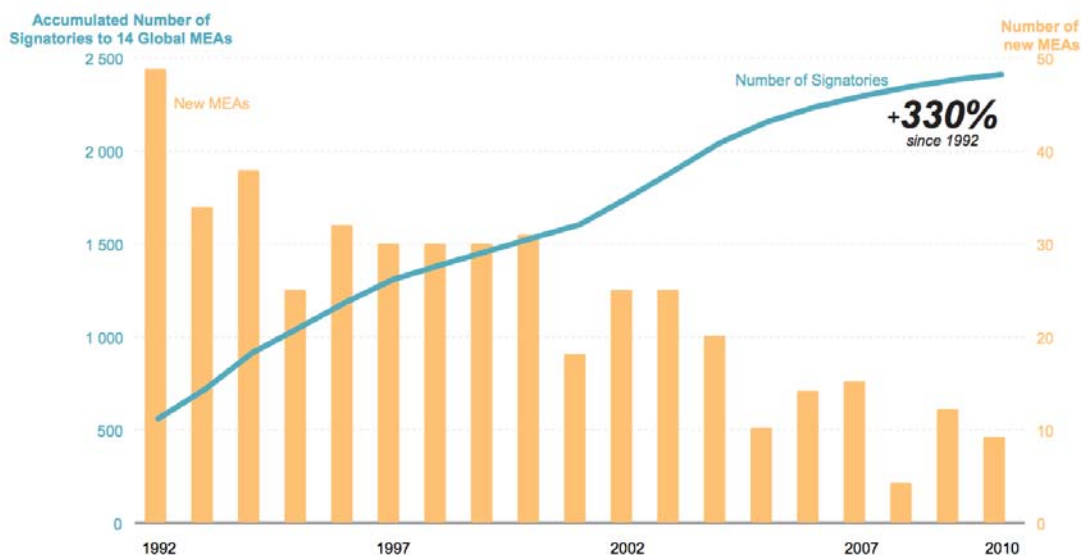
Currently, there are more than 500 MEAs¹¹ in place (UNEP 2011c, Najam et al. 2006, Kanie 2007). Figure 7 illustrates the evolution of MEAs over the last 20 years and the commitments of the parties.¹² The decreasing number of MEAs being agreed suggests that most of the pressing environmental problems are being addressed (but not necessarily solved) (UNEP 2011a).

¹¹ It should be pointed out though that many of the MEAs are institutionally linked, e.g., come clustered in institutional packages like The Law of the Sea or are protocols nested under the same framework convention.

¹² The graph includes 14 MEAs* and shows the total number of signatories for those 14 taken together (max. 2744). These MEAs comprise Basel Convention, Cartagena Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Convention on Migratory Species, World Heritage Convention, Kyoto Protocol, Secretariat for the Vienna Convention and for the Montreal Protocol, Ramsar Convention, Rotterdam Convention, Stockholm Convention, Convention to Combat Desertification, Convention on the Law of the Sea, Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Najam et al. (2006) disagrees and attributes this to “negotiation fatigue”, specifically that states are today less interested in establishing new MEAs, since they are overloaded with the obligations arising from those already in place.

Figure 7: MEAs – Number and signatories



Source: UNEP 2011a

Proliferation of MEAs and the institutional fragmentation around these agreements is one of the primary challenges facing the IEG framework. Ways of fostering coherence, coordination and synergies in this matter are among the issues to be discussed at the Rio+20 Summit. In the words of Najam and Halle (2010), the system is now populated “by negotiators and not by implementers”.

Najam and colleagues identified five main reasons leading to an “incoherent system of solutions [that] is becoming even more complex than the problems it was meant to address”. They point out that the fragmentation of the system is often “overemphasized by those who want to have a system governed or controlled from the top down”. Likewise, they also indicate advantages of the proliferation of MEAs (see Table 5).

Table 5: Pros and cons of the current MEA framework

Positive	Negative
Increased visibility and awareness of environmental threats	Treaty congestion
Competition can bring about better, more innovative results	Institutional and policy fragmentation
Secretariats develop pockets of expertise and their hosts have the pride of ownership	States, especially developing countries, struggle to meet institutional demands
Cooperation benefits going beyond environment	Duplication and conflicting agendas, although some degree of redundancy is desirable
Numerous entry points for global civil society	The role of science in IEG is diminishing

Source: Najam et al. 2006

Below is a brief description of some negative aspects of the current situation since these will be addressed in the forthcoming Summit.

A large number of MEAs, secretariats, subsidiary bodies and ad-hoc working groups have been established over the last 20 years. This has led to treaty and institutional congestion, which can lead to inefficient implementation. In addition, the agendas of some MEAs overlap and even at times conflict with each other, since MEAs are usually built from scratch by different policy-makers and stakeholders (Najam et al 2006, Kanie 2007).¹³

The large number of MEAs also entails considerable administrative and institutional costs associated with meetings, negotiations and reporting. These costs increase significantly due to the different geographical locations of the different secretariats. As a consequence, states, especially developing countries, have difficulties meeting all these demands (Najam et al 2006, Kanie 2007, UNEP 2011c). The optimum participation of stakeholders from civil society is also impaired by the large economic resources that are needed to participate within the current framework (Oberthür 2002).

Clustering of MEAs is one of the approaches being recognised as a potential solution to rationalising the fragmented environmental governance system while fostering synergies between MEAs (UNEP 2011c, UN 2012c). Some MEAs are already moving in this direction, especially in the chemicals and waste domain (UN 2010).

The final argument put forward is the weakening of the science-policy interface in IEG. Najam et al. (2006) and Kanie (2007) argue that despite the availability of rigorous information through, for instance, the IPCC, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, and the Global Environment Outlook, there is a need to synthesise and channel the flow of information to policy makers.

2.2.3. The role of international financial institutions

International financial institutions (IFI) such as the World Bank (WB) and the Regional Development Banks have the potential to be major enablers of SD and therefore should play a key role on the transition towards sustainability. However, important structural changes are required to align their activities with SD objectives. This section will focus on the role of the WB as one of the potential key enablers of a real transition towards SD.

The WB is a UN specialised agency with freedom to act independently. Not only it is a trustee of funds established through multilateral processes related to the environment and SD, but also finances an enormous number of development projects worth billions of dollars (Stoddart 2011a). Herbertson (2011) argues that the WB is now a "demand-driven" body that allows governments to independently select their development path. In contrast, critics argue that rather than serving as a neutral actor, the WB is a donor-driven body that is steered by developed countries, despite its ultimate objective of reducing poverty and supporting development (Stoddart 2011a, Friends of the Earth et al. 2011).

Although since its inception, the WB has been more focused on finance and development than on the environment and human rights, the evolution of the concept of "(sustainable) development", the WB has undertaken several reforms to align its investment policies toward a more environmentally- and socially-friendly development. There is, however, controversy over the effectiveness of the current set of environmental and social standards and Environmental Impact Assessments that have been established by the bank (Najam et al. 2006). Moreover, these standards do not apply to a large share of WB loans (Herbertson 2011). Therefore, the extent to which these reforms contribute to a more SD remains unknown.

¹³ One of most cited examples refers to HFCs, which is proposed as an alternative of CFCs in the context of the 'Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer', but at the same time, it is a GHG.

The energy sector is among the most controversial investment areas. During the 2008-2011 period, 46% of the WB investments in this field were allocated to fossil-fuel-related projects (i.e. oil, gas, and coal projects, and policy loans, transmission and distribution and financing that is directed toward fossil fuels) (Friends of the Earth et al. 2011). In this context, the WB is neither committed to measure, nor to reduce the carbon footprint arising from its investments (Herbertson 2011).

The WB is probably the only global financing institution with the capability to undertake major investments with the potential of facilitating the transition to sustainability for developing countries (Stoddart 2011a). It is for this reason that UN agencies will need to put effort toward ensuring that the WB implements the principles embraced by the UN such that the IFIs and the UN are working toward common objectives (Herbertson 2011).

2.2.4. Stakeholder engagement

SD governance relies on the broad participation of a diversity of stakeholders. Agenda 21 identified nine major stakeholder groups, namely women, children and youth, indigenous people and their communities, NGOs, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, scientific and technological community, and farmers. These groups have different identities, roles and powers of influence.

Global governance is evolving from a state-centric system towards more open participatory systems (French 2002). The participation of major stakeholder groups in general (UN 2010), and of local governments, civil society organisations and business in particular (Najam et al. 2006), is continuously growing in decision-making processes. NGOs are key agents in providing knowledge, creating international norms and implementing environmental and development programmes in many developing countries (ibid.). Business is also increasingly committed to SD. The adoption and implementation of CSR policies, environmental reporting, voluntary standards, environmental management systems, private-private, private-public and private-civil society partnerships have all grown considerably to become commonplace. Though it is undeniable that the attitude of business has changed over the years, critics argue that voluntary codes are “declarations of vague business principles and lack independent performance monitoring”, while many partnerships have been characterised as greenwashing (ibid.).

Collins et al. (2005) point out that “stakeholder engagement may indeed take us some distance from relative unsustainability, but it may serve to mask some real issues to do with a lack of fundamental agreement and common interest as to what is actually required for sustainability at a systems level”. In other words, the different ways of understanding SD and the uneven levels of commitment by each stakeholder might not have the desired effect and thus, may not be sufficient to reach SD.

Broad participatory governance cannot substitute for the role of government regulation (French 2002, Najam et al. 2006). Thus, national governments will continue to play a central role in changing consumption and production patterns, correcting market failures, protecting vulnerable groups in society, and creating a democratically legitimate and inclusive governance framework (Baker 2009).

2.2.5. Leapfrogging towards Sustainable Consumption and Production¹⁴

The shift of current consumption and production patterns toward sustainability at the industrial and household levels is a goal that demands collaboration systems between many social actors, policy makers, businesses, organized civil society and academia. Hence, fostering dialogue among the concerned actors is necessary to achieve real commitments and action that leads to SCP practice.

A global process, namely the Marrakech Process, has supported the implementation of SCP projects and strategies and the elaboration of a 10-Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP). The process responded to the call for the development of a 10YFP to support regional and national initiatives to promote the shift towards SCP patterns at the 2002 Johannesburg Summit. The Marrakech Process took the name of location of the First International Expert Meeting on the 10YFP in 2003. Since that time, UNEP together with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) assumed a coordinating role for the activities under the Marrakech Process. A proposed 10YFP was reviewed by the CSD during the 2010/11 two-year cycle.

UNEP and UNDESA coordinate the overall process through a body called the **Secretary**, which also identifies synergies and compiles information to showcase best practices at the government policy and private sector levels. In 2008, an **Advisory Committee** was established to provide expert advice to the process. The committee is comprised of public and private stakeholders from all regions. **International and Regional Implementation Meetings (RIM)** have been held to enable the identification of priorities for action, as well as the exchange of experiences, advances and best practices. **National Roundtables and Programmes** in China, Brazil, Mexico, India and South Africa have been established to raise awareness among relevant actors, identify country specific SCP priorities and define tailored policies for each country. Aside from these spaces for dialogue and interaction, the process also conceived other platforms such as the **Cooperation Dialogues and Forums** with other UN organisations (e.g. UNDP, UNESCO, etc.) and other development agencies.

The framework document on 10YFP on SCP was finalized by UNEP, UNDESA and all Marrakech Process partners in advance of the 19th session of the CSD, held in May of 2011. After intense negotiations, the working group on the 10YFP reached an agreement on the text including its common vision, functions, organisational structure, programmes and means of implementation. However, the CSD failed to adopt the decision due to disagreements regarding the text on chemicals, waste management, linkages and cross-cutting issues.

Nonetheless, according to the zero draft of the resolution to be adopted during Rio+20 (UN 2012c), it is likely that SCP will be increasingly recognised in the coming years. The draft resolution specifically states that “we agree to establish a 10-Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) as part of a global pact on sustainable consumption and production, based on the text elaborated in the negotiations in the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development at its nineteenth session”.

The voluntary, stakeholder and market driven nature of the 10YFP has helped to maintain momentum to date. However, if considerable public (and private) financing mechanisms for these programmes cannot be leveraged in the coming period, the 10YFP will remain either as a “wish list” of actions and/or a series of niche projects. The EU-funded SWITCH-Asia Programme is currently seen by many as the only serious source of public financing on implementation for SCP actions.

¹⁴ This section is largely based on UNEP 2012d.

To avoid patchy, uncoordinated efforts with little impact integration of SCP themes into and beyond environmental ministries and inter-ministerial coordination are urgently needed.

One of the important Marrakech Process mechanisms is the **Task Forces**. Between 2005 and 2006, seven Task Forces working on specific SCP issues were created as voluntary initiatives led by national governments. The Task Forces can be seen as mechanisms to implement concrete projects at national, regional and global levels. The Task Forces together generated some 70 initiatives including 5 sets of policy recommendations, 33 SCP tools and methodologies for capacity building, and 27 demonstration projects/good practices. Major outcomes from each Task Force are summarized in ANNEX 4.

Despite the limited success in mainstreaming SCP policies and tools to date, several steps have been taken over the past nine years to identify regional priorities, promising cases and to develop National SCP Action Plans. Since SCP presents different challenges in different parts of the world, regional SCP programmes identified key priorities (see Table 6) and developed regional and national strategies and programmes. Major outcomes of the Task Forces are described below.

Table 6: Key SCP priorities identified at different SCP meetings

REGION PRIORITIES	AFRICA	ASIA & THE PACIFIC	EUROPE	AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN	ARAB REGION (WEST ASIA)
Priority sectors					
Energy	R	R	E	E	R
Agriculture – Food	R	R	E	E	R
Housing (Building & Construction)	R		E		
Transport / Mobility	R	R	E		
Tourism	E	E		E	R
Waste	R	R		E	R
Water	R	E		E	R
Priority SCP Programmes / Tools					
National SCP Action Plans / Programmes	R	E	E	R	R
Finance and Economic Framework for SCP	E	R	E	E	
Sustainable Procurement	R	R	E	R	R
Sustainable Products & Services (labelling & standards)	R	E	E	E	
Education, Information on SCP & Sustainable Lifestyles	R	E	E	R	R
Enhancing Business Competitiveness through SCP (SMEs & Value Chains)	R	E	E	R	E
Urban and Rural Development (Sustainable Cities)	R	E	E	E	R
Cleaner Production	R	R			E
Regional SCP Information Network	R	E		R	R
Cross-Cutting Issues					
Poverty Eradication	R	E		E	R

E: Priority identified at SCP Expert Meetings

R: Priority identified from Regional meetings and the RIMs

Source: UNEP and UNDESA 2010

A highlight in **America** was the development of a regional SCP strategy from which the Forum of Environmental Ministers of America and the Caribbean endorsed important elements that have been in place since 2006. A further success was the establishment of the regional council of government experts on SCP as well as the development of a regional information network on SCP (Red PyCS¹⁵). This platform has strengthened the exchange of experience among policy makers in the region. This and the efforts of the Secretary in the region have supported countries like Colombia, Chile, Ecuador and Brazil to develop concrete actions to design and promote sustainable public procurement policies.

In **North America**, countries are shaping their strategies to address SCP as a policy issue. In the period since 2008 the region has been analysing the linkages between SCP and the greening of approaches to help overcome the current economic downturn and to mitigate climate change. In addition, SCP success stories, lessons learned, and good practices have been compiled and published (UNEP and UNDESA 2010).

In **Africa**, the linkages between SCP and poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods have been emphasized as a priority for the region. In 2006, the African Roundtable on SCP was institutionalised as a regional network organisation. Located in Addis Ababa, it also served as Secretariat for the African 10YFP. National SCP Programmes have been successfully completed in Mauritius, Tanzania and at the city level in Cairo and Maputo.

In the **Asia-Pacific** region an official linkage between the Green Growth initiative and the Marrakech Process has been established. The establishment of the €150 million SWITCH-Asia Programme¹⁶, funded by the EU since 2007, has reinforced this development. SWITCH-Asia is the most important global international SCP cooperation initiative. It aims to support the transition towards SCP and to replicate good practice among consumer groups and SMEs in 19 Asian countries. Aside from individual projects the SWITCH-Asia programme has a Network Facility Component and Policy Support Component (PSC). SWITCH-Asia PSC aims to create an enabling environment to strengthen or initiate policies that help to mainstream SCP in regional sub-regional and national development programmes. The regional policy support component has recently compiled the most comprehensive assessment SCP policies ever completed to identify needs and capacities in the Asia region. The PSC was also able to establish the "ASEAN Forum on SCP" within eight months of operation. The regional SWITCH-PSC is expected to be one of the main drivers of the forum's activities over the coming three years (SWITCH-Asia 2012).

In **Europe**, the Marrakesh Process catalysed the European SCP and Sustainable Industrial Policy Action Plan (European Commission 2008). Engagement on SCP actions with retail companies in the Retailer's Forum could be seen as an innovative instrument that was included in the Action Plan.

In the **Arab Region** the regional strategy on SCP was launched and approved in 2009 by the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment. Furthermore, the regional SCP roundtable was institutionalised and a temporary secretariat was created in 2009.

¹⁵ Information under: <http://www.redpycs.net/>

¹⁶ Information under: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/regional-cooperation/environment/switch_en.htm & <http://www.switch-asia.eu/>

2.2.6. Governance of the global environmental commons

Governing the global environmental commons remains one of the main challenges of SD governance. Governance of the environmental commons needs to happen at multiple levels and is these needs are often incompatible with current governance regimes built around nation states and multilateral agreements. Some aspects of the global commons (such as the protection of the ozone layer) have an entirely global aspect; others (such as clean air) are transboundary; and still others (such as biodiversity) are multilevel in character (Brousseau et al. 2012). According to Rockstrom and colleagues (2009), we have already crossed planetary boundaries in the fields of climate change and the rate of loss of biodiversity. As long ago as 1968 Hardin used the term tragedy of the commons to describe how “freedom in the commons brings ruin to all” (Hardin 1968). In other words, absent of appropriate management incentives free riding and ultimately leads to overuse and decline of the common resource.

Optimal governance of the global environmental commons and national sovereignty usually clash since measures taken by governments tend to be taken in accordance with national priorities rather than to common global interests (Stoddart 2011a, Ivanova and Roy 2007). States are willing neither to cede part of their sovereignty to an international body empowered to take decisions on the basis of common global interests, nor to bear the significant costs of protecting assets within their national boundaries for the common good. These are two of the main reasons behind the absence of effective compliance mechanisms in MEAs. Alternative governance models such as stakeholder partnerships have begun to emerge. Likewise, mechanisms to create incentives for improved decision-making at the national level have also started to emerge, an example being REDD+¹⁷.

Based on the work done by Ostrom (1990) and Dietz et al. (2003), Stern (2011) identified seven principles for effective governance of the global commons:

- Invest in science to understand the resource and its interactions with users and those affected by its use.
- Establish independent monitoring of the resource and its use that is accountable to the range of interested and affected parties.
- Ensure meaningful participation of the parties in framing questions for analysis, defining the importance of scientific results, and developing rules.
- Integrate scientific analysis with broadly based deliberation.
- Higher-level actors should facilitate participation of lower-level actors.
- Engage and connect a variety of institutional forms from local to global in developing rules, monitoring, and sanctioning.
- Plan for institutional adaptation and change.

¹⁷ REDD+ stands for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation; the ‘plus’ denotes the conservation of forests, enhancement of forest carbon stocks and sustainable management of forests.

3. ROAD TO RIO+20: RETHINKING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

This section presents and evaluates proposed options for a potential reform of IEG and the IFSD on the basis of ongoing discussions within the preparatory processes for the Rio+20 Summit.

As described in the previous chapter, SD governance can be characterised as suffering from institutional fragmentation of activities and agreements, inefficiency and a lack of coordination and financial support. Rather than contributing to solving coordination problems, new agreements, programs and funds have in many ways served to increase coordination challenges (Unmüßig 2011). Accordingly, since the 2001 Johannesburg Summit, reform efforts and initiatives have increased to respond to shortcomings, gaps, fragmentation and the lack of coherence in the IFSD and IEG system. These efforts include discussions and initiatives led by the UNEP Governing Council (GC), the GMEF, the High Level Panel on System Wide Coherence (2006), the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) Management Review of Environmental Governance within the UN System (2008), and the Consultative Group of Ministers and High Level Representatives on International Environmental Governance (2009). As part of this process, a broader discussion among governments, stakeholder groups, and academics actively accompanied the formal and informal consultations (Bernstein and Brunée 2011).

Aside from stakeholder consultations, the Preparatory Committee for Rio+20 decided to request inputs and contributions from member states, UN organisations, IFIs, major groups and other stakeholders by disseminating a questionnaire asking for success factors, challenges and risks to a positive outcome at the upcoming Summit (UNGA 2011).¹⁸ It is hoped that Rio+20 will “provide an opportunity for agreement on an ambitious and effective international environmental governance reform package and on strengthening the broader institutional framework for sustainable development” (ibid.).¹⁹

3.1. Reform options

According to Vijge (2010), the existing proposals for reform and/or a new environment organisation contain so many variations in the functions, design and implications of such an environment organisation that there is yet no existing proposal delivering a “fully-fledged, analytically grounded and practical reform blueprint”. There should be a clear idea of the functional problems of the existing structures and what needs to be improved before a discussion on formal options is possible. Specifically, the “form should follow function” principle must be foremost (ibid.). Most proposals for reform have avoided difficult institutional questions such as the rights, goals, rules and decision-making procedures focussing rather on administrative and organisational improvements (Young 2008, Bernstein and Brunnée 2011).

¹⁸ By January 2011, a total of 108 responses had been received comprising altogether 49 responses from Member States, 24 from developed countries, including a common submission from the EU and its Member States, and 25 from developing countries or economies in transition. Further responses were received from 32 organisations or networks of major groups and from 27 UN organisations. All the responses are available on the website for the Conference (UNGA 2011).

¹⁹ A broader description of the milestones leading to and actors involved in the IEG/IFSD reform is given in ANNEX 5.

Altogether appear to be two major approaches and proposals: The first being on the one hand arguments for a broader reform of the UN system (e.g. Biermann et al. 2011), the second on the other hand being arguments for incremental change, given the lack of commitment for a broader reform (Olsen and Elder 2011, Ivanova 2011, c.f. Section 3.2).

Since the strands of the various arguments are frequently linked, the options for reforming environmental and SD governance frameworks are not seen as competing, but rather as complementary (Bernstein and Brunnée 2011).

3.1.1. Option 1: Enhancing UNEP

The secretariat of UNEP has its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. For a long time, it was the first and only UN programme headquarters located in a developing country (Bauer 2009). With a staff of 600 employees UNEP has grown significantly but is still relatively poorly resourced relative to organisations such as the World Food Programme and the WHO, which each enjoy a staff of some 9,000 employees. The proposed biennial support budget for 2010-2011 is approximately \$434 million; 40% of this coming from the Environment Fund on the basis of the Voluntary Indicative Scale of Contributions. Compared to other UN organisations the budget is small, which is also a consequence of the fact that there is no operational mandate (Simon 2010). The UNDP, which has an operational mandate, had a budget of \$4.1 billion in 2008, exceeding the UNEP budget by a factor of ten.

The 1997 Nairobi Declaration states that "The United Nations Environment Programme, whose mandate is to coordinate the UN environmental activities, is closest to being the 'leading global environmental authority'" (UNEP 1997). According to this mandate, UNEP is the central environmental institution within the UN. The program aims to develop normative models that promote international negotiations and thus serve as a catalyst for the emergence of multilateral agreements. In addition, it is obliged to observe the state of the environment, to document the effects of environmental efforts at national and international level and promote the integration of environmental mainstreaming in other institutions. Another task is it to assist states in the implementation of environmental conventions and to monitor the progress (Simon 2010). According to Vijge (2010) "there is no single organisation that possesses authority or political strength to effectively coordinate all international environmental efforts" within the complex international system for IEG.

Proposals to enhance UNEP are based on its 1972 mandate as defined in the Nairobi Declaration of 1997, and aim to supplement the current mandate: "1) investing UNEP with extended decision-making power applicable to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) that choose to participate in such arrangements while maintaining its formal status as a UN Programme, in accordance with the recommendations of the Report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment (Delivering as One [DaO]); and 2) establishing new tasks for UNEP that can be associated with establishing a High Commissioner for the Environment, using the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights as a source of inspiration" (Fauchald 2010).

There is a series of proposals to enhance functions to build upon UNEP's current strength and/or mandate (Ivanova 2011). In some cases, the same set of proposals could also apply to a new environment organisation (Bernstein and Brunnée 2011). Currently, UNEP is the only institution within the UN system with a mandate to focus specifically on environmental issues (Strandenaes 2011b). Table 7 lists key proposals currently under discussion in stakeholder consultations with a brief outline of structural, legal and financial implications of each proposal.

Table 7: Enhancing UNEP

Key proposals	Structural implications	Legal implications	Financial implications
Universal membership (currently 58 state representatives in the GC)	Enhances legitimacy but less effective decision-making without majority decisions being possible ²⁰	Creation of an Executive Board (EB) recommendable, but UNGA resolution needed	Marginal increase in cost
Enhance capacity-building and cohesive approach to meeting country needs a) UNEP Implementation Arm b) Technical assistance	Increasing expertise in UN/UNEP regional offices, scale up Bali Strategic Plan	a) Based on existing mandate b) DaO model	Additional financing and staff needs
Permanent science-policy interface and/or information clearinghouse mechanism or "Global Information Network"	Improved analytical capacity/infrastructure to share/disseminate information/data/ knowledge, esp. in developing countries	Similar to capacity building reform	Costs for establishment of global information network and web platform
Clustering of MEAs (almost 500 MEAs currently in force)	Review and evaluate implementation; knowledge management and reporting; streamline secretariat functions, system-wide framework for capacity building for MEA implementation	Specific agreement by Conference of the Parties (CoP) required; administration by UNEP would require UNGA approval	Unclear; resistance to proposal very likely
Enhanced role for the EMG or a system-wide environmental strategy	Division of labour with other coordinating mechanisms	Not significant	Unclear

Source: Based on Bernstein and Brunnée 2011, UNEP 2010, Simon 2010

The most frequently discussed point is the introduction of a universal membership in the GC. The lack of representation of 58 (voting) members for global environmental issues, who are elected by the UNGA for four-year terms, do not take into consideration the principle of equally distributed regional representation and can perpetuate North-South divisions (Olsen and Elder 2011). Only providing universal participation in UNEP's GMEF is insufficient. The principle of unanimity voting, by contrast, makes it difficult to reach a consensus on key issues (ibid.). Some proposals therefore analyse and discuss new forms of majority decision-making.²¹ Nevertheless, resistance may evolve from those countries that would "lose comparable advantages in the GC decision-making process, as their vote will mean less with increased numbers of voting members" (ibid.).

²⁰ A few suggestions are included in Olson and Elder 2011.

²¹ e.g. EU: multi-level co-decision-making system, qualified majority voting (71% of voting members' weight which is a number of votes assigned), double majority voting, or given with regards to the proportion of population represented); GEF (182 member governments): double weighed majority, at least 60% from all member countries and 60% from total contributions) (Olsen and Elder 2011).

3.1.2. Option 2: Creating an **umbrella organisation** for SD

The proposal to create a new umbrella organisation for SD envisages a new organisational structure that would redefine the role and mandate of the key SD organisations ECOSOC, UNEP and CSD, with an 'umbrella' built over these existing structures. This particular proposal, coming from Brazil, seeks to better integrate the three pillars of sustainability and coordinate the relevant institutions and MEAs (Bernstein and Brunnée 2011).

Table 8: Creating an umbrella organisation for SD

Key proposals	Structural implications	Legal implications	Financial implications
New umbrella organisation (overseeing ECOSOC, UNEP, CSD, and MEAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Overall governing body with limited or universal membership b) Advisory board of representatives of associated organisations c) Executive head and secretariat with secondments from associated organisations d) Strategic programme and financial arrangement e) Executive umbrella committee of senior officials 	Independent legal instrument or UNGA resolution required; if relevance for MEAs approval by CoP necessary	Contributions from coordinated bodies

Source: Based on Bernstein and Brunnée 2011 and UNEP 2010

The "creation of a new organisation that should have the mandate to coordinate other UN organisations and MEA secretariats (is) extremely difficult" because, first, a UNGA resolution, second, approval of all CoP of the MEAs would be required and, since the whole consultation process is lead by UNEP, it is very unlikely that this option could reach a status of being in serious implementation discussions (Vijge 2010).

3.1.3. Option 3: Creating a **specialised agency** for the environment

There is wide support for strengthening UNEP but opinions vary with regard to creating a specialised agency for the environment as set out in and practised under articles 57 and 63 of the UN charter. The proposal for a specialised agency is the most widely advocated solution and is most frequently discussed (even in the UNGA) as the preferred option to establish "a more autonomous, permanent, and authoritative lead organisation for the environment within the UN system" (Bernstein and Brunée 2011). Most proposals refer to this institution as the United Nations Environment Organisation (UNEO), a subsidiary UNGA organ with (automatic) universal membership, and stress increased staff and predictable financial resources, an expanded mandate, and enhanced legal powers (Vijge 2010, Chasek 2011). Other sources of inspiration, for example FAO and WTO, have been used for designing the proposals for how a World Environment Organisation (WEO) could operate and better relate to the management of the existing MEAs (Fauchauld 2010). However, at this point, the discussion becomes confusing and sometimes vague as many countries and stakeholders do not take a clear position on the options to which they refer. Terms are partly mixed and legal implications remain often unconsidered (Stoddart 2011a).

The establishment of a specialised agency could use either WEO or UNEO as a label because the main differences are found in their form and not necessarily in their function. However, it is the implications of each of these options that can be very important for member states (Bernstein and Brunée 2011).

The purpose of the institution is to unite the existing fragmented institutional architecture under a common roof. It could integrate the GEF, the Forum on Forests United Nations, or the numerous MEAs and conventions. Thus, synergies could be better exploited when coordinated under the roof of a single organisation. As a programme UNEP largely depends on external contributions. The creation of a new legally binding agreement for a specialised agency for the environment could provide financial security and significantly promote the implementation of measures, agreements and projects.

Table 9: Creating a specialised agency for the environment

Key proposals	Structural implications	Legal implications	Financial implications
UNEO	Subsidiary UNGA organ with (automatic) universal membership	No executive head, no ability to create treaties	Budget to be approved by UNGA
WEO	Provide policy advice and guidance; authority for assessment and early warning	Full organisation status similar to Specialised Agencies such as FAO, or full organisation status such as WTO – adoption of a legally binding treaty	No access to assessed contributions from member states because institution is outside the UN system

Source: Based on Bernstein and Brunnée 2011, UNEP 2010, Vijge 2010

Environmental issues could enjoy an enhanced profile in other inter-governmental regimes by conceptualising the WEO as a new organisation outside the UN system. As an example, a WEO would be of a status similar to the WTO. In view of the considerations to (partially) converge environmental and development issues at the UN level, UNEO could be better coordinated with the UNDP. Nevertheless, a global authority such as WEO (with full organisation status of specialised agencies such as WHO, International Labour Organisation (ILO), WMO) needs to be adopted through a legally binding treaty and “can only come into existence if the strongest actors assert the necessary power to create it” (Vijge 2010). Interestingly, many of the proposals to create a new environment organisation come from less powerful states, and some of the most powerful states (e.g. the US and China) are opposed to or sceptical of such proposals (ibid.). Due to the fact that UNEP has only 58 members it is not possible to decide on reforming the IEG system within the GC of UNEP. A decision to change the IEG system within the UN can only be taken by the UNGA, which would presumably be quite difficult and time-consuming (ibid.).

3.1.4. Option 4: Reforming the ECOSOC and the CSD

The CSD is a functional commission of the ECOSOC comprising 53 members elected for three year terms by the ECOSOC from the UN member states and UN specialised agencies. The Commission meets annually for a period of two to three weeks, with substantive and technical services provided by UNDESA’s Division for Sustainable Development. The Commission reports to ECOSOC and, through it, to the Second Committee of the UNGA (Carpenter 2002). According to Bernstein and Brunée (2011), “time has come to elevate the profile, influence, and authority of CSD or replace it with a higher level body. The basic rationale is very similar to the arguments put forward for upgrading or enhancement of UNEP, namely that sustainable development concerns and their increasing significance over the last 20 years, along with significant gaps and shortcomings in coordination, cohesion and implementation, stronger institutions are needed”.

This could also be a reform of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) as a body that oversees and guides development activities of 32 UN agencies into the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG).

Given that some CSD sessions (e.g. 2007 and 2011) even failed to agree on an outcome, it is said that its program and structures are inflexible and leave “no room to address important emerging issues” (ibid.). Some CSD critics have even called for its closure and the incorporation of its functions elsewhere within the UN system (Carpenter 2002). However, a proposal to close a UN body would most likely face strong resistance from many governments and stakeholders because of the “public signal such action would send” (ibid.).

“However, so far, ECOSOC has proven unwilling or unable to enhance its current role in sustainable development governance” (Bernstein 2011). Therefore, another option is a proposal to create a body, such as a Sustainable Development Council (SDC), similar to the Human Rights Council, which would include the participation of ministers of planning, finance or economy. It would have greater influence in the dialogue with implementation bodies and would have its decisions incorporated into country-level assistance frameworks (ibid.). This council could also complement the proposed Option 1, to enhance UNEP.

Table 10: Reforming ECOSOC and CSD

Key proposals	Structural implications	Legal implications	Financial implications
Reform of CSD and ECOSOC	(a) Merge CSD into ECOSOC (b) Refigure CSD work programme and introduce SD implementation review mechanism (c) Dialogue segment with other governing bodies (d) Mainstream CSD decisions into other programmes, agencies, funds	(a) Charter amendment; (b) Internal decision; (c) Potential overlap with UNDG	(a) Not significant (b) Relevant (c)+ (d) not significant
SDC	Independent and authoritative voice; reporting or systematic review mechanisms for SD implementation at national level	Subsidiary body of the UNGA, similar to Human Rights Council; outlined as a complement to enhancing UNEP (option 1)	Administrative support for additional analytical staff for review system

Source: Based on Bernstein and Brunnée 2011 and UNEP 2010

According to Bernstein and Brunnée (2011) and Strandenaes (2011b), the SDC is the most promising option to address the integration of three dimensions of SD. The legal process of creating a Human Rights Council could be taken as a model for a timeline and process.

3.1.5. Option 5: Enhanced institutional reforms and streamlining the existing structures

Some analysts suggest that “institutional complexity can be a reasonable response to the need for flexibility, experimentation, and political feasibility”, that can leave doorways open, when “one pathway may be blocked” (Young 2008). In fact, “some redundancy can even lead to greater robustness” (Bernstein and Brunnée 2011). The danger of a great institutional complexity, however, is that it indirectly supports those with the large capacity and resources to cope with time-consuming negotiations and multiple negotiating fora.

In addition, it requires both the political and strategic capacity at the international level, and well-educated and financially equipped human resources for discussing implementation and policy development (Bernstein and Brunée 2011).

Today, the UN system encompasses 19 specialised agencies and related organisations (e.g. WHO), thirteen funds and programmes (e.g. UNDP), nine functional commissions (e.g. CSD), five subsidiary bodies (e.g. Human Rights Council), five regional commissions (e.g. Economic Commission for Africa), four research and training institutes (e.g. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development) and many regional and country level structures and secretariats, expert bodies, standing committees and other UN entities.²² The proposal to enhance institutional reforms is based on the continuation of current approaches and work, taking into consideration that the IEG system and the IFSD need further development and adjustment (Fauchald 2010). To this end, existing structures should be streamlined to allow for broad participation and cost-effectiveness. The key proposals presented within this context are shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Streamlining the present IEG structure

Key proposals	Structural implications	Legal implications
Build on DaO	Change UNDG into UNSDG; non-rotational members of the advisory UNDG group are: FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, WHO and UNIDO	UNEP as non-rotating member of the Advisory Group of an UNSDG
Enhanced System-Wide Planning Processes for SD through the CEB	a) EMG could take over the task b) Re-establish Inter-Agency Committee on SD c) New High-level committee on SD	c) Inclusion of WTO and Bretton Woods Institutions
Develop SD goals	Based on MDGs	Potentially create benchmarks and accountability mechanism
Global economic coherence and SD	a) Enhanced Integrated Framework b) Aid for Trade has no explicit SD mandate	Integration with WTO's coherence mandate

Source: Based on Bernstein and Brunnée 2011 and UNEP 2010

"As apparent from the huge numbers of calls and proposals for IEG reform in the last forty years, they are most controversial. Some argue that this controversy is the main factor why no decisions have been made. One contentious issue is that of how to finance the IEG system. It is generally agreed that adequate and predictable financial resources are important to strengthen IEG, but whether new and additional resources are needed, where these resources should come from and where they should go is still a point of debate" (Vijge 2010).

²² Information under www.un.org/en/aboutun/structure/

3.2. State of the debate and outlook

At present the discussion around the IFSD has resulted in the January 2012, Zero Draft of the UN document "The future we want" taking a "lowest common denominator" form as a basis for further negotiations (see ANNEX 6).²³ Consequently, the document suggests the reaffirmation of the central role of UNGA as the highest policy-making body and the ECOSOC as the central mechanism for the coordination of the UN system (UN 2012c).

In May 2010, the Preparatory Committee for the Rio+20 Summit decided to seek information, input and contributions from member States, the UN system, IFIs, major groups and other stakeholders on their experiences including the success factors, challenges and risks with respect to the objective and themes of the Summit through direct inquiries and by soliciting submissions (UNGA 2011).

To this end, two separate questionnaires were prepared to explore the two Summit themes with a specific questionnaire exploring the issue of the "Institutional Framework for sustainable development". 289 submissions have been received to date (see ANNEX 7).²⁴

According to an assessment of the Stakeholder Forum (2010), the country positions respecting a reform of the IFSD can be summarised as follows (see ANNEX 8 for more detailed information):

Supportive: Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, EU, Egypt, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway, Switzerland, USA, UNEP

Unclear: China, Workers and Trade Union, Science and Technology

Sceptical/Negative: NGOs

At the Consultative Group meeting held in Helsinki in November of 2010 there was still no consensus, which means that all options remained open for further exploration. In February 2011, the UNEP GC put the reform proposal on the agenda again on the table. Great differences became apparent between the EU and Switzerland on the one hand, pleading for a strong new specialised environment body that was built upon UNEP, and the US, China, Russia, India and Argentina on the other hand. The potential value of a centralised agency for the environment is still controversial. In addition, far-reaching reform plans are perceived with great scepticism by a large part of the emerging and developing countries. According to Unmüßig (2011), an attempt to create a new umbrella organisation may fail to win the necessary support.

Brazil is an exception. Since 2007 it has called for a new UN umbrella organisation for the environment and SD. As host of the Rio+20 Conference, the Brazilian government is advocating for a successful outcome (ibid.). At the last preparatory meeting for the Rio +20 Conference in New York, Brazil renewed its recommendations for a UN umbrella organisation, and proposed a revision to the roles and mandates of ECOSOC, UNEP and the CSD.

Since 2004 France has been calling for an upgrade of UNEP to that of a specialised agency by the establishment of a WEO. This proposal is supported by the EU. The US, however, appears uninterested in such a proposal, while the position of the emerging and developing countries can be described as indifferent.

²³ According to Chasek (2011), the document is based on 679 submissions altogether (100 member states, 5 political groups, 72 UN agencies and IGOs, 497 major groups and the outputs of the five regional preparatory meetings).

²⁴ All the submissions can be found in www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.php?menu=87

China and Kenya, on the other hand, appear to be cautious. Among the non-governmental organisations, Greenpeace supports the initiative. While a specialised agency would be in a good position to play an active role in decision-making on MEAs or to negotiate its own treaties, the EU proposal specifically endorses support for the continued legal autonomy of existing MEAs. Hence, the EU and its allies favour a more top-down and coordinated approach under their proposal for a more powerful and full-fledged organisation for the environment (Vijge 2010). At the same time, closer cooperation between the new agency and MEAs is suggested by proposing to establish high-level representatives from the MEAs in the agency's decision-making bodies (Bernstein and Brunée 2011). The US and the other JUSCANZ countries (Japan, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) appear to prefer "a practical, bottom-up, fragmented and decentralised approach with less bureaucracy" as the best way to reorganise IEG (Vijge 2010).

The on-going debates between North and South around the SD concept influences the preferences for policy proposals with regard to the reform of IEG. While many countries in the North (especially the EU member states) would prefer to establish a specialised agency for the environment, many countries in the South prefer an institution that deals with SD (ibid.). Developing countries have expressed concerns about an environment organisation that can "take attention away from issue of socio-economic development and thus undermine developmental issues on the political agenda" (ibid.). In this context – and just as critical –, the perception of natural resources as common-pool resources, as well as the introduction of environmental regulations in global trade regimes are perceived as threatening by many developing country stakeholders. The establishment of an effective environmental governance framework is seen as "another source of conditions and sanctions, and with enforcement powers comparable to WTO" (ibid.). While the G77 calls for focusing on development and capacity-building in the South and providing additional financing for this task, the US favours an improvement of cost-effectiveness and efficiency of the UN system without increasing its budget.

Most countries in the North "want UNEP to be a science-based organisation, the mandate of which is primarily the production of scientific knowledge. In contrast, many countries in the South see UNEP as an organisation that can support (developing) countries with capacity-building" (ibid.). Not surprisingly, some observers believe that the US and the Group of 77 are delaying efforts to reach a consensus because they are not willing to surrender part of their sovereignty to a supranational organisation for the environment. According to a very illustrative theoretical analysis²⁵ underpinning the findings collected above, several barriers must be taken into consideration to explain the absence of IEG reform to date. These findings are also likely important to an assessment of the upcoming negotiations on institutional reform.

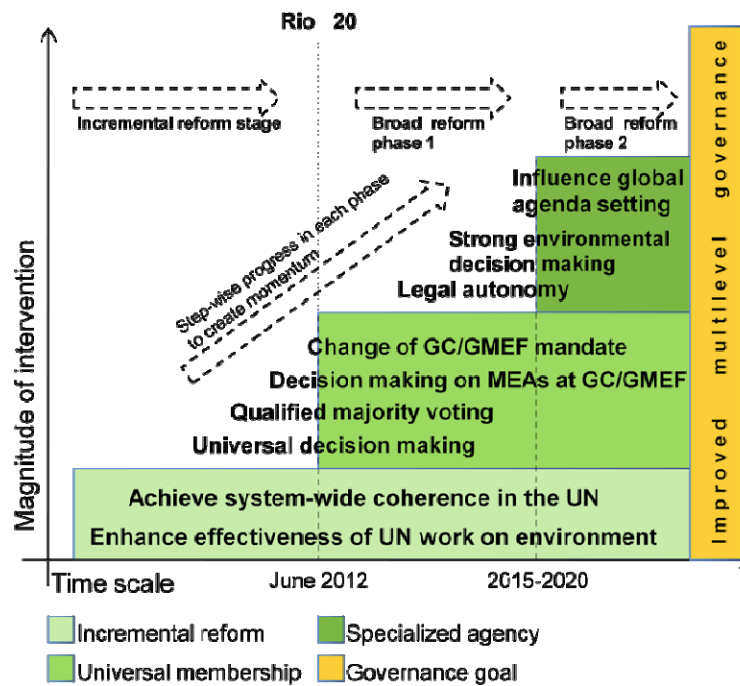
Based on the work of Vijge (2010), Unmüßig (2011) and Simon (2010), the following barriers can be identified:

- **path dependency** that is perpetuated through the "rapid increase of international organisations in the environmental arena" as original efforts by the UN to coordinate environmental activities or to discuss options to improve this coordination" (creation of UNEP, followed by EMG, followed by GMEF, followed by CSD);
- **asymmetrical power relations** between actors, states and organisations naturally influences the creation (or prevention) of new institutions and hence the preferences for the corresponding options (see above). Therefore, "(m)uch of the controversy on whether and how to reform the IEG system exists alongside a North-South division";

²⁵ Three strands of theoretical derivation are referred to, historical institutionalism, discursive institutionalism and rational choice institutionalism.

- the resistance of organisations and nations to cede parts of their **sovereignty**, mandates or budgets to a new environmental institution are “part of the reason for why it is so difficult to substantially reform the IEG system”;
- a remarkable correspondence between the **fragmentation of the interactive processes** around IEG reform and the institutional system in place, leads to the fact that “(t)he debates are scattered in many different locations around the world, which is a cause of great inefficiency, puts high demands on UN staff, and makes it difficult to retain a good view of the bigger picture” and, most important “especially developing countries have difficulties attending all meetings and working groups (...)”;
- **debates** with a tendency of being **repeated and recycled** instead of building upon one another (ibid.);
- the reform debate is a **collective action dilemma** that tends to lose sight of common environmental challenges, so that most actors involved are “more concerned with safeguarding their national and institutional interests”;
- **lack of political will** against the background of other urgent matters (such as the financial crisis, security issues, climate change);
- **lack of public concern**, even in civil society institutions and businesses concerned with environmental issues;
- and last but not least, a fear of **uncertainties** associated with the complexities and costs of a reform of the IEG system.

Against this background, Olson and Elder (2011) bring to mind that the discussion on a specialised agency for the environment has been addressed in the GC before and a proposal for universal membership has also been submitted to ECOSOC for approval at the UNGA in the past. “But neither proposal succeeded in achieving ratification” (ibid.). For this reason they propose an incremental approach that summarises the IEG reform options and places them on a timeline in relation to each other (ibid.). The figure below illustrates that it is not necessary for the various reform proposals to compete with each other, but rather, due to their different reform quality and depth, need time to achieve policy implementation capacity for a truly quality improvement in a multi-level governance system.

Figure 8: Thrust of IEG Reform


Source: Olsen and Elder 2011

A broad reform of the IEG system will accept that “decision-making systems can be adjusted to accommodate both needs for efficiency as well as for democratic influence even in the face of increasing (or universal) membership” (ibid.). The whole process calls for a “step-by-step approach of consensus building” (Vijge 2010) that has to overcome the inter-agency and North-South distrust challenges (Najam et al. 2006). However, many of the reforms suggested can be accomplished legally and functionally without upgrading UNEP to a specialised agency, which may be politically difficult. Although a willingness of key actors to undertake underlying reform a can be assumed (Simon 2010), “(t)he main trade-off, which is not trivial, is that upgrading UNEP raises its political profile, and increases its autonomy, and, possibly, its authority” (Bernstein and Brunée 2011). While perhaps an inconvenient conclusion, the above summarizes the main risk and also the main opportunity connected to SD and environmental governance in general: Improving governance for SD is perceived as threatening to those who benefit from the status quo in terms of exploitation of people and/or the planet. At this point in the development of our common civilisation this view may be the case for the majority.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The concept of SD remains in many ways opaque. Thus, the topic has often been subject to interpretation and adapted to fit the interests of different stakeholders. The differing understanding of the meaning of SD, and the at times large-scale changes that are required, is one of the main obstacles to the establishment of governance frameworks at different levels of global society. There are numerous linkages between the normative, political and administrative challenges outlined in this study and this creates a complex and fragmented set of obstacles.

An aim of the upcoming reform of the IEG system and the IFSD during the Rio+20 Summit is to address many of these challenges. However, the current likely scenario is for limited progress toward this goal. Many government and non-governmental stakeholder groups have already assumed positions on key issues and there is little apparent common ground upon which compromise could be built.

The shrinking carrying capacity of the planet presents a compelling rationale for change in production and consumption patterns. Thus, SD has become a concept broadly used in policy-making. Nevertheless, there is a significant gap between theoretical concepts under discussion and practice in reality. All major assessments of global environmental conditions have shown that, despite significant progress toward SD and environmental governance over the previous 40 years, there has been failure on many fronts to stop the alarming deterioration of the planet.

The institutions for global environmental governance and SD do not always have clear functions and mandates, causing inefficiency and overlapping mandates. Coordinating organisations (e.g. EMG and GMEF) have been established, but their effectiveness to date has been rather limited.

States as well as institutions must be judged not by their statements, but by measurable implementation of their commitments and achievement of goals (Najam and Halle 2010). Current frameworks for monitoring and accountability have proven insufficient. The MDGs were established a decade ago, but they can only be considered as a first step towards a set of targets reflecting all dimensions of sustainability. Therefore, **accountability should be promoted by establishing a set of internationally agreed SDIs and targets** (United Nations Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability 2012).^{26 27}

IFIs are key enablers for the transition to sustainability. Therefore, these organisations should **increase their efforts to integrate SD principles into their core operating policies**. There is also room to improve the assessment and reporting on the **impact of their policies and investments**.

The ongoing discussion and lack of agreement on the eve of the Rio+20 summit suggests that many governments remain motivated by an impulse to protect short-term national interests rather than to pursue common long-term goals. Strategies such as Europe2020 and the EU SDS can provide a mid- to long-term orientation. In this vein, **long-term strategic planning** has the potential not only to legitimise the change process, but also to facilitate the development of a consensus around long-term objectives.

²⁶ The principles upon which a set of SD indicators should be based are outlined in ANNEX 9.

²⁷ For an overview of currently existing international targets, see Stoddart 2011b.

Although SDSs can provide a mid- to long-term vision they are often not sufficiently linked to concrete government action. In order to **improve policy coherence** there is a need for governments to make use of different mechanisms, such as those described in Table 12.

Table 12: Instruments to promote policy coherence at national level

Institutional structures	Examples ²⁸
Inter-ministerial bodies at the political level	Germany: State Secretaries' Committee for Sustainable Development Belgium: Interdepartmental Commission on Sustainable Development
Inter-ministerial bodies at the administrative level	UK: Sustainable Development Programme Board Switzerland: Interdepartmental Sustainable Development Committee
Hybrid structures that involve politicians, administrators and societal stakeholders	Finland: Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development Czech Republic: Government Council for Sustainable Development
Councils of scientific advisers	US: United States President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology UK: United Kingdom Government's Chief Scientific Adviser
Budget	
Objective-driven resource allocation. The alignment of national budgets towards strategic goals rather than to ministries or departments that tend to defend their own interests can help to proactively focus government departments and agencies on the means to support cross-governmental goals.	
Integrate SD matters into national budgets. These can be based on goals and standards agreed at international or national levels.	
Green Public Procurement to integrate SD into public expenditure.	

Source: Based on Berger and Steurer 2009, United Nations Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability 2012

The limited prospects for success of the negotiations at the Rio+20 Summit suggests that there may be a new potential role for non-governmental actors. Governance research indicates that the influence and participation of non-governmental stakeholders is increasing. Expanding governance structures beyond those of the nation-state and government institutions offers a promising opportunity to improve the governance of SD. Already the development of SDSs at different governance levels plays an important role in engaging stakeholders. Table 13 summarises some of the advantages and disadvantages of this approach.

²⁸ Information on (i) its objectives and tasks, (ii) its members, (iii) the way it works in practice, (iv) horizontal policy integration impacts, and (v) future challenges of each of the institutional bodies is given in Berger and Steurer 2009.

Table 13: Measures to improve SD governance and stakeholder engagement at national, regional and local levels

Measure	Pros	Cons
Establish or reform national multi-stakeholder platforms, i.e. NCSDs to focus on the green economy.	Creates a platform for governments and stakeholders to influence the direction of the economy.	Mixed experience with NCSDs, may mean that some would be reluctant to repeat the approach.
Establish sub-national multi-stakeholder platforms for the green economy.	Inspire a generation of regional government politicians similar to the experience of local government politicians following Rio in 1992.	Fragmented uptake. Requires additional support for developing country regional governments.
Establish local multi-stakeholder platforms for the green economy.	Re-launch LA21-type initiatives and, if implemented with the above recommendations, foster vertical policy integration.	Following the 1992 Rio Summit, LA21s were not always fully implemented.

Source: UNDESA and Ministry of Environment Republic of Indonesia 2011

In addition, **consultation processes and dialogue should be encouraged** to incorporate non-governmental voices, including via non-conventional networks and youth communities, such as Internet forums and opinion-making blogs (United Nations Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability 2012).

Decisions should be taken on the basis of the best information. To this end, measures should be taken to **strengthen science-policy linkages** at all levels. On the one hand, social science could help improve governance and develop the necessary social innovations to enhance transition management. On the other hand, natural science can improve the understating of critical issues such as "planetary boundaries", "tipping points" and "environmental thresholds". The science-policy linkage can be improved by creating global platforms, examples of which include the IPCC and IRP. These initiatives could be complemented by further scientific research on the social and economic challenges faced by poor communities and developing countries in the context of current development patterns and trends (ibid.). At the national and sub-national levels, representatives of the scientific community could be included as members or advisors in relevant national or local bodies that are tasked with sustainable development issues (ibid.).

SCP programmes could be critical to the transition towards a green economy. Despite the inability to adopt a decision during the 19th session of the CSD in 2011, an agreement on the 10YFP provided a first basis for consensus. On the eve of the Rio+20 Summit the cooperating partners within the Marrakech Process have chosen to maintain their positive momentum and continue to support the 10YFPs to create better linkages to the green economy.

The Marrakech Process might prove to be sufficiently robust to continue under its own momentum, given continued support from a large number of governments and pledges of support from several UN agencies. However, financing mechanisms and long term commitments for the 10YFP remain a large and unresolved question.

To accelerate the shift towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production, the following recommendations are presented for consideration for future steps under the Marrakech Process:

- The business case for SCP has been made by business intermediaries such as the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, but much remains to be done to encourage a broad uptake of the concept. To accomplish this aim, economic and financial instruments could prove effective. Actions to be taken include the development and strengthening of **mechanisms established to multiply the uptake of SCP practices** (including cleaner production, eco-design, value chain partnerships, sustainable start-ups).
- With regard to sustainable public procurement, it is important to deepen the interaction and involvement among all government bodies. There is a need to **introduce green public procurement guidelines and practices within inter-ministerial processes, and for proper dissemination within supply chains to catalyse uptake by private actors as well.**
- Stronger impetus to encourage sustainable lifestyles remains a core need. **Development of future visions for sustainable lifestyles and planning to shift away from unsustainable consumption trends (backcasting rather than forecasting) is necessary to develop effective transition strategies.**

Successful applied programmes such as the SWITCH-Asia Programme could be examined to identify opportunities for replication in other regions or expansion to include additional SCP aspects (SWITCH-Asia 2012). Great importance should be given to identifying **ways to enable replication and adaptation of successful initiatives.**

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ANNEX 1: GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS INFLUENCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE

ECOSOC^{29 30}

ECOSOC was established under the UN Charter as the principal organisation coordinating economic, social, and related work of the 14 UN specialised agencies, functional commissions and five regional commissions. The Council also receives reports from 11 UN funds and programmes. ECOSOC serves as the central forum for discussing international economic and social issues, and for formulating policy recommendations addressed to Member States and the UN system. It is responsible for:

- promoting higher standards of living, full employment, and economic and social progress;
- identifying solutions to international economic, social and health problems;
- facilitating international cultural and educational cooperation; and
- encouraging universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

It has the power to make or initiate studies and reports on these issues. It also has the power to assist the preparations and organisation of major international conferences in the economic and social and related fields and to facilitate a coordinated follow-up to these conferences. With its broad mandate the Council's purview extends to over 70 per cent of the human and financial resources of the entire UN system.

In carrying out its mandate, ECOSOC consults with academics, business sector representatives and more than 3,200 registered non-governmental organisations. The Council holds a four-week substantive session each July, alternating between New York and Geneva. The session consists of the High-level Segment, Coordination Segment, Operational Activities Segment, Humanitarian Affairs Segment and the General Segment.

The High-level segment serves as a forum for Ministers and executive heads of international institutions and high-ranking officials, as well as civil society and private sector representatives to discuss key issues on the international agenda in the area of economic, social and environmental development.

CSD³¹

CSD was established by the UN General Assembly in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED, also known as the Earth Summit.

The Commission is responsible for reviewing progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; as well as providing policy guidance to follow up the JPOI at the local, national, regional and international levels. The JPOI reaffirmed that the CSD is the high-level forum for SD within the UN system.

The CSD meets annually in New York, in two-year cycles, with each cycle focusing on clusters of specific thematic and cross-sectoral issues, outlined in its new multi-year programme of work (2003-2017).

²⁹ The description of each institution has been taken from its official web page.

³⁰ <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/>

³¹ http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_index.shtml

The CSD has opened its sessions to broad participation from both governmental and non-governmental actors, and it supports a number of innovative activities, such as the Partnerships Fair, the Learning Centre and a series of panels, roundtables and side events. The High-level segment features dialogue among Ministers, and Ministers also hold a special dialogue session with Major Groups.

As a functional commission of ECOSOC, CSD has 53 member States (about one third of the members are elected on a yearly basis). Each session of the CSD elects a Bureau comprised of a Chair and four vice-Chairs.

UNEP³²

UNEP, established in 1972, is the voice for the environment within the UN system. UNEP acts as a catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote the wise use and sustainable development of the global environment. To accomplish this, UNEP works with a wide range of partners, including UN entities, international organisations, national governments, non-governmental organisations, the private sector and civil society.

UNEP work encompasses:

- Assessing global, regional and national environmental conditions and trends
- Developing international and national environmental instruments
- Strengthening institutions for the wise management of the environment
- Facilitating the transfer of knowledge and technology for sustainable development
- Encouraging new partnerships and mind-sets within civil society and the private sector.

UNEP's global and cross-sectoral outlook is reflected in its organisational structure, its activities and its personnel. Being based in Kenya, Africa gives UNEP a clear advantage in understanding the environmental issues facing the world's developing countries.

To ensure its global effectiveness UNEP supports six regional offices, plus a growing network of centres of excellence such as the Global Resource Information Database centres and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre. UNEP also has major offices in Geneva and Paris, where its Division of Technology, Industry and Economics is situated.

UNEP also hosts several environmental convention secretariats including the Ozone Secretariat and the Montreal Protocol's Multilateral Fund, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Migratory Species, and a growing family of chemicals-related agreements, including the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and the recently negotiated Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

³² <http://www.unep.org/>

UNDP³³

UNDP is the UN' global development network, an organisation advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP is on the ground in 177 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and its wide range of partners.

World leaders have pledged to achieve the MDGs, including the overarching goal of cutting poverty in half by 2015. UNDP's network links and coordinates global and national efforts to reach these Goals. Its focus is helping countries build and share solutions to the challenges of:

- Democratic Governance
- Poverty Reduction
- Crisis Prevention & Recovery
- Environment & Energy
- HIV/AIDS

UNDP helps developing countries attract and use aid effectively. In all their activities, it encourages the protection of human rights, capacity development and the empowerment of women.

The annual Human Development Report, commissioned by UNDP, focuses the global debate on key development issues, providing new measurement tools, innovative analysis and often-controversial policy proposals. The global Report's analytical framework and inclusive approach carry over into regional, national and local Human Development Reports, also supported by UNDP.

In each country office, the UNDP Resident Representative normally also serves as the Resident Coordinator of development activities for the UN system as a whole. Through such coordination, UNDP seeks to ensure the most effective use of UN and international aid resources.

WB³⁴

Since its inception in 1944, the WB has expanded from a single institution to a closely associated group of five development institutions. Its mission evolved from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development as facilitator of post-war reconstruction and development to the present-day mandate of worldwide poverty alleviation in close coordination with its affiliate, the International Development Association, and other members of the World Bank Group (WBG), the International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Guarantee Agency, and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes.

Reconstruction remains an important part of its work. However, at today's WB, poverty reduction through an inclusive and sustainable globalisation remains the overarching goal of its work.

³³ <http://www.undp.org/>

³⁴ <http://www.worldbank.org/>

Six strategic themes drive the Bank's work, focusing on the poorest countries, fragile and conflict-affected states, the Arab world, middle-income countries, global public goods issues, and delivery of knowledge and learning services.

There are also strategies for the key areas of its work:

- Thematic and sector strategies, which guide its work to reduce poverty in a specific sector or aspect of development. Each derives from a broad consultation with a wide array of stakeholders.
- Country assistance strategies, which identify the key areas in which we can best support a country in reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development.

The WBG provides low-interest loans, interest-free credits, and grants to developing countries. These support a wide array of investments in such areas as education, health, public administration, infrastructure, financial and private sector development, agriculture, and environmental and natural resource management. Some of our projects are co-financed with governments, other multilateral institutions, commercial banks, export credit agencies, and private sector investors.

The WBG also provides or facilitate financing through trust fund partnerships with bilateral and multilateral donors. Many partners have asked the Bank to help manage initiatives that address needs across a wide range of sectors and developing regions.

WTO³⁵

The WTO is the only global international organisation dealing with the rules of trade between nations. At its heart are the WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the bulk of the world's trading nations and ratified in their parliaments. The goal is to help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business.

The WTO agreements cover goods, services and intellectual property. They spell out the principles of liberalisation, and the permitted exceptions. They include individual countries' commitments to lower customs tariffs and other trade barriers, and to open and keep open services markets. They set procedures for settling disputes. These agreements are not static; they are renegotiated from time to time and new agreements can be added to the package. Many are now being negotiated under the Doha Development Agenda, launched by WTO trade ministers in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001.

WTO agreements require governments to make their trade policies transparent by notifying the WTO about laws in force and measures adopted. Various WTO councils and committees seek to ensure that these requirements are being followed and that WTO agreements are being properly implemented. All WTO members must undergo periodic scrutiny of their trade policies and practices, each review containing reports by the country concerned and the WTO Secretariat.

The WTO's procedure for resolving trade quarrels under the Dispute Settlement Understanding is vital for enforcing the rules and therefore for ensuring that trade flows smoothly. Countries bring disputes to the WTO if they think their rights under the agreements are being infringed. Judgements by specially appointed independent experts are based on interpretations of the agreements and individual countries' commitments.

³⁵ <http://www.wto.org/>

WTO agreements contain special provision for developing countries, including longer time periods to implement agreements and commitments, measures to increase their trading opportunities, and support to help them build their trade capacity, to handle disputes and to implement technical standards. The WTO organises hundreds of technical cooperation missions to developing countries annually. It also holds numerous courses each year in Geneva for government officials. Aid for Trade aims to help developing countries develop the skills and infrastructure needed to expand their trade.

The WTO maintains regular dialogue with non-governmental organisations, parliamentarians, other international organisations, the media and the general public on various aspects of the WTO and the ongoing Doha negotiations, with the aim of enhancing cooperation and increasing awareness of WTO activities.

EMG³⁶

The EMG is a UN System-wide coordination body. It was established in 2001 pursuant to the General Assembly resolution 53/242 in July 1999.

The resolution supported the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an environmental management group contained in his report on Environment and Human Settlements. The EMG membership consists of the specialised agencies, programmes and organs of the UN including the secretariats of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements. □□The group is chaired by the Executive Director of UNEP and supported by a secretariat provided by UNEP. The Secretariat is located in Geneva, Switzerland.

The EMG identifies issues on the international environmental agenda that warrant cooperation, and finds ways of engaging its collective capacity in coherent management responses to those issues. In accordance with its Terms of Reference the EMG works through technical meetings, Issue Management Groups and task forces. Representatives of intergovernmental bodies, civil society and international non-governmental organisations can be invited to contribute.

CEB³⁷

The UN Systems CEB was founded in 1946, at which time it was called the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). It was established by the Secretary-General at the request of ECOSOC to bring about more organisation to the UN system due to all of the distinctive, specialised bodies that make up the UN, and so that the main body of the UN could specifically deal with issues of peace and security. Since all of the individual bodies have their own constitutions, mandates, governing bodies and budgets the Chief Executives Board brings them together into a common body that holds strong to the aims of the UN as a whole while not over burdening the main body. Over the years, since its inception, there have been many reforms and revisions of the coordination of the committee. In 2001 the ACC was renamed as the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, which it is still called today. It is a highest-level board, and also the longest standing, in the UN.

³⁶ <http://www.unemg.org/>

³⁷ <http://ceb.unsystemceb.org/>

The Chief Executives Board meets twice a year and is chaired by the UN Secretary-General. Present at the meetings are the Heads of 27 UN system organisations (which include 15 specialised agencies, 10 UN Funds and Programmes, the WTO and the International Atomic Energy Agency). The Chief Executives Board is responsible for keeping up to date on the current political issues and concerns that face the UN. Additionally, they approve policy statements on behalf of the system when the reporting bodies make recommendations to do so.

There are three committees that support the Chief Executives Board; the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) which deals with global policy and other items that face the world at large, the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) which works to make businesses across the system work together, and the UNDG which works to promote country level efforts within the system. Additionally, UNESCO joins in on the discussions and consultations of the CEB when they have common interests. Such interests include administration and personnel questions, follow-up on past UN conferences, UN reform and the status of women in the UN system.

ANNEX 2: LIST OF UNEP'S OFFICES

UNEP Divisions
Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA)
Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI)
Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE)
Regional Cooperation (DRC)
Environmental Law and Conventions (DELIC)
Communications and Public Information (DCPI)
Global Environment Facility Coordination (DGEF)
UNEP Regional Offices
Regional Office for Africa
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
Regional Office for Europe
Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
Regional Office for North America
Regional Office for West Asia
UNEP Liaison Offices
UNEP Addis Ababa Office
UNEP Beijing Office
UNEP Brazil Office
UNEP Brussels Office
UNEP Cairo Office
UNEP Moscow Office
UNEP New York Office
UNEP Vienna Office
UNEP Out-Posted Offices
Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) - Athens, Greece
Joint Secretariat of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)- Rotating Secretariat
Global International Waters Assessment (GIWA)- Kalmar, Sweden
UNEP System-Wide Earthwatch Coordination Office - Geneva, Switzerland
UNEP programmes and secretariats located in Geneva, Switzerland
Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch (PCDMB) - Geneva, Switzerland

UNEP Collaborating Centres

UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC)

Global Resource Information Database (GRID)

UNEP Risø Centre on Energy, Climate and Sustainable Development (URC)

UNEP Collaborating Centre on Water and Environment (UCC-Water)

Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)

Basel Agency for Sustainable Energy (BASE)

Conventions Secretariats

Other Convention Secretariats

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

Ozone Secretariat

Multilateral Fund Secretariat for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol

Secretariat to the Convention of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Secretariat for the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal

The Carpathian Convention

Scientific Advisory Groups

The Ecosystem Conservation Group (ECG)

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

The International Resource Panel (IRP)

The Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environment Protection (GESAMP)

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP)

The United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR)

ANNEX 3: LOCAL LEVEL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Concepts such as zero-carbon cities, eco-cities, sustainable cities, etc. have started to arise in the last years. This is the result of the acknowledgment of the vital role that cities have to play in the transition towards sustainability. Table 14 provides a few examples of the initiatives to promote local governance for SD.

Table 14: Local initiatives for SD

Name	Outreach	Purpose
ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability ³⁸	220 local government Members from 70 different countries that represent more than 569,885,000 people	To provide technical consulting, training, and information services to build capacity, to share knowledge, and to support local government in the implementation of SD at the local level.
Transition Network ³⁹	As of 2012, there are 421 "official" initiatives	To inspire, encourage, connect, support and train communities as they self-organise around the transition model, creating initiatives that rebuild resilience and reduce CO2 emissions.
Sustainable cities programme ⁴⁰	Both operate in over 30 countries worldwide.	To build capacities in urban environmental planning and management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening local capacities to address urban environmental priority issues. • Enabling replication and scaling-up of EPM activities. • Mobilising anchoring institutions for EPM support.
Localizing Agenda 21 ⁴¹		To help local authorities in secondary towns to achieve more SD by implementing an environmental planning and management process to identify and address priority issues.
Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign ⁴²	To date, more than 2,500 European local governments from more than 40 European countries have signed the Aalborg Charter, the 1994 founding document of the Campaign.	To help local governments across Europe to mainstream sustainability best practice and to implement the Aalborg Charter and Aalborg Commitments to achieve tangible results in local SD.

³⁸ Information under www.iclei.org

³⁹ Information under www.transitionnetwork.org

⁴⁰ Information under www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=540&cid=5025

⁴¹ Information under www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?typeid=19&catid=540&cid=5023

⁴² Information under www.sustainable-cities.eu

Name	Outreach	Purpose
World Mayors Council on Climate Change ⁴³	Presently over 60 members of the Council, representing a vast network of local governments.	To strengthen political leadership on global sustainability by building a group of committed local sustainability leaders, and to be the prime political advocacy force of cities and local governments on global sustainability matters.
Energy Cities ⁴⁴	More than 1,000 towns and cities in 30 countries.	To strengthen the role of cities in the field of sustainable energy, to represent their interests and influence the policies and proposals made by European Union institutions in the fields of energy, environmental protection and urban policy, and to develop and promote local initiatives through exchange of experiences, the transfer of know-how and the implementation of joint projects.

Source: See footnotes

⁴³ Information under www.worldmayorscouncil.org

⁴⁴ Information under www.energy-cities.eu

ANNEX 4: MAIN OUTCOMES FROM THE TASK FORCES ESTABLISHED UNDER THE MARRAKECH PROCESS

The task force of **Sustainable Products**, led by the UK's government, generated five initiatives in the form of policy tools, methodologies for capacity building, demonstration projects and good practices. The most significant outcome was the establishment of a formal agreement for international action of energy-efficient products, called the "International Energy Agency Implementing Agreement for a Cooperating Programme on Efficient Electrical End-Use Equipment ("4E")". This formal initiative is expected to raise the international standard of more energy-efficient electrical equipment.

The task force of **Sustainable lifestyles**, led by the Swedish government carried out nine projects, generated recommendations for research and developed tools and methodologies for capacity building, in areas such as social innovation, communication, education, marketing, advertising and business. They produced a communication package in various languages, including a website, a full report and brochure as well as the video "Living Outside the Box – Sustainable Lifestyles". The Task Force formally ended its activities in 2009 but continues its work through its cooperation with the Partnership on Education for Responsible Living (PERL), which was set up by UNEP, UNESCO and the Marrakech Task Force on Education for Sustainable Consumption. Furthermore, the task force was also engaged to make a link between sustainable entrepreneurship and lifestyles in developing countries with the project: Introducing Sustainable Entrepreneurship and Lifestyles in African Universities.

The task force of **Education for Sustainable Consumption**, led by the Italian Government, collected good practices and generated five tools and methodologies for lifelong learning on sustainable consumption. These include the "Here and Now!" publication, which is the first of its kind highlighting how to include the topic of SCP into the formal learning process. The task force supported the establishment of the Partnership on Education and Research about Responsible Living (PERL) - a network of over 100 Higher Education Institutions from 40 countries - which functions also as a platform to disseminate the work of the Task Force on ESC.

The task force of **Sustainable Building and Construction**, led by the Finnish government, focused on the links between energy, buildings and construction, especially in relation to Climate Change. They conducted research projects helping to translate the vague concepts of sustainable buildings into concrete actions considering the fundamental differences between "green buildings", "energy-efficient buildings" and "sustainable buildings". They have published 5 reports, such as: "Buildings and Climate Change: Status, Challenges and Opportunities" (2007), which includes a set of mini case studies from all over the world illustrating the variety of different public policies and legislation that can promote energy efficiency, energy savings and renewable energy use in the built environment.

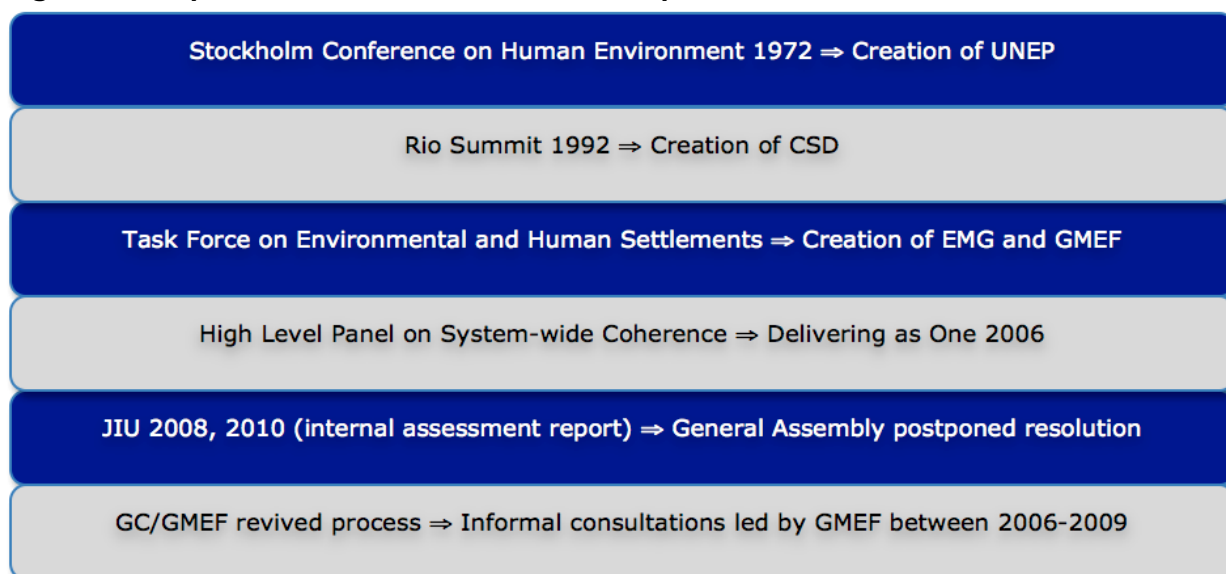
The task force of **Sustainable Tourism Development**, led by the French government, has been transformed into a UN partnership called "The global Partnership for Tourism". They developed various manuals on sustainable tourism such as "rising awareness on tourism and climate change", including a set of policy recommendations. Furthermore they launched the "Green Passport" a communication campaign on sustainable holidays and established the Sustainable Investment and Finance Tourism Network (SIFT).

The task force of **Sustainable Public Procurement**, led by the Swiss government, focused on the development and implementation of specific methodologies to implement Sustainable Public Procurement in both developed and developing countries. They conducted six regional trainings benefiting 130 procurement experts from 50 countries. The approach was tested in 11 pilot countries. They developed policy recommendations to the CSD 10/11.

The task force of **Cooperation with Africa**, led by the German government generated over 20 initiatives on policy support. They designed SCP tools and methodologies for capacity building and identified best practices to promote SCP in Africa. They supported the elaboration and implementation of the African regional 10YFP as well as the African roundtable on SCP. Emphasis was given of linking SCP with the challenges of meeting basic needs and providing sustainable livelihoods. Reports on best practices in African countries as well as a review paper exploring opportunities and challenges of promoting SCP through leapfrogging have been developed. Furthermore an African Eco-labelling mechanism was established.

ANNEX 5: MILESTONES AND ACTORS AS WELL AS THE INCEPTION OF THE FORMAL CONSULTATIONS OF THE DEBATE ON IEG/IFSD REFORM

Figure 9: Important milestones in the run-up of the IEG/IFSD reform debate



Source: Based on Olson and Elder 2011, Vijge 2010

Since 2006, there have been various formal intergovernmental consultation processes.

Figure 10: Important milestones within the IEG/IFSD reform debate



Source: Based on Olson and Elder 2011, Vijge 2010

Working on a proposal from the Board of Directors of UNEP, the consultative group presented five reform options in their so-called Nairobi-Helsinki-Outcome. These include:

- the enhancement of UNEP, with better funding, more authority and coordination tasks;
- the creation of a new UN umbrella organisation for SD;
- the creation of a new specialised agency, such as a WEO - similar to the WHO;
- the reform of the ECOSOC and CSD, and
- as the last and least practical option enhanced institutional reforms and streamlining of existing structures (Consultative Group of Ministers or High-level Representatives on International Environmental Governance 2010).

Subsequently, the recommendations of the Nairobi-Helsinki Outcome were discussed in UNEP's 26th meeting of the Governing Council in February 2011. There was broad agreement on the options, but no consensus on which of them should be eventually taken to strengthen governance system (Olsen and Elder 2011).

As a consequence of the informal and formal internal UNEP consultations and in preparation of Rio+20, a broad stakeholder process has been initiated, in order to build up consensus on the need for reform and find out the positions of member states and stakeholders. The following regional meetings were held:

- Regional Preparatory Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean, 7-9 September 2011, Santiago, Chile
- Preparatory Meeting for the Arab Region, 16-17 October 2011, Cairo, Egypt
- Preparatory Meeting for the Asia-Pacific Region, 19-20 October 2011, Seoul, Republic of Korea
- African Regional Preparatory Meeting, 20-25 October 2011, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- Economic Commission for Europe Preparatory Meeting, 1-2 December 2011, Geneva, Switzerland

ANNEX 6: ZERO DRAFT RESOLUTION AND IEG/IFSD REFORM

“The future we want” as of January 2012

In total, 18 sub-points are introduced for the area IFSD, here only the alternatives presented (UN 2012c).

On reaffirming or transforming the role the CSD:

- B 49. Reaffirm the role of the CSD as high-level commission on SD in UN system, consider options for improving working methods, agenda and programme (...)

Or

- B 49 alt. Resolve to transform the CSD into a Sustainable Development Council (SDC) that will serve as the authoritative, high-level body for consideration of matters relating to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development
- B 49 alt. bis. The work of the Council should be based on fundamental documents and (...) fully carry out the functions and mandates of the Commission for Sustainable Development (...)
- B 49 alt. ter. We request the President of the General Assembly to conduct open, transparent and inclusive negotiations, with the aim of establishing the mandate, modalities, functions, size, composition, membership, working methods and procedures of the Council (...)

On enhancing UNEP or establishing a UN specialized agency:

- B 51. Strengthen the capacity of UNEP to fulfil its mandate by establishing universal membership in its Governing Council and call for significantly increasing its financial base (...)

Or

- B 51 alt. Resolve to establish a UN specialized agency for the environment with universal membership of its Governing Council, based on UNEP, with a revised and strengthened mandate, supported by stable, adequate and predictable financial contributions and operating on an equal footing with other UN specialized agencies. This agency, based in Nairobi, would cooperate closely with other specialized agencies.

ANNEX 7: INPUT FOR THE ZERO DRAFT RESOLUTION OF RIO+20

Questionnaire for the Member States (15 questions on institutional framework)

Questionnaire for the Major Groups (16 questions on institutional framework)

Questionnaire for the UN System Organisations, IFIs and Other Stakeholders (14 questions on institutional framework)

289 submissions

Responses of UN Member States

Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Viet Nam

Responses of Major Groups

International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), GreenLine, Major Group for Children and Youth, International Council for Science (ICSU), World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO), Key member organisations of the Women's Major Group, Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF), Women Major Group, European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) on behalf of Workers and Trade Union Major Group, Access Initiative, Assemblée des Chambres Francaises de Commerce et d'Industrie, AEGEE/European Students Forum, Association of Science Technology Centers, Baha'i International Community, Belgian Federal Council For Sustainable Development (FRDO-CFDD), Chulalongkorn University Research Assistant, ETC Group (Action Group on Erosion, Technology and Concentration), European Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Councils (EEAC), Forum Empresarial RIO+20 (Entrepreneurial Brazilian Forum), Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) ; US Citizens Network for Sustainable Development ; and the Association of World Citizens, Helio International, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), Russian Academy of Sciences, Integrative Strategies Forum (ISF), International Centre of Comparative Environmental Law (C.I.D.C.E.), International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC), One Earth, Pew Environmental Group, Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future, Sustainable Commission (SDC) – The independent government advisor on sustainable development, WaterCulture, World Aquarium and Conservation for the Oceans Foundation, WWF International

Responses of UN System and other International Governmental Organisations (IOG)

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Law on Sustainable Development Partnership (IDLO), International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS), Secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), UN World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), World Bank, World Health Organisation (WHO), World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), World Trade Organisation (WTO).

UN Development Group members; 32 UN agencies and groups, plus five observers

UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund
WFP - World Food Programme
OHCHR - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UN Women (formerly UNIFEM)
UNOPS - United Nations Office for Project Services
UNAIDS - Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UN-HABITAT - United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WHO - World Health Organisation
DESA - United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
IFAD - International Fund for Agricultural Development
UNCTAD - United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
FAO - Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
UNIDO - United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
ILO - International Labour Organisation
UNDPI - United Nations Department of Public Information (Regional Commissions (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA - rotating annually)
OHRLLS - Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries & Small Island Developing Countries
SRSG/CAC - Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme
UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
OSAA - Office of Under Secretary General (USG - Special Advisor on Africa)
UNWTO - United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WMO - World Meteorological Organisation
ITU - International Telecommunications Union

ANNEX 8: COUNTRY AND STAKEHOLDER POSITIONS

Table 15: Selected submissions and statements with respect to IFSD reform

Countries / groups	Opt 1 UNEP enhancement	Opt 2 Umbrella org.	Opt 3 WEO or UNEO	Opt 4 Reform ECOSOC/ CSD	Opt 5 Streamlinin g existing structures
Arab Region					x
	« not use environmental considerations as barriers or conditions for providing development assistance »				
Brazil	x	x		x	
	« The creation of a high-level permanent coordination mechanism among all the international institutions that address development would be an effective initiative that could have considerable political impact »				
Business Action for Sustainable Development 2012	x				
	« enhancement of the engagement of business and business organisations »				
The Caribbean Community					x
	« no support for proposals creating G20 style groupings of developed countries plus emerging economies, often excluding small states » « strengthen support to SIDS »				
Economic Commission for Africa	x		x		
	« no implication of an environment inspection body, compliance mechanisms for developing countries, or the introduction of green conditionalities or trade barriers, additional financial burdens for Africa »				
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	x			x	x
	« international financial institutions will also need to review their programmatic strategies »				
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia					x
	« activating, strengthening and enhancing the existing institutional structures for SD at the regional level »				
European Union and its Member States	x		x	x	
	« Rio+20 must strengthen the engagement of the private sector « strong functional link between IFSD and the Green Economy»				
Farmers Major Group	unclear				

Countries / groups	Opt 1 UNEP enhancement	Opt 2 Umbrella org.	Opt 3 WEO or UNEO	Opt 4 Reform ECOSOC/ CSD	Opt 5 Streamlinin g existing structures
Group of 77 and China					x
	« adopt SD as a key element of the overarching framework for UN activities »				
Indigenous Peoples Major Group	« requires government policies and regulations which recognize and reinforce traditional knowledge and which protect local economies and the prior rights of indigenous peoples and local communities from predatory investments » « recommend the creation of formal mechanisms that ensure the participation of Indigenous Peoples in general »				
ILO	« Institutional framework for a green economy » « essential to ensure tripartite participation – by governments, employers and workers – in international, national, sectoral and local governance structures for SD policy formulation and implementation »				
International Trade Union Confederation	unclear				
Major Group for Children and Youth			x	x	
	Intergovernmental Panel on Sustainable Development (IPSD) Stewardship for Global Commons Ombudspersons for Future Generations				
Pacific Small Island Developing States	« global conference for the SD of Small Island Developing States in 2014 » « strengthening the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation and Barbados Programme of Action »				
Scientific and Technological Community Major Group	« strengthening of science, engineering and policy links, and strengthening the science-base and engineering capacity within all institutions »				
US	x				x
	« engage IFIs and MDBs »				
Women’s Major Group	x				
	« gender mainstreaming within the entire SD governance structure (for example, through quotas) »				
WTO	unclear				

*Bold: particular emphasis within stakeholder’s statement

Source: Based on individual submissions and statements

ANNEX 9: PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

Table 16: Principles for SDI

Principles
It should be universal in character, covering challenges to all countries rather than just developing nations
It should express a broadly agreed global strategy for SD
It should incorporate a range of key areas that were not fully covered in the MDGs, such as food security, water, energy, green jobs, decent work and social inclusion, SCP, sustainable cities, climate change, biodiversity and oceans, as well as disaster risk reduction and resilience
It should be comprehensive, reflecting equally the economic, social and environmental dimensions of SD and the interconnections between them
It should incorporate near-term benchmarks while being long-term in scope, looking ahead to a deadline of perhaps 2030
It should engage all stakeholders in the implementation and mobilization of resources, including local communities, civil society and the private sector, along with Governments
It should include progress metrics alongside absolute targets, in order to focus policy attention as a means of driving development outcomes and to reflect various development priorities and conditions across countries and regions
It should provide scope for the review of these goals in view of evolving scientific evidence

Source: United Nations Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability 2012

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR INTERNAL POLICIES

POLICY DEPARTMENT ECONOMIC AND SCIENTIFIC POLICY **A**

Role

Policy departments are research units that provide specialised advice to committees, inter-parliamentary delegations and other parliamentary bodies.

Policy Areas

- Economic and Monetary Affairs
- Employment and Social Affairs
- Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
- Industry, Research and Energy
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