

Costa Rica meeting, opening session, September 5th, 2005
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***The Implementation Challenge of the Marrakech Process:
It is Time to Focus***

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, colleagues, friends,

1. It is a pleasure for me to be here today. I welcome you **on behalf of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** and of its Division of Technology, Industry and Economics. I want to thank the government of Costa Rica for hosting the meeting. I also want to thank all governments who are supporting us.
2. Two years ago the process of establishing a ten-year framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production has been nicknamed the Marrakech process. But last night here in Costa Rica I have learnt a wonderful word that I would like to use as of today for SCP: ***pura vida!*** The pure, full life ... isn't that something that we would like to achieve through changing the patterns of consumption and production? It is positive, it is appealing to people.
3. I will say a few words about the **Implementation Challenge** of the Marrakech process. First of all, I would like to emphasise that the 10-year framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production **should not be simply another series of meetings and conferences**. It should not result in just another pile of documents and web-sites with recommendations. We need concrete action on the ground at this very moment.

The results of the consultation process

4. I am glad to see that the Johannesburg's call for action has been heard. As was concluded in **Europe** Sustainable Consumption and Production should be seen as a basis for sustainable resource use, which can help to achieve new sustainable development models. **Asia** is very active on this new approach. China with the *circular economy approach*. Japan with the "*3R*" *initiative*. **Africa** is exploring the potential and possibility to **leapfrog to sustainability**. Establishing an African brand - "made in Africa" – was one of the conclusions of the Casablanca meeting. And

here in **Latin America and the Caribbean** a regional council and strategy on SCP has been established.

5. We have made an overview of this process in the discussion paper that you find in your folder. The new **UNEP/Wuppertal Institute Collaborating Centre on SCP**, CSCP, has made an important contribution to it. I am pleased that this Centre, which ambition it is to become one of the scientific house institutes of the Marrakech process will officially be inaugurated later this year.

Some examples of UNEP activities

6. On top of facilitating the regional consultation process we have been active in various areas, in order to help governments to make concrete progress. I will give a few examples.
7. At the national level we are developing **demonstration projects**. In **Africa** we are currently implementing 3 projects:
 - One on mainstreaming sustainable consumption and production in the **Lake Victoria** This project focuses on the harmonization of policies for the environmental management of the lake, to protect its catchments and to promote sustainable fisheries. It also includes economic activities for the sustainable development of industry, agriculture and tourism;
 - The second project is on **sustainable use and production of plastics** in Africa. It is a demonstration of integrated solid waste management. It promotes industrial innovation - environmentally degradable plastics – and it includes effective communication strategies;
 - And a third one is on **regional capacity building on Life Cycle Analysis**. This aims at assisting countries in the identification of key impact categories for their life cycle inventories.
8. We are also working with **Ghana** and with **Senegal** in pilot projects to integrate the concepts of SCP into **poverty reduction strategies**, highlighting how SCP can provide opportunities for new markets, better livelihoods and indeed poverty reduction.

9. In **Argentina** we are starting a demo-project to assist the government to develop its national strategy on Sustainable Consumption, including concrete activities with retailers and on sustainable procurement.
10. We have also been responding to the call of many governments for **capacity building** on implementing sustainable consumption policies. This was a follow up of the joint UN Consumer Guidelines project that we have implemented with Consumers International. We are now testing a training manual, which is called “*Hands on Sustainable Consumption*”. With the support of the European Commission we also carried out a project on capacity building in 12 countries in Asia and 6 in Europe (*SC.Asia*). The results will be published later this year.
11. The **Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building** includes SCP as one of the key areas. Training courses responding to that strategic plan and to the Marrakech Process have been developed, and you will have a chance to experience some highlights of the trainings here in Costa Rica. They are about sustainable procurement (developed in cooperation with ICLEI), Life Cycle Analysis (through our Life Cycle Initiative with SETAC) and as I just mentioned on the UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection with Consumers International.

Linkages between SCP and Development Co-operation

12. We have been mobilizing global support for the agenda of SCP. Some have been wondering over the last two years why UNEP felt that linkages between the poverty agenda and SCP were so important. As I have outlined for the European meeting, in Belgium last year, I feel that the overall priority of a programme on Consumption and Production simply should be that the **basic needs of the poor are being met**.
13. When we talk about SCP on a global level then we know that the overwhelming majority of the people cannot even be called "consumers". **Poor people struggle for survival on a day-to-day basis**. The poor have no access to clean drinking water, they have no access to affordable energy sources, their lands are being depleted, and they see ever-growing mountains of waste surrounding them.
14. **Waste** is the most visible sign of the world's failure to achieve sustainable consumption and production patterns. We keep wasting

resources, we keep wasting human lives, and we continue to look away from our house that is burning down, as President Chirac mentioned at the Johannesburg Summit. All of this has to **stop** and we are not getting there by only telling each other about our priorities and policy instruments.

15. I have called our approach "**Human Development Through The Market**" with the following key elements:

- a) creating **public/private partnerships** that achieve a better access to sustainable environmental services for the poor;
- b) allowing developing countries to "leapfrog" to sustainable consumption and production patterns. That means from the beginning to invest in **long-term sustainable solutions** and not make the mistakes that developed countries have made in the past;
- c) harvesting the **economic and social benefits** of sustainability. Sustainable production, sustainable product design, sustainable procurement ... these programmes are all good for the environment, but they are **also good for the economy** (saving costs, developing domestic and export markets) and they are **also good for social progress** (helping to spread good labour conditions, and to create decent jobs).

16. I am pleased that we have been able to start some projects on this in 2005. With the results of these projects we want to **mobilize the development co-operation community to implement concrete actions on SCP**. They need to be involved in the Marrakech Process. They are key actors for implementation. I am therefore very pleased that we have managed to organise the **Co-operation Dialogue sessions** in this meeting.

UNEP priorities for the years to come

17. The Marrakech Process has 4 phases:

- a) **Regional consultations;**
- b) Development of **regional and national strategies;**
- c) **Implementing concrete programmes and projects;**
- d) **Monitoring and evaluating progress.**

18. Now, two years after the start of the Marrakech process, it is time to take stock of what has happened so far. And more importantly: what needs to

be done over the next years, what are our ambitions?

19. First of all, I think that it is clear that with this meeting here in Costa Rica we have to **close the regional consultation phase**. In two years time we have accomplished a lot, we now know the priorities, so it is now time to implement concrete programmes. Where relevant the support for these programmes can be mobilised through national or regional strategies. But I really believe that we all know what needs to be done. It is now a matter of wanting to act and being able to act.

20. Secondly, we know that SCP is a **very broad topic**. In principle almost everything could be addressed. We are talking about consumption and production ... there is not much more in this world! So it means that we can go on forever ... we talk about all kinds of industry, all kinds of target groups, all kinds of issues. But everybody knows that talking about everything leaves little time for *doing*! **We just have to focus**. At the same time when we focus, we might be afraid that we miss valuable other opportunities. Or that we miss the overall picture ... It is a dilemma, I am aware of it. But running around in circles is not a solution.

21. Thirdly, on UNEP's role, which is really appreciated by most of you as far as I know, I must admit that I myself am getting a bit nervous. I am already thinking about 2010 when the results of the process will be reviewed. What can we then show? That we have facilitated the process? That we have assisted government officials in many countries to understand the issue? Would that be enough? I do not think so. Our global programmes are at the disposal of everybody, and we are happy to share them, but **we cannot assist on an individual basis all countries that want to take action**.

22. So for us at UNEP all of this means that - now we have concluded the regional consultations - our focus will have to be more - even more than in the last two years - on supporting the development and implementation of **concrete demonstration projects** with the most active countries in the regions, with good and solid support from donors, after which they can be replicated by others. And the results of these projects need to be manuals or **guidelines** that everybody can use, with adaptation to specific needs if needed.

23. We will focus on the following **key priorities**:

- i. Showing the added value of new models of **Industrial development**, focusing on the establishment of closed loops economies, such as the programme on *Circular Economy* which we have *started in China*. We will work on the global level with key industrial sectors, such as construction, tourism, and food. And we will include **safer production**. We have to build industries and communities that are prepared for disasters. We have been witnessing the devastating impacts on human lives and infrastructure of the Tsunami in Asia and East Africa. And now we are witnessing the impacts of hurricane Katrina. Nobody believes these will be the last disasters ... so we need to be ready for that;
- ii. **Waste management** - focusing on improving collection, disposal and recycling schemes, increasing the role of the private sector and aiming at poverty eradication and creation of jobs. This is related to the *G8 3 R Initiative*, championed by the government of Japan, and it includes e-waste. This is also a key priority in our UNEP waste strategy, which was adopted earlier this year by our Governing Council.
- iii. As a contribution to the Bali Plan: **SCP capacity building** and training on priority tools to address challenges that **industry** face - in particular SME's. For this we can build on the existing NCPC network that we run together with UNIDO. Topics include Life Cycle Management, Design of Products and Services. And for **governments** we focus on procurement and policy implementation.
- iv. **Sustainable trade and use of resources**: product lifecycles are increasingly international, which calls for integrated policies to optimise the use of resources and materials over the full life cycle accompanied by adequate support for, in particular, SME's in developing countries. We hope to start a programme on resources together with the European Commission.
- v. **Sustainable energy and mobility**, focusing on a much better use of the potential of renewable energy and on improving the infrastructure, in particular for industrial development and to help achieve development goals.

24. And of course, we also need to find better means to inform and motivate consumers. That is why I am very pleased to launch today our **Guide on Communicating Sustainability**. This guide has been developed in response to the first Marrakech meeting. As Klaus Töpfer writes in his preface "*Informed, motivated and committed people can help us to achieve our sustainability goals*". The guide was developed with Futerra and contains many examples of interesting campaigns, including one campaign of our host country (Costa Rica). You all have received a copy in your registration folder.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

25. Some countries have expressed the wish to initiate informal and practical working groups to achieve results. These are the so called **Marrakech taskforces**. I am very happy to see the good reaction to our initiative. Today three countries want to present their first plans. Sweden on sustainable lifestyles, UK on sustainable product policies, and Germany on co-operation for Africa. I am sure that other task forces will follow. They will gather expertise from all regions of the world, as you will hear in more detail this afternoon and in the discussions in the various working groups.

26. To **conclude**, this meeting is important in the sense that it brings together key actors from all the regions, and it is providing us the platform and opportunity to give a shared orientation to the "Pura Vida Marrakech Process". On the same time, it is good to realise, that **we are not negotiating here**. It is an expert meeting. Recommendations will be put in a chair's summary and do not need consensus. *That* work will start in 2010 when the framework will be discussed at the CSD. All your energy of today and the rest of the week can therefore be devoted to implementation!