



Tracking Progress: Implementing sustainable consumption policies



2nd Edition

A global review of implementation of the
United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection

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United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection
(Section G: Promotion of Sustainable Consumption)



Acknowledgments

This report was written by Matthew Bentley for UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE) and Consumers International (CI), under the guidance of Bas de Leeuw, Co-ordinator, Sustainable Consumption Programme, UNEP DTIE and Anna Fielder, Director, Office for Developed and Transition Economies, CI.

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Foreword

There is wide global recognition that unsustainable patterns of consumption have serious social and environmental impacts. Moreover, an emerging conclusion of the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), including a series of regional round tables organised by UNEP, is that there is still an important lack of understanding about the potential contribution of sustainable consumption policies to eradicating poverty, while at the same time preserving the environment.

'Changing consumption patterns', as identified by Chapter 4 of Agenda 21, remains a challenging, yet significant component of the drive to achieve sustainable development.

Protecting consumers from impending environmental and social catastrophes is an integral responsibility of governments all around the world. Ever since the expansion of the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection in 1999 to include elements on sustainable consumption, governments have had at their disposal a valuable framework of policies designed to reorient consumption patterns towards sustainability.

Consuming efficiently – using fewer resources and causing less pollution – to achieve a better quality of life for all should be a non-controversial issue. However, insufficient knowledge sometimes leads to a hesitant or slow uptake of the required policies. A significant sign of hope is uncovered by the first global review of the status of implementation of the UN Guidelines conducted by UNEP and CI. The overwhelming response to the survey from

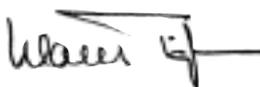
over 50 governments, including more than half from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, indicates their support for the expanded Guidelines and outlines their current progress and needs for furthering the adoption process.

The advancement and promotion of the Guidelines and sustainable consumption and production are considered a key theme for this year's World Summit on Sustainable Development, and *Tracking Progress* is a pioneering, crucial review in the implementation of such policies. It highlights both good practices and the need for a time-bound global framework programme aimed at comprehensive and integrated implementation of the Guidelines.

We call on all governments to adhere to the messages in this report and push ahead with implementation of the sustainable consumption section of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection. We trust that *Tracking Progress* will also act as the benchmark for a successful training and capacity-building programme in the years to come.



**Louise Sylvan,
CI President**

**Klaus Töpfer,
UNEP Executive Director**



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Abbreviations and acronyms used in this report

CI	Consumers International
CSD	Commission for Sustainable Development
DTIE	Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP)
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (UN)
ODTE	Office for Developed and Transition Economies (CI)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PREPCOM	Preparatory Committee meeting for WSSD
ROAF	Regional Office for Africa (CI)
ROAP	Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (CI)
ROLAC	Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (CI)
SC	sustainable consumption
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WEEE	Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (European Union Directive)
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

Executive summary

Three years have passed since the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection were expanded in 1999 to include new elements on Sustainable Consumption (Section G). They represent a framework for governments to use in formulating and strengthening consumer protection policies and legislation. The Guidelines encompass such issues as providing information, conducting consumer research, testing products, promoting recycling and sustainable government practices, encouraging life cycle thinking and eco-products, and strengthening regulatory mechanisms and adopting economic measures.

UNEP and CI have conducted the first global governmental study of the status of implementation of the sustainable consumption section of the Guidelines. It has revealed a clear and strong interest by governments everywhere in implementing these Guidelines. Policy makers all over the world are aware of the urgency of protecting their citizens from environmental and social disasters by inspiring changes in consumption and production patterns.

However, of the 53 governments whose survey responses feature in the study, more than a third were not actually aware of the Guidelines before they received the global survey.

Altogether, UNEP and CI approached and actively followed up almost 150 governments, receiving a positive response from 90, including those that participated in the study. A vast number of requests were fielded for information about the Guidelines and the topic

of sustainable consumption. This shows a clear need for a better and more systematic approach to spreading knowledge and understanding of the Guidelines.

The status of implementation of the specific elements of the Guidelines varies widely. For example, three-quarters of governments surveyed said that they had started to implement policies in line with the need for sustainable government practices, but just over half said that they had promoted research on consumer behaviour to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable.

Governments are calling for training and other opportunities to learn from the international community, including consumer organisations, NGOs and other interested parties.

There is an overwhelmingly positive opinion of the Guidelines – almost 80% of countries surveyed said that the Guidelines are useful for policy making. However, a third of the governments surveyed believe that Section G of the Guidelines need to be modified, in many cases because certain guidelines are felt to lack clarity and need better explanation.

Measuring progress is another area where there is room for improvement. Half the governments surveyed do not have designated representatives in charge of implementing, or monitoring compliance with, the Guidelines.

One of the clear positive messages from the study is the large number of governments that have raised consumer awareness about sustainable consumption issues. Eight in ten governments have promoted such practices in

recent years and many others have devised campaigns for the future. The most common activities revolve around disseminating information about saving energy and water resources, or protecting the environment by recycling or buying recycled products. However, this is by no means all that should be done. Governments, especially those in non-OECD countries, could learn from examples in other countries and extend their campaigns beyond the traditional resource-saving sphere.

The eight national case studies included in this report demonstrate a host of good practices for countries intent on starting or furthering sustainable consumption policy making (see Chapter 4, page 30).

Many of the governments that responded to the survey expressed the need for support in designing national policies that follow the framework of the Guidelines. However, many such policies are already available and have been enacted by various authorities. Enthusiasm and good practices should be shared so that global policy implementation in this field can be boosted without re-inventing the wheel.

Summary of recommendations

- Governments should initiate a five-year global framework programme aimed at comprehensive and integrated implementation of the guidelines at national, regional and international level. Such a programme could be launched at the WSSD.
- Governments should develop a concrete plan of action for implementation of the Guidelines including timelines and measurable targets.
- Special attention should be focused on the following policy areas: publicly-available information on measuring progress; research on consumer behaviour; environmental product testing; regulatory mechanisms, including economic instruments; sustainable government practices, including sustainable procurement; life cycle design of products and services; and recycling programmes.
- Governments should carry out their own monitoring activities and nominate a department or organisation to be responsible for the compliance-monitoring role.
- The international community should set measurable targets and progress should be tracked. Every two years a global review should be conducted by impartial bodies to review progress towards such targets.
- Further research must be conducted that investigates more fully the level to which initiatives or legislation have been implemented in support of each of the sustainable consumption elements of the Guidelines. The information should be made publicly available.
- Governments, supported by international organisations and consumer organisations, should raise awareness of the existence of the Guidelines within their own national political structures.
- International organisations, such as UNEP and the OECD, should promote good-quality and reliable information about sustainable consumption to governments, business, non-governmental organisations and the public.
- Governments should share experiences with the international community on progress towards implementing the Guidelines. Industrialised countries should support developing countries with direct knowledge transfer. Training and information-sharing workshops should be conducted in all world regions.
- International organisations and consumer organisations should improve their outreach to support efforts to implement the Guidelines by raising awareness, providing information and monitoring progress. Promotional materials, good-practice case studies, resource websites and toolkits that clearly explain the key strategic objectives should be made available. The Guidelines should be translated into all official UN languages.

1 Introduction

Achieving sustainable consumption

World consumption expenditures, private and public, have expanded at an unprecedented pace, doubling in real terms in 25 years to reach \$US24 trillion in 1998. This expansion has propelled considerable advances in human development¹. Unfortunately, however, the negative impacts have been similarly resounding. The problems include unequal distribution of consumption, environmental damage (deforestation, soil degradation, desertification, water stress and loss of biodiversity) and social impacts that deepen inequalities and social exclusion.

Sustainable consumption and production first secured international prominence at the Rio Earth Summit (UNCED) in 1992.

At the 1992 United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, the Agenda 21 action plan was adopted. Agenda 21 is a collection of detailed goals and policies aimed at making sustainable development a reality by eliminating poverty and by eradicating the serious threats to our global and local environment². Chapter 4 of this groundbreaking document, 'Changing consumption patterns', highlights the need for reorienting consumption patterns towards sustainability, and presents strategies for achieving the goals.

'Ever since the international community endorsed the concept of sustainable consumption it has led to an impressive amount of activities by international governmental organisations, governments, business decision-makers, non-governmental organisations and individual people themselves. However, governments should realise that there might be a firmer role for them to play. Financial and legal regulations should better reflect today's concerns for sustainability. Designing in "sustainability" in a broad spectrum of policies, including land-use planning, transport and energy policies will facilitate individual consumers to take the environment into account in their daily decisions.'

Bas de Leeuw

Co-ordinator, Sustainable Consumption Programme, UNEP DTIE

Chapter 4 of Agenda 21 recognised that 'the major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment is the unsustainable pattern of consumption and production, particularly in industrialised countries' and called for action to promote patterns of consumption and production that reduce environmental stress and will meet the basic needs of humanity³.

Chapter 4 of Agenda 21 encourages the implementation of national policies, including the utilisation of economic instruments, such as taxes and deposit/refund systems that can influence consumer behaviour towards sustainability. Government procurement is outlined as a critical requirement, as was the need for environmental labelling schemes⁴.

In 1995, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development officially adopted the working definition of sustainable consumption as: 'The use of services and related products which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimising the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generations.'⁵

*'Sustainable consumption is not about consuming less, it is about consuming differently, consuming efficiently, and having an improved quality of life. It also means sharing between the rich and the poor.'*⁶

Jacqueline Aloisi de Lardere
UNEP Assistant Executive Director

Other important elements that need to be addressed through sustainable consumption include decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation and the theme of 'common but differentiated responsibility'.

In Response to Chapter 4 and the increased consumer awareness and interest in sustainability worldwide, the international consumer movement led the drive to incorporate environmental criteria into the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection. In 1993, Consumers International organised a conference about sustainable consumption, 'Beyond the year 2000: The transition to sustainable consumption'. As a result of intensive lobbying, in 1995, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) agreed to request the Secretary-General to expand the Guidelines to include elements on sustainable consumption.

'Consumers are increasingly interested in the world that lies behind the product they buy. Apart from price and quality, they want to know how, where and whom has produced the product. This increasing awareness about environmental and social issues is a sign of hope. Governments and industry must build on that.'

Klaus Töpfer
UNEP Executive Director

'Even though the concept of sustainable consumption may sound new, the concept is something that has been practiced by our ancestors. Traditionally our society and the people lived and used their natural resources sustainably. They were healthy because they consumed only what was required for living. With the current situation it is different because people become so dependant on imported goods and they produce for commercial trade unlike the traditional practices and consumption patterns. It is therefore important that traditional knowledge on consumption should be encouraged because it will assist to maintain sustainable patterns of consumption.'

Ernest Bani
Director, Environment Unit, Vanuatu

'Responsible consumption is a logical development of the concept of sustainable consumption, as responsible consumers demand that their rights be respected, including the right to "consume better", that is, in a more ethical, ecological or socially-responsible way.'

Martin Frid
Swedish Consumer Coalition

CI and UNEP promoting sustainable consumption

Over the years most of the work on sustainable consumption has shifted from discussing concepts and strategies to defining policy options⁷.

The UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) co-ordinated many international sustainable consumption activities in the mid to late 1990s after setting up an International Work Programme on Changing Consumption and Production Patterns (IWPCPP) in 1995. However, both CI and UNEP have become integral in the process of promoting and advancing sustainable consumption thinking and policy-making efforts⁸.

CI has been responsible for a number of sustainable consumption campaigns since the adoption of Agenda 21. For example, *Greening consumer choice?* was published in 1995 to examine environmental labels, and CI's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

conducted a nine-country examination of household consumption patterns⁹ in the region, and also distributed a series of case studies, 'A matter of living on earth'. Other relevant work included the report 'Meeting needs, changing lifestyles', issued at the World Consumer Rights Day on March 15, 1997, and the impressive collection of books and campaign materials as support to consumer organisations in promoting sustainable consumption on green testing, green claims and green guidance¹⁰.

CI was instrumental in having the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection expanded to include sustainable consumption.

In 1999, UNEP's Sustainable Consumption Programme was launched. Its mission was to better understand the forces that drive consumption and use the findings to inspire governments, businesses and non-governmental organisations to take action. Consumers need information, products, services, price incentives, legal frameworks and infrastructure in order to be inspired to change their consumption choices. Creating the conditions for consumers to consume more efficiently (using fewer natural resources and causing less pollution and negative social consequences) has therefore become the main focus of work for UNEP's SC Programme.

A particular emphasis is given to the opportunities and needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in this area. More efficient consumption and production patterns will – apart from the environmental gains – also be beneficial for countries with scarce resources, as it can provide quality of life for all, foremost those most in need, and thereby contribute to the eradication of poverty.

The increasing awareness of sustainability among consumers worldwide can potentially create business opportunities in those countries, both in their domestic and their export markets, which will also strengthen their economic development. However, a lack of knowledge and skills sometimes leads to a hesitant or slow uptake of the required policies. This is why UNEP's SC Programme

includes an important 'capacity-building' component, focusing on Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe.

UNEP's SC Programme includes activities addressing such sectors as advertising and youth, and core themes such as life-cycle thinking, sustainable product and service design and a process of regional round tables¹¹. Research was conducted on the consumption patterns of global consumers¹² – a group of consumers with similar tastes and habits, on youth lifestyles and on indicators for sustainable consumption¹³.

The need for user-friendly, transparent and reliable information about environmental aspects of products and services is increasing, as more and more people are interested in the 'world behind' their consumption patterns. In an effort to meet this need, UNEP and the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) have joined forces to facilitate the use of life cycle assessment (LCA) and to promote life cycle management for both business and governments¹⁴.

Sustainable consumption and cleaner production are two sides of the same sustainability coin. UNEP is working on both sides in an integrated manner. The two approaches meet at the level of the product. Tools such as eco-design, dematerialisation and the promotion of services and product service systems (PSS) are being investigated and promoted¹⁵. UNEP is also amongst the promoters of environmentally and socially responsible (green) procurement. It is particularly keen on promoting information exchange on sometimes very varied experiences, with a special focus on the needs of governments and business in developing countries¹⁶.

With this portfolio and outputs, UNEP's relatively young SC Programme has quickly achieved the status of one of the leaders in setting the international agenda on sustainable consumption and in promoting its implementation.

'UNEP is playing a strategic role in sustaining the debate on changing consumption and production patterns. UNEP is the organisation that is giving credibility to the UN and the international community in following up on Chapter 4 of Agenda 21. That's why UNEP deserves and requires support from all those working towards sustainable consumption and production.'

Eva Charkiewicz

Tools for Transition, The Netherlands

United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection

In 1985, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, by consensus, the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection in its resolution 39/85. The Guidelines are intended for use by governments in developing and strengthening national consumer protection legislation and regulation. They are not formal obligations or even recommendations, but rather a set of elements governments can draw upon in developing such policies. (See Appendix 1, page 64, for the full text of Section G of the Guidelines)

The UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection remain an extremely valuable tool in national policy development, and in the design and implementation of consumer protection legislation. The Guidelines represent a dynamic process, adapting to changing conditions (for example, the recent inclusion of the sustainable consumption elements)¹⁷.

Expanding the Guidelines to include elements on sustainable consumption

In 1999 the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection were expanded to include elements on sustainable consumption. Based on the text drafted by the UN Inter-Regional Report Group Meeting on Consumer Protection and Sustainable Consumption: New Guidelines for the Global Consumer (Sao Paulo, January 1998), and on informal intergovernmental consultations held at the UN in late 1998, CSD-7 adopted a revised text for the Guidelines. That text was endorsed by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July 1999 and

adopted by the General Assembly in late 1999 (Decision 54/449). At the February 1999 meeting, CI ROLAC's Stefan Larenas called the adoption of the new Guidelines a 'crucial next step' in achieving the goals of sustainable development as agreed upon in Rio in 1992.

CI played an integral role in the preparatory work for the extension of the Guidelines. Based on the UN ECOSOC resolution 1997/53, which was sponsored by Brazil and Chile and co-sponsored by 15 member states, CI prepared draft inputs for the new Guidelines, incorporating elements of sustainable consumption¹⁸. Various stakeholders, including the OECD and UNEP, commented on the proposed texts.

The extension of the Guidelines to include sustainable consumption provided an important opportunity both to update consumer protection policies to include environmental protection and sustainable development, and to strengthen the linkage between consumer interests and sustainable consumption, thereby stimulating national policy making to promote more sustainable consumption.

In the past, extensive environmental protection and sustainability activities had focused on making production processes cleaner and safer, whereas since the early 90's, it was increasingly considered as equally important to promote the demand side and to promote more sustainable consumption patterns. The hope was that the revised Guidelines would stimulate governments, businesses and consumer organisations and, ultimately, individual consumers, to consider the environmental impacts of the production, marketing, consumption and disposal of goods and materials¹⁹.

'Consumer protection has taken a pioneering stride into a greener future. This is the first major update of this Magna Carta of consumer rights since it was adopted 19 years ago. The decision to approve incorporation marks a victory for consumers and provides an important tool which governments can use in developing, and implementing effective action plans for sustainable development. Consumers International will both support and monitor their efforts.'

Anna Fielder
Director, Office for Developed and Transition Economies, CI (1999)

General principles of the Guidelines

These state that: 'Governments should develop or maintain a strong consumer protection policy, taking into consideration the UN Consumer Guidelines and relevant international agreements.', and '...Governments should set their own priorities for the protection of consumers in accordance with the economic, social and environmental circumstances of the country and the needs of its population, bearing in mind the costs and benefits of proposed measures.'¹⁹

Objectives of the Guidelines

The Guidelines take into account the interests and needs of consumers in all countries, particularly those in developing countries: 'recognising that consumers often face imbalances in economic terms, educational levels, and bargaining power: and bearing in mind that consumers should have the right of access to non-hazardous products, as well as the right to promote just, equitable and sustainable economic and social development and environmental protection'.

The guidelines for consumer protection have the following objectives:

- to assist in achieving or maintaining adequate protection for their population as consumers;
- to facilitate production and distribution patterns responsive to the needs and desires of consumers;

- to encourage high levels of ethical conduct for those engaged in the production and distribution of goods and services to consumers;
- to assist countries in curbing abusive business practices by all enterprises at the national and international levels which adversely effect consumers;
- to facilitate the development of independent consumer groups;
- to further international co-operation in the field of consumer protection;
- to encourage the development of market conditions which provides consumers with greater choice at lower prices; and
- to promote sustainable consumption.

For the full text of the Guidelines, see Appendix 1, page 64.

The project

'Changing consumption patterns', as identified by Chapter 4 of Agenda 21, remains an integral focal point for this year's World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), taking place in Johannesburg, South Africa. It was stated in the Chairman's Summary Proposals (PrepCom II, NY, 30 January 2002) that it would be important to promote 'co-operation among civil society and governments to create initiatives for sustainable production and consumption behaviour'.

Moreover, in the NGO Statement from PrepCom II, 'NGOs called upon governments to support and actively develop, implement and monitor national policy frameworks and plans of action to achieve sustainable production and consumption in partnership with civil society. The starting point for this should be the implementation of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection, with special emphasis on confronting barriers to change.'

The UNEP/CI partnership is addressing a number of the major themes of the Chairman's report from PrepCom II, including protecting consumer interests, considering diversity, global outreach, and issues of good governance, as well as disseminating best practices. The initiative is directly in-line with the call from PrepCom II participants that collaboration between major groups, the UN and civil society as a whole is essential for the equitable and effective implementation of sustainability policies.

Project summary

In 2002, three years after the UN Guidelines were expanded to include new elements on Sustainable Consumption, UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE) and CI identified the need to conduct a global survey measuring progress of implementation of the sustainable consumption section of the Guidelines. Specifically, the research project was designed to discover whether governments were aware of the existence of the sustainable consumption section and to determine what governments had done to implement these elements in their national policy frameworks.

The project was divided into two major segments: a globally-distributed questionnaire and follow-up interviews with more than ten governments. See Chapter 2, page 14, for more about how the research was conducted.

The project's objectives were to:

- determine which governments know about the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection (Section G: Promotion of Sustainable Consumption);
- establish what governments have accomplished: have the guidelines been a source of inspiration for (sustainable consumption) policy makers?;
- identify good practices and lessons to be learnt from both developed and developing countries (national case studies);
- present recommendations for future action and commence planning follow-up activities; and
- raise awareness of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection.

Endnotes

- 1 UNDP. (1998), Human Development Report. New York: Oxford University Press
- 2 Swedish Consumer Coalition (2001) *Sustainable consumption: A report from the Swedish Consumer Coalition*, Sweden
- 3 UNEP. (2001), Consumption Opportunities: Strategies for Change, Geneva
- 4 See de Leeuw, B. (2001) Policies to Promote Sustainable Consumption: An Overview, (OECD) for a summary of sustainable consumption policies
- 5 UN CSD IWPCP, adopted in 1995.
- 6 UNEP/CDG. (2000), Sustainable Consumption and Production. *Creating opportunities in a changing world: Report of the 4th International Business Forum*, Berlin, 1999
- 7 OECD. (2001), Policies to Promote Sustainable Consumption: An Overview, Paris
- 8 Bentley, M. (2001), Consumer Trends and Expectations: An international survey focussing on environmental impacts, UNEP Industry and Environment review, Vol. 23 no.4, October-December 2000
- 9 Consumers International (ROAP). (1997), A Discerning Middle Class?, Malaysia: Jutaprint
- 10 There is more information about Consumers International's activities and publications on sustainable consumption at: www.consumersinternational.org
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- 14 The UNEP/SETAC Life Cycle Initiative: See www.uneptie.org/pc/sustain/lca/lca.htm
- 15 See www.uneptie.org/pc/sustain/design/design.htm (Includes the UNEP brochure: *The role of product services systems in a sustainable society*)
- 16 See www.uneptie.org/pc/sustain/design/green-proc.htm
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- 19 UN CSD. (1999), The United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection
- 20 UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection

2 Research methodology

Questionnaire

Design and testing

The global questionnaire was designed to meet the stated project objectives (as outlined on page 13). The questionnaire was separated into two parts.

The first part focused on questions of a general nature, concerning such aspects as the determined value and clarity of the Guidelines, as well as gauging government awareness and progress of associated monitoring activities. It also probed whether governments had promoted awareness-raising and information campaigns focusing on sustainable consumption – these are not covered in detail in Section G of the UN Guidelines.

The second part of the questionnaire requested information on the status of governments' implementation of policies in line with those referred to in Section G of the Guidelines.

The core research team selected eight important Paragraphs from Section G of the Guidelines to be measured for implementation status. The survey focused on policies for:

- encouraging design, development and use of environmentally sound products and services (Paragraphs 45 and 50 of the Guidelines);
- recycling programmes (Paragraph 45);
- environmental testing of products (Paragraph 47);

- effective regulatory mechanisms (Paragraph 51);
- economic instruments (Paragraph 52).
- indicators, methodologies and databases (Paragraph 53);
- sustainable government practices (Paragraph 54); and
- consumer research (Paragraph 55).

The second part of the questionnaire did not include all the issues raised in Section G of the Guidelines. Although there were no specific questions relating to paragraphs 46, 48 and 49, these paragraphs, were occasionally commented on by responding governments. (A future global review of implementation of Section G should take these elements into consideration.)

The eight questions in part two were interpreted for meaning by the research team and rewritten in abbreviated form to make completing the survey as time-efficient as possible. The specific paragraphs of the Guidelines were provided with each question as a reference for respondents and misunderstandings of questions by respondents were relatively small (see 'Limitations', page 16).

Government respondents were encouraged to provide examples in the case of positive responses to the survey questions. This was considered necessary in order to help provide legitimacy to claims of policy implementation and to provide verification of such claims. Documentation was also requested that could

provide further evidence of respective policy design and implementation.

At the time of the questionnaire design, the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection were available only in English. Section G of the UN Guidelines (along with the survey questions) were translated by the project team into French and Spanish, to provide a wider target audience for the survey. (Since then, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has translated the complete Guidelines into French and Spanish.)

The final questionnaire drafts were tested by various individuals with direct experience in sustainable consumption government policy making and by external research institutes with experience in designing and conducting such government surveys. Some adjustments to the questionnaire were made as a result.

The testing process identified some concerns about complicated and confusing wording of a small number of the Guidelines' paragraphs. See Chapter 3, page 18, for more about this.

Distribution

In order to manage a project of this nature, it was vital to construct a global project task force. The project's regional task force, built from CI's regional office network, played an invaluable role in following up governments in their respective regions.

The principal representatives of this task force were: Matthew Bentley (UNEP/CI Project Co-ordinator), Bjarne Pedersen and Jan Leipold (CI, Office for Developed and Transition Economies), Nessie Golakai (CI, Regional Office for Africa), Stefan Larenas (CI, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean) and Rajeswari Kanniah (Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific).

The representatives from the four CI regional offices were responsible for following up governments once the questionnaires were distributed, acting as both a point of contact for queries and comments and also to prompt those governments that had not returned their questionnaires to do so.

Before the questionnaire was distributed (in October 2001), a detailed contact database was established, including known sustainable consumption contacts in over 20 governments. Where direct contacts were not identified, surveys were mailed directly to the ministry or government body responsible for environmental issues.

The vast majority of questionnaires were completed by each government's ministry of environment. In a few cases, the government requested other ministries to complete the questionnaire. In other cases, they were forwarded to working groups consisting of staff from various government bodies and other institutions, such as consumer organisations.

One of the secondary goals of the project was to build a contacts database of key government personnel associated with sustainable consumption policy making all over the world. This resource will act as a critical future network for furthering global policy making in this area.

As well as being mailed to governments throughout the world, the project materials were also posted on the UNEP/CI project website from where they could be downloaded.

Survey sample

Governments representing countries, special administration regions and territories were the target audience for this survey. In the cases of federal systems, such as Australia and Germany, federal governments reported on activities carried out at both the federal and state levels.

Questionnaires were in some cases received by national consumer organisations, responding on behalf of their government, though surveys from consumer organisations or other bodies were not directly solicited. Contact with such organisations was established only after government officials presented these organisations with the questionnaire or when the team was requested to direct enquiries to such bodies.

Data collection and analysis

Since a large proportion of questionnaires were sent to governments in which a direct contact had not been identified, task force members had difficulty establishing the status of questionnaire completion. In many cases the questionnaire was resent to the new contact identified at the time of the phone call or e-mail.

In all, task force representatives directly or indirectly contacted more than three-quarters of the world's national governments to maximise response.

Numerous enquiries were fielded during this stage of the research undertaking, including the response to queries about the topic areas of sustainable consumption and the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection.

Thanks to the remarkable commitment of the project task force, their affiliates and contacts, the original target of 30 to 40 government surveys was easily met. This study includes the results of 53 surveys, of which 50 were received by the March 2002 deadline. Three surveys from Estonia, Finland and India, received after the initial deadline, have been included in this updated version of the report (see Appendix 3, page 72, for a full list of participating countries).

Invaluable contacts made at the time of various government enquiries, and from questionnaires received prior to and after the deadline, have resulted in the construction of a global database of primarily government sustainable consumption policy makers.

The small minority of questionnaires received from national consumer organisations were processed in the same way as those received directly from governments. These included surveys from Zimbabwe (Consumer Council of Zimbabwe), Chile (National Consumer Association) and Italy (Consiglio Nazionale dei Consumatori).

An encouraging facet uncovered was the co-operation witnessed between consumer organisations and government departments in the completing of a number of these surveys.

For example, the Slovak Republic's return was a joint effort between the Ministry of Environment and the Association of Slovak Consumers.

The cross-sector nature of sustainable consumption resulted in a number of government departments needing to solicit information from other departments before returning the questionnaire. In some cases, this resulted in lengthy delays and may have resulted in the research team receiving the questionnaires after the due date. However, positive signs were also observed in this respect. The utilisation of working groups, as was the case with Belgium, resulted in a detailed and well-supported questionnaire return. Co-operation between government departments and partnerships between consumer organisations, governments and civil society are considered essential for moving implementation of these Guidelines forward.

Limitations

Various analyses were undertaken using a mix of data provided in the questionnaires, from comprehensive follow-up interviews and from other communications with the government representatives, via the phone and e-mail. If there was any illegible or unclear text that could not be clarified, the data was not included in the analysis. In the case of the survey results tables in Appendix 3 (page 72), unclear or unanswered responses have been left blank.

Often when governments made a positive response to a policy implementation question, they would comment that only partial implementation had taken place and that further actions were planned or needed in the future. This constitutes one of the weaknesses of the study, and further research is needed to more fully investigate the level to which initiatives or legislation have been implemented in support of the sustainable consumption elements of the UN Guidelines. Although quantifying a level of implementation would be difficult, it may have been interesting to offer governments an alternative to 'yes' or 'no' on the questionnaire, such as 'partial implementation'.

However, in terms of providing a first review of status, the research team is confident that the output is very close to the reality, bearing in mind that positive responses do not necessarily equate to complete implementation of a particular paragraph of the Guidelines. Nor in all cases do negative responses mean that nothing of any relevance has happened in that country.

A careful review of the text provided as verification of positive responses highlights the fact that a number of the Guideline paragraphs may include some confusing wording or complicated statements. Most of the unanswered questions, although relatively very small, may also be evidence of the fact that some respondents were unable to decipher the meaning of some of the paragraphs. See 'Modification or clarification?', page 20, for more on this.

Positive claims to Paragraph implementation were verified using a range of methods including comparison with known progress or actions, and examples provided in the text sections of each question. Moreover, the national case studies and other supporting documentation provided an opportunity to verify data collected from those country's questionnaires. When the research team was unsure of the accuracy of a response in terms of its relevance to the actual paragraph, attempts were made to follow up with the government representative. When this was not possible and the response was clearly a misunderstanding of the Paragraphs, the response was assigned an 'n/a' value, pending later verification.

Future studies should focus on further verifying claims of full or partial paragraph implementation. And more advanced measurement techniques (indicators) should be developed to clearly identify levels of implementation of the various policy areas. However, clarifying the respective meaning of the sustainable consumption elements of the UN Guidelines, so that all governments comprehend their related responsibilities, should happen first.

To improve understanding, the research team suggests designing toolkits and offering

training opportunities for governments, particularly those in developing countries.

Follow-up interviews

The purposes of the follow-up interviews were to verify information provided on the government survey and to further expand the analysis of the respective government's sustainable consumption-related policy implementation. The national case studies (in Chapter 4, page 30) were drafted from information provided in the survey and subsequent follow-up interview.

The national case studies are intended to present positive examples of implementation efforts for governments preparing to commence or further their own process of implementation of the Guidelines.

The interview form included questions relating to government participation at international meetings on either sustainable consumption or the UN Consumer Guidelines, requirements for further implementation to take place and possible support of follow-up project activities.

The following individuals were responsible for conducting the interviews: Brazil: Stefan Larenas (CI ROLAC); Chile: Stefan Larenas (CI ROLAC); Germany: Jan Leipold (CI ODTE); Japan: Shuei Hiratsuka (CI ROAP consultant); Mauritius: Nessie Golakai (CI ROAF); Senegal: Lamine Nidiaye (CI ROAF, West and Central Africa).

The project co-ordinator personally conducted interviews over the phone or via e-mail with Australia and China.

The project team would like to extend special thanks to our contacts who kindly participated in these interviews: Marguerite Carrington (Australia), Antonio Mello (Brazil), Alejandra Arratia (Chile), Li Chuhua and Chen Shangqin (China), Christian Loewe (Germany), Tetsuya Kamijo (Japan), R. K. Bunjun (Mauritius) and Boury Ngom (Senegal).

3 Survey findings

Response and participation

The project had a target of receiving 30 to 40 government surveys, of 180 sent out. The target was easily met, and this updated report includes the results of the 53 surveys received to date. The map, below, shows the location of the countries whose responses and views feature in the report, and identifies those countries which feature as national case studies (in Chapter 4, page 30).

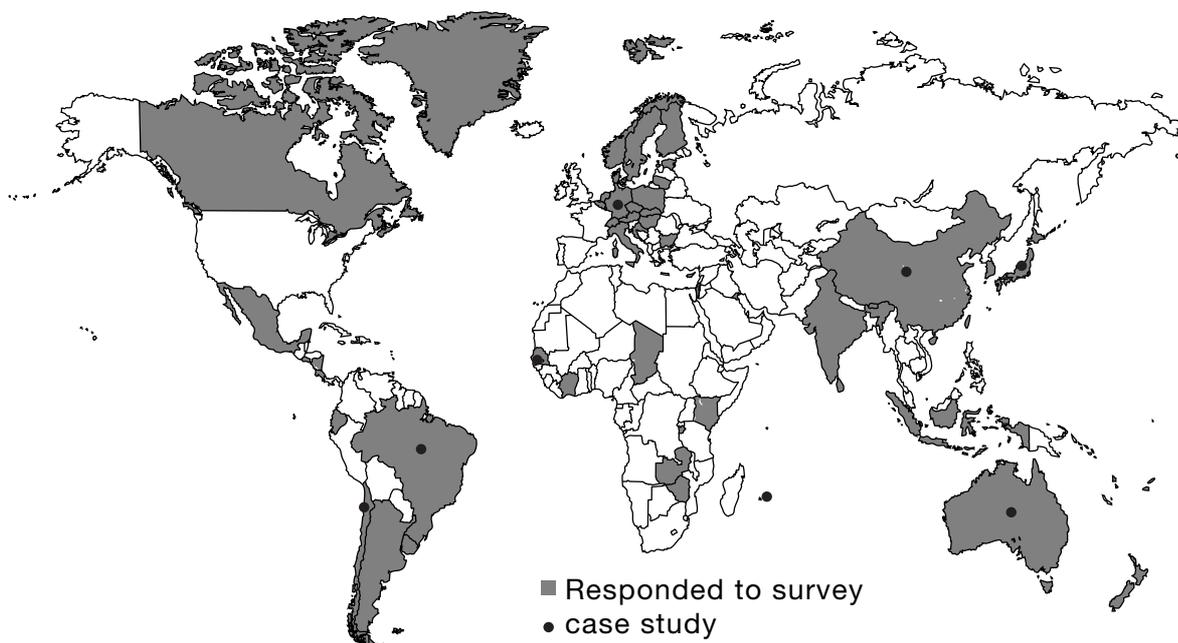
Of the 53 surveys, 20 were from OECD countries and 33 were from non-OECD countries.

The non-OECD countries were divided regionally as follows:

- eight from Asia and the Pacific;
- two from the Middle East;
- nine from Latin America and the Caribbean;
- six from Eastern and Southern Europe; and
- eight from Africa.

For a full list of participating countries, see Appendix 3, page 72.

A Global Review of the Implementation of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection (Section G: Promotion of Sustainable Consumption)



Government's views

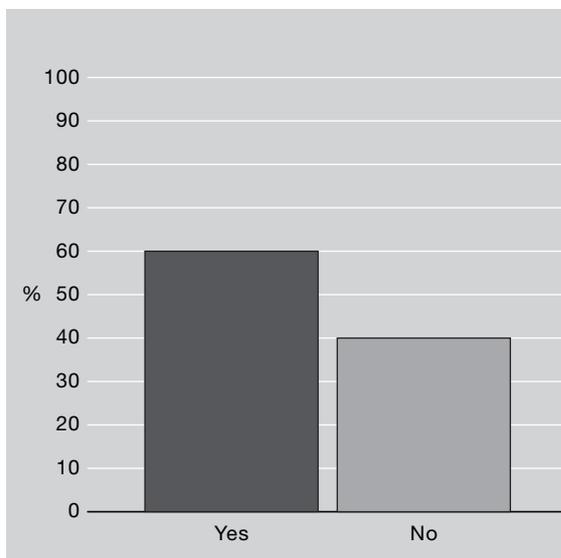
Awareness of the guidelines

Generally limited awareness and understanding indicate the need for renewed efforts to promote and explain the Guidelines.

A total of 32 governments, including those of a number of developing countries, were aware of the existence of the sustainable consumption section of the Guidelines. However, an inherent weakness identified from the research is that over a third (40%) of governments surveyed had not been aware of the Guidelines before they had received the global survey.

There was no clear pattern in how governments became aware of the Guidelines. Most of those that had the Guidelines were directly involved in the expansion process in the mid to late 1990s. Otherwise, governments were informed of the Guidelines from the UNEP or UN CSD websites, by monitoring UNEP and CI activities and from media documents and official UN circulars. Other government personnel came to know of them through discussions with colleagues and by participating in international meetings.

Many governments from all regions were among those that became exposed to the Guidelines for the first time because of the global study.



Graph 3.1 Countries aware of the Guidelines

'Generally the Guidelines [Section G] seem good and, if they were implemented, it would help bring us closer to a sustainable development. But I doubt that many people are aware of them.'

Jacob Bomann-Larsen
Adviser, Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, Norway

Opinion of the Guidelines

Governments have overwhelmingly expressed support for the sustainable consumption paragraphs of the UN Guidelines. Almost 80% of governments stated that the Guidelines are useful for policy making. Governments have made over 20 positive comments in direct support of their existence and intention.

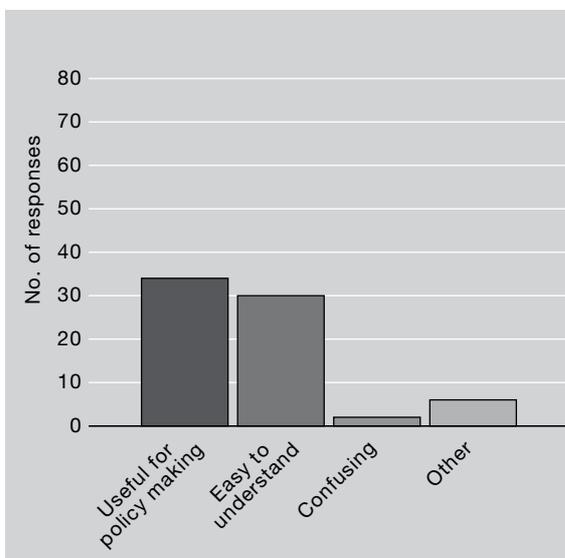
The Guidelines have only recently been translated into French and Spanish, so there was a limit to the number of governments that had access to them. And even now, with only three languages covered, governments will require translations into at least all official UN languages so that the Guidelines can be more easily understood and interpreted.

Only a small number of governments consider that the Guidelines include confusing statements or are not useful for policy making. However, there does exist room for improvement, and a number of suggestions have been made (see 'Modification or clarification', page 20).

Although many countries have already implemented policies in line with many of the Guideline's paragraphs, the Guidelines can be used as a checklist or as a source for updating or expanding policies in this area. Governments that have become aware of the Guidelines after making respectable progress towards implementation have expressed disappointment at not having had access to them at an earlier stage.

'Our overall impression of the Guidelines is that they emphasise and clearly specify the role of government in this issue.'

Shang Qin Chen
Director, State Administration of Environmental Protection, People's Republic of China



Graph 3.2 Opinion of the Guidelines

'I think [Section G] is very comprehensive and it provides an effective guideline for decision/policy makers to put into place national regulatory mechanisms.'

Ernest Bani

Director, Environment Unit, Vanuatu

'The UN Consumer Guidelines are a very good initiative. However, we believe that the UN, through the work of UNEP, must provide more tools for protecting the environment through the promotion of sustainable consumption.'

Nassere Kaba

Director SAAJSP, Ministry of Environment, Côte d'Ivoire

Modification or clarification

Over a third (38%) of the governments surveyed believe that Section G of the Guidelines need to be in some way modified. The comments range widely, but the underlying theme is that certain elements lack clarity and must be better explained. Some of the comments received include the following.

- The means of implementation are not very explicit. A more descriptive *modus operandi* would have been more effective.
- The Guidelines should be amended and upgraded, subject to the proven achievements of the document.

- The Guidelines need to be upgraded in line with new developments in the field of biotechnology as well as other technological developments.

There was a suggestion that the Guidelines could have been simpler and perhaps more concrete. One possible approach to correct this could be to make the Guidelines more like a checklist for government implementation of measures. A checklist, incorporated within a government toolkit, would offer a solution.

There was also a request for a clearer definition of sustainable consumption to make it more obvious that a sustainable consumption strategy is a consumption strategy that any country can attain (taking geographical differences into consideration), and that resource use per capita in the industrialised world must be reduced. A higher quality of life should be promoted through a sufficient – but as low as possible – material consumption level.

A number of governments have identified that, within the framework of the Guidelines, countries should formulate their own set of 'sub-guidelines'. Certainly, in the case of countries that use languages other than English, French and Spanish, this will be very important.

A call was made for an elaboration on governmental regulations on enterprises, and on the promotion of active and voluntary participation of businesses and consumers in realising sustainable consumption patterns. Governments also highlighted the importance of incorporating sustainable consumption into education programmes, especially at primary and high-school levels.¹

Finally, the researchers included a question on governments raising consumer awareness about sustainable consumption issues, particularly because this item is not covered by the Guidelines. The majority (80%) of governments identified that they were involved in the promoting of such activities through the various media.

‘The Guidelines include a lot of very important points for sustainable consumption, but they are a bit confusing. They could be improved by increasing the clarity and accuracy and by identifying the key strategic objectives that must be followed.’

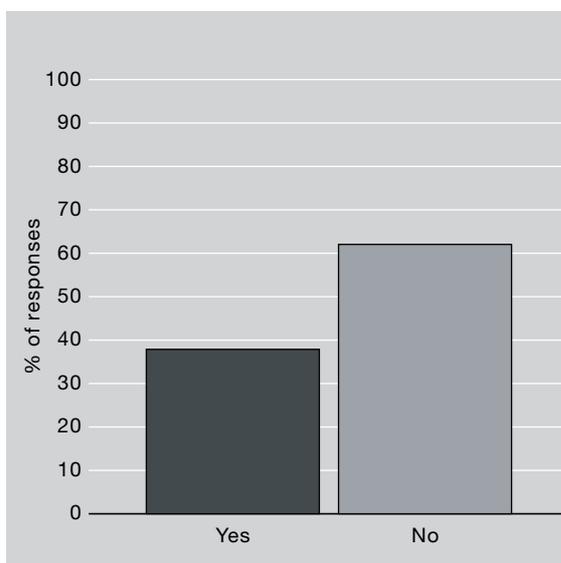
Anne-France Woestyn

Engineer, Service Product Policy, Federal Department for the Environment, Belgium

‘From a public policy perspective, these guidelines represent a useful framework. [Section G] rightfully underlines the importance of addressing the issue of sustainable consumption via an appropriate mix of policies in partnership with business and relevant organisations of civil society. Policies are to include regulations, economic and social instruments, information programmes to raise awareness, and promotion of sector-specific environmental-management best practices. Section G is well-written and highly relevant as it provides clear legitimacy for policy development as well as benchmarks and principles which can be enshrined in legislation and voluntary instruments.’

Duncan Bury

Head, Product Policy, National Office of Pollution Prevention, Environment Canada



Graph 3.3 Should the Guidelines be modified?

Progress of implementation

Information and research

Information and research initiatives have the lowest level of implementation of all the paragraphs of the Guidelines.

Information measuring progress

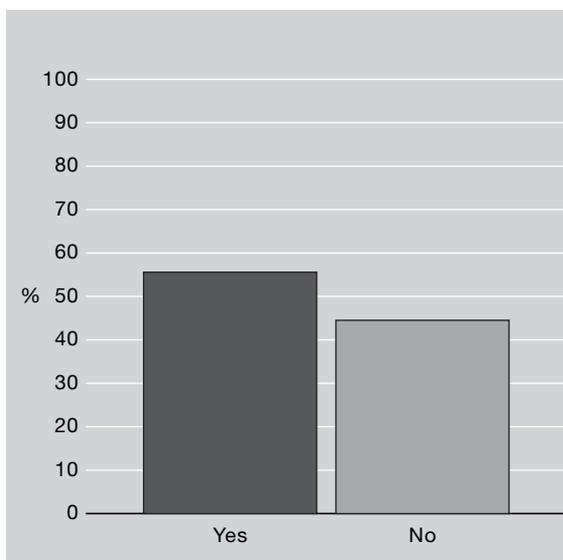
Just over half (56%) of the governments surveyed noted that they had not specifically measured progress towards sustainable consumption. There also seemed to be some confusion in terms of what is expected from this Paragraph. Some governments who answered in the positive to this question provide a range of public environmental information, but lack a holistic measurement device for sustainable consumption.

There are very limited cases of governments that have existing sustainable consumption indicator programmes, based on any frameworks such as the type produced by the OECD Environment Directorate (for example, ‘Towards more sustainable household consumption patterns: Indicators to measure progress’) and the UNCSD indicator network on ‘Measuring changes in consumption and production patterns’.

This is certainly an area of weakness. A number of governments, including those of Sweden and Canada, are compiling a set of indicators for sustainable development, which will include measurements for sustainable consumption. However, there are other examples of good practice.

For example, the Danish EPA measures and studies:

- number of eco-label licenses (Scandinavian Swan and European Daisy);
- eco-label revenue development;
- the development in market share of eco-labelled products within certain categories; and
- how the environmental performance of some products develop.



Graph 3.4 Governments measuring progress towards sustainable consumption

The results and figures are published on the home page of the Danish EPA’s website.²

The Mexican government provides monthly updates of progress towards sustainable consumption. Articles are also often published in the *Consumer* magazine.

Research on consumer behaviour

About half (56%) of governments are promoting research in this area, so there are many opportunities for dissemination of good practices.

Governments seem conscious of the need to study consumption patterns, with many implementing research projects. Some countries, including Belgium, Norway and Germany, have initiated extensive and numerous research projects, though most of those conducting research have limited their activities to one or two isolated studies. The topics studied generally focus around household patterns of consumption (water, energy, transport and waste).

The organisations conducting the research range from the Ministry of Environment to national consumer organisations to specially-designated consumer research institutes. Moreover, a number of governments that have recently instituted efforts in this area have noted that the research studies will become an ongoing process of measurement towards sustainable consumption.

Promoting and analysing consumption patterns remains a potential avenue for increased international co-operation. Both developing and industrialised countries would benefit from a better understanding of consumer behaviour in relation to minimising environmental and social impacts.

‘This is one of our needs, and outside assistance will help us to figure out unsustainable consumption behaviours.’

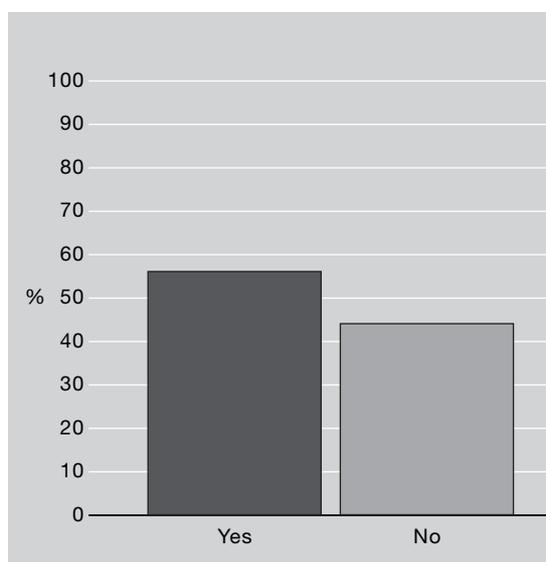
Farran Redfern
Ministry of Environment and Social Development, Kiribati

‘Several research projects have been executed by the government. Nowadays research is focussing on the social context in which consumers operate (peer groups) and on the finding of factors that may increase opportunities and preference for SC.’

Marten L. Koen
Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, The Netherlands

‘Research studies have been conducted into incentive measures to change consumer behaviour – for example, the use of economic instruments.’

B. M. S. Batayoda
Director, Ministry of Transport and Environment, Sri Lanka



Graph 3.5 Governments promoting research into consumer behaviour

Product testing

Progress in this area has been limited to the testing of only a small range of products, and is often only connected to those products and services accredited by green labelling schemes.

More traditional product testing, which concentrated on quality and health aspects, is gradually being expanded to include environmental considerations. Many of the governments that answered positively to this survey question, including those of Norway, Sweden, Brazil and Hong Kong (SAR), have programmes in place in coalition with national consumer councils and organisations.

The specific products being tested range widely. For example, Sweden identified that they were testing household products; China noted products involved in interior household renovations (for example, paints); the Dutch test passenger cars; Kuwait, Chad and Lithuania test food products; Poland and Hong Kong (SAR) test packaging items; and Denmark tests detergents.

Of the 64% of governments that said they were involved in some form of environmental product testing, a large proportion are involved in this process only by way of eco-labelling schemes. However, many of these governments highlighted the need for expanding these efforts to include a wider range of products and services.

'Assessment for green label products is carried out by the Standards Institution of Israel. Standardised guidelines for such assessment were produced by the Institution in 1993.'

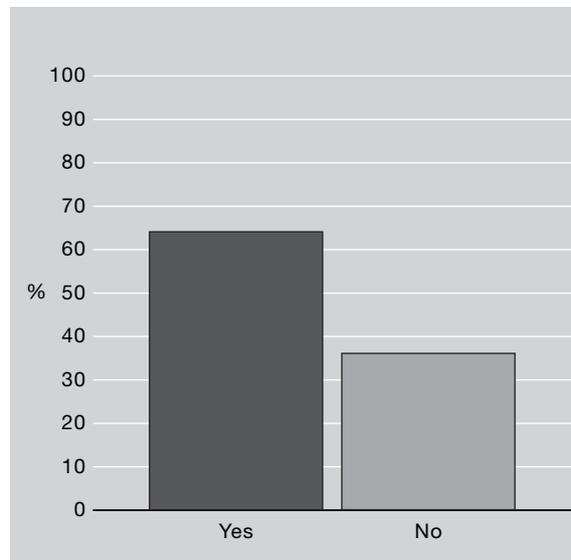
Ori Livne

**Director, International Relations Division,
Ministry of the Environment, Israel**

'Use of the Environmental Choice label requires assurance that products are environmentally safe (and have been tested). Examples of New Zealand products that carry the label include paints and carpet.'

Rob Ogilvie

**Senior Policy Analyst, International
Co-ordination, Ministry for the
Environment, New Zealand**



Graph 3.6 Countries conducting impartial environmental testing of products

Regulations

Integral to any serious efforts to sustain consumption patterns, the implementation of regulatory mechanisms to protect consumers and economic measures to promote sustainable consumption must be stepped up.

Effective regulatory mechanisms

Although 77% of governments said they had effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers in place, almost half of these governments did not specify whether sustainable consumption factors were covered in legislation. Consumer protection legislation being implemented focuses on consumer health and safety issues, while often not also incorporating specific environmental aspects.

Apart from a host of OECD countries, Sri Lanka, Lithuania, Senegal, Mauritius, Hungary, Hong Kong SAR, Kiribati, Argentina and Brazil are among the governments surveyed who mentioned consumer protection legislation. But what is not always clear is whether consumer rights related to high environmental standards are being protected.

A range of other governments, including those of Croatia, Seychelles, Zimbabwe and Côte d'Ivoire, have consumer protection legislation in either the construction or adoption phases. It is not clear in such cases whether sustainable consumption issues will be raised within the new laws.

Norway is currently strengthening its consumer protection legislation, while the Slovak Republic's legislation has been modelled on the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection. The government of El Salvador is fortifying legislation and practices so that it establishes a national culture of sustainable consumption.

Non-OECD countries that have focused special attention on sustainable consumption in their consumer protection or other regulatory mechanisms include Chile, El Salvador, Mexico and China.

'Section G has not been adopted in its totality but there are regulations under the Environmental Protection and Pollution Control Act and other legislation, which has implications to regulate unsustainable practices related to consumption patterns.'

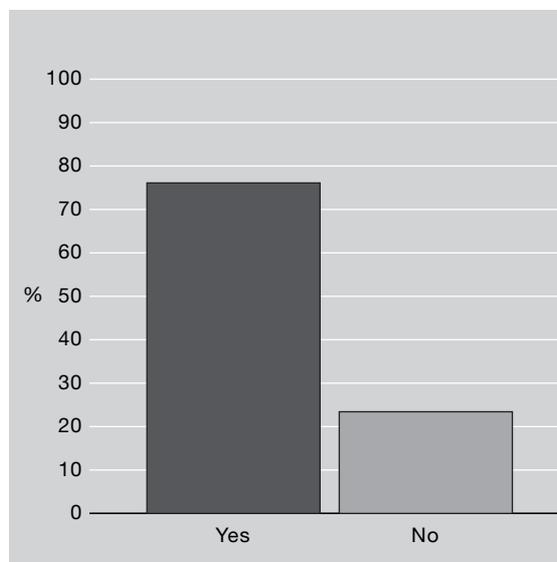
Lubinda Aongola
Director, Planning and Information
Department, Ministry of Environment and
Natural Resources, Zambia

'On 15 March 2001, a Green Consumption campaign was launched by the Chinese Consumers Association in collaboration with other related government departments. The Law of the PRC on the Protection of Consumer Rights and Interests also promotes sustainable consumption through publicity and education of the community at large.'

Shang Qin Chen
Director, State Administration of
Environmental Protection, People's
Republic of China

'The Government communication Action programme for sustainable consumption patterns for consumers/households sets out the government's goals regarding consumer protection, environment and sustainable consumption. The Government bill, Action Programme for Consumer Policy 2001-2005, contains among five goals one which states that consumption and production patterns that lessen the strains on the environment and contributes to a sustainable society should be developed.'

Anna Sanell
Head, Consumer Policy Division,
Ministry of Justice, Sweden



Graph 3.7 Governments with effective regulatory mechanisms

Economic instruments

Just over half (58%) of governments surveyed said they had economic instruments in place to promote sustainable consumption. There are also some ambiguities here in that some governments listed economic measures that may or may not necessarily be in support of sustainable consumption patterns. However, a variety of actions are being taken by various countries that are legitimately supportive of sustainable consumption.

Many governments cited their involvement in taxing leaded fuel. This global trend seems to have had some success, considering that leaded fuel consumption has decreased markedly and even phased out entirely in some countries like Australia.

Mexico has a vehicle verification programme, which aims to minimise polluting agents by encouraging motorists to keep their engines maintained. On particular days, cars with higher emissions will not be allowed to circulate. Mexico has also imposed an 'ecological tax' on gasoline to elevate its price, encouraging motorists to use their vehicles more efficiently.

Higher import duties on new cars compared with used models was also sighted a couple of times. Croatia, for example, charges a 2.7% lower import duty on used cars.

Deposit schemes for plastic bottles and cans are also quite common and operate with direct government intervention. Subsidies for environmentally friendly products, recycled products and recycled waste are also in place to varying degrees around the world.

Belgium's so-called 'ecotaxes' are levied on certain product categories that have a detrimental effect on the environment, namely batteries, disposable cameras, packaging of ink, glue and solvents. The aim of these taxes is to influence consumption choices and production methods (recycling).

Australia employs a range of economic measures to promote more sustainable consumption, particularly at State level. These include a \$A200 levy on Sydney car park spaces (encouraging use of public transport or car pooling), making CNG excise-free (encouraging use of natural gas vehicles) and local council rebates on water-efficient toilets and showerheads.

There are numerous other good practices, including environmental levying by the Seychelles, providing tax incentives to producers of 12 different products; low-interest loans to recycling industries by the Republic of Korea; and a 30% sales tax reduction on light vehicles that meet the European emission standard by China.

Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Israel and Fiji, among others, indicated that their governments were currently considering the implementation of economic measures.

Other governments, namely New Zealand, rely primarily on voluntary actions by businesses and households to change consumption patterns. The government indicated that economic measures such as the petrol tax and landfill charges that are currently in place are primarily revenue-raising instruments.

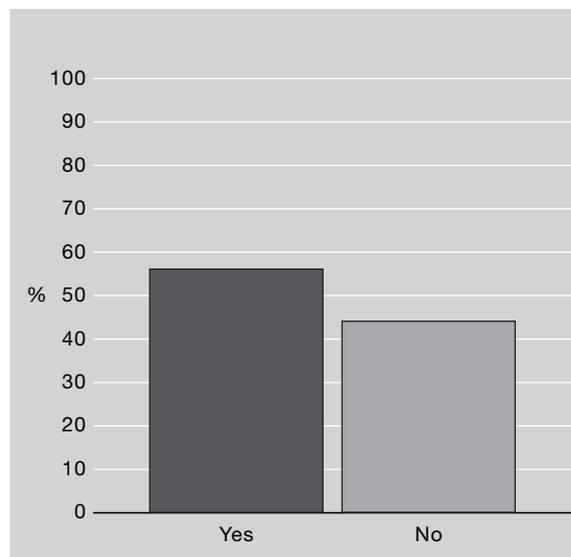
The German government has been another prominent supporter of economic instruments. Since 1998, the government has been introducing a five-step eco-tax on mineral oil and other energy materials to reduce energy consumption and resource depletion.

However, Germany calls for caution. At the moment, it is not widely known what effects economic measures will have on consumption patterns. Recent research has identified that the existing economic instruments have only a limited influence over consumption levels in Germany. It is in this context that voluntary schemes like eco-labelling (for example, the Blue Angel scheme³) may be better instruments to safeguard high standards of consumer protection and sustainable consumption.

Of course, governments must determine which actions will be the most effective within their own borders. Certainly, economic measures, such as the internalisation of environmental costs – an important complimentary instrument in the drive to implement sustainable consumption patterns – remain at a minimum.

'Norway supports the principle of internalising environmental costs, but this has only partially been implemented. Examples include the taxation of cars (purchase and petroleum), waste and electricity. About 5 to 10% of the government's tax revenue is related to environmental taxes.'

Jacob Bomann-Larsen
Adviser, Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, Norway



Graph 3.8 Governments with relevant economic instruments

'The Environmental Policy of Nicaragua 2001-2005 establishes within its sections the promotion of sustainable consumption. Nicaragua supports the internalisation of environmental costs through the creation of the System of Accounts Satellite of the Ministry of Environment, promoting therefore the valuation of environmental goods and services and the prioritisation of investment decisions and use of such, also taking into account the social necessities.'

Denis Fuentes Ortega
Director of Planning, Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, Nicaragua

Recycling programmes

Solid international progress by governments in encouraging recycling programmes should now be emulated by efforts to promote purchasing of recycled products.

Most governments (83%) surveyed identified that their country had implemented some form of recycling practices. Countries from all regions and all major world aggregates have taken part. From recycling factories in Senegal to paper and plastic recycling in Costa Rica, Uruguay, El Salvador, to vast operations in Mexico, China and Brazil, the progress has been encouraging.

Many countries have implemented legislation to support recycling operations, and initiatives seem to be on the rise. Recovery rates on post-consumer solid waste include targets of up to and beyond 50% by 2010.

Some countries, notably developing ones, are actively collecting products, such as aluminium cans and plastics and exporting them for processing in neighbouring countries. For example, Mauritius sends compacted PET bottles to countries like South Africa, and Kiribati exports collected aluminium cans to Australia. The recycling industries in Fiji and the Seychelles collect, compact and export the recyclable materials. In the case of Fiji, recycled products are offered at a discount to other products.

Governments are often being supported by private industries or NGOs that offer recycling services. In developing countries,

private sector activities provide the only form of recycling operations. Partnerships between these two bodies will be important for ensuring improvements in recovery rates.

A well known recycling scheme is the German 'Green Dot' (Grüner Punkt) that covers the recycling of various packaging materials. The German government is proposing to introduce recycling schemes for electrical equipment and appliances (WEEE-Directive). To increase purchasing of recycled products (private consumer, public procurement), a spectrum of recycled products has been integrated into the Blue Angel scheme.

The weakness in the context of successful recycling practices seems to be the lack of support and promotion of recycled products. Sustainable (green) procurement efforts have the potential of attributing to this need.

'Pilot projects have been developed for the recycling of products such as plastic, paper, glass and tins.'

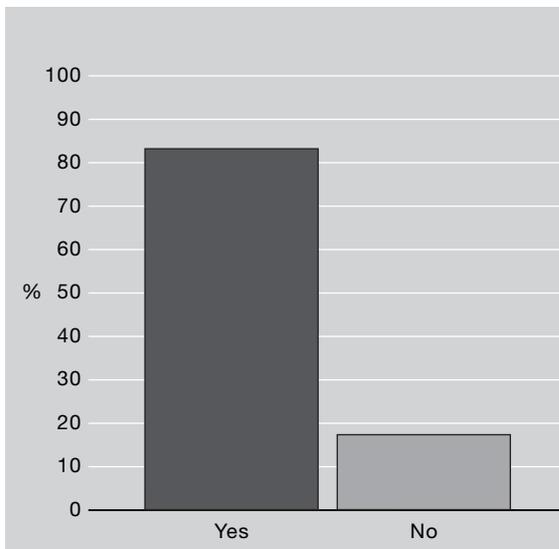
Miriam Vega
Ministry of Planning and Environment, Uruguay

'The HKSAR Government plans to raise the overall waste recovery rate from 34% in 2000 to 40% in 2007. In September 2001, the government launched a series of new initiatives to further promote waste separation and recovery in Hong Kong. It has already placed about 13,000 waste separation bins in public venues, schools and public housing estates, and supplied another 6,600 in private housing estates. It plans to inject around \$US13 million into the Government's Environment and Conservation Fund to support primarily community-based waste prevention and recovery programmes.'

Raistlin Lau
Principal Assistant Secretary, the Environment and Food Bureau, The Government of the Hong Kong SAR, People's Republic of China

'Pilot programmes are being developed whereby certain NGOs and associations are recycling plastic bags.'

Zakaria Hoski, Director-General of the Ministry of the Environment and Water, Chad



Graph 3.9 Governments with recycling programmes

Products, services and technology

A range of actions demonstrates good practice in a number of areas. However full life cycle impacts are rarely contemplated.

This category saw the highest implementation rate, with approximately 87% of governments supporting initiatives that in some way encouraged the design, development and use of safe and energy and resource-efficient products and services.

Energy efficiency campaigns, such as one adopted by the Argentine government, were commonly mentioned, as well as resource-saving consumer awareness campaigns such as those in Nicaragua and Sri Lanka.

The development and advancement of eco-labelling schemes is a trend being emulated in all regions and world income aggregates. Most OECD countries surveyed indicated the existence of eco-labelling schemes. Many non-OECD countries, such as Bulgaria and Brazil, also have such programmes.

A number of countries specifically identified the incorporation of life cycle assessment (LCA) practices in specifying eco-products under such labelling schemes. Switzerland, for example, noted its tradition of promoting LCAs, and New Zealand includes LCA analysis in product specifications. Denmark started a grant scheme in 1998 that supports the development of cleaner products and

relevant instruments, such as LCA.

Another encouraging sign is the growing number of cleaner production and cleaner technology centres. Brazil and Croatia have both recently opened cleaner technology centres. Hungary and Israel have recently established cleaner production centres⁴. Israel's Centre for Cleaner Production, a joint venture between the Ministry of the Environment and the Manufacturers' Association, promotes clean production (reduction at source), green-label products and ISO 14000. At present, these do not incorporate comprehensive life cycle analyses, but this is planned for the future.

Countries such as Norway, the Netherlands and the Republic of Korea have promoted eco-design practices. Korea, for example, has developed eco-design techniques using LCA.

The Belgium Federal Department for the Environment is preparing a Guide Plan for integrated product policy (IPP), the life cycle approach being one of the main orientations for the plan. Norway, along with the other Nordic governments developed a strategy for an IPP to minimise the full life cycle environmental impact of products and services. Many other governments are supporting IPP thinking.

The Netherlands has developed environmental criteria for sustainable building materials and set up a multi-year programme on the implementation of product-oriented environmental management systems.

Other initiatives include Mauritius giving various fiscal incentives to the business community, and removing products that adversely affect the environment from the market in phases. Japan's Law Concerning the Promotion of Procurement of Eco-Friendly Goods and Services encourages consumers to consider the environmental aspects of the products and services they are purchasing.

Australia has recently completed a project to introduce LCA into the construction industry, and a software package (LCAid) for undertaking LCA for construction projects.

Canada encourages the development and use of environmentally-sound products, services and new technologies and consideration of the full life cycle impacts through a number of initiatives including the Environmental Choice Programme (ECP) and the Environmental Technologies Verification (ETV) programme. The ETV programme verifies performance claims associated with environmental technologies. Canada has also supported the development of eco-efficiency indicators and has developed a training package on Design for the Environment.

Encouraging progress has been made on a number of fronts, although expanded activities by all governments in the areas discussed above will be necessary.

'The Government encourages environmental-friendly products, and every year the Minister of the Environment commits a prize for the most environmental products on the advice of representatives of the government.'

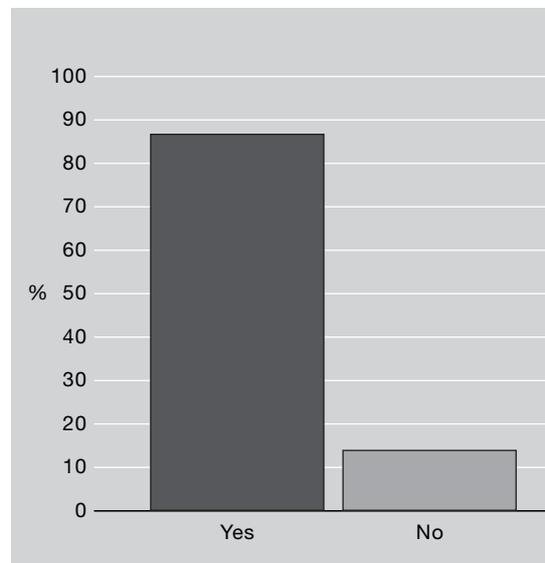
Ondrej Wagner
Ministry of the Environment,
Czech Republic

'The government has encouraged the development and use of environmentally-sound products by supporting the following events: Sustainable Consumption workshop (March 1999), World Consumer Day 1999, (Sustainable Consumption) held in El Salvador and World Consumer Day 2001, (New Technologies).'

Norma Campos
Consumer Protection Division,
El Salvador

'The government awards a national prize to companies who have invested in clean production for protecting the environment.'

Nassere Kaba
Director SAAJSP, Ministry of
Environment, Côte d'Ivoire



Graph 3.10 Governments that have encouraged development of environmentally-sound products and services

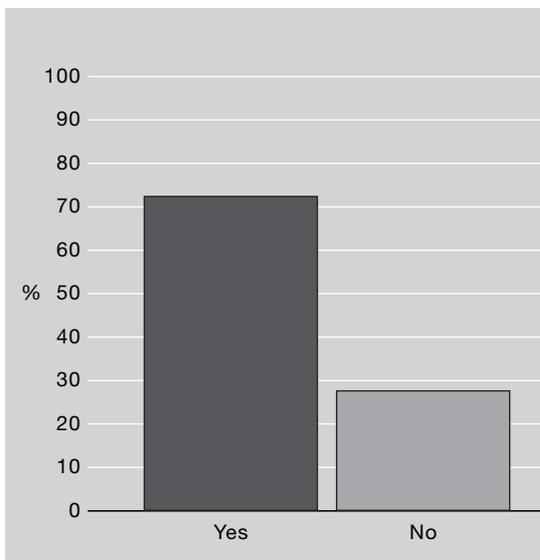
Sustainable government practices

While most governments have started with efforts to recycle products (paper, plastic), others have gone much further in their drive to make their own operations sustainable.

Just over 70% of governments surveyed have implemented sustainable practices in their own operations. However, the majority of governments have only promoted waste recovery and separation in government departments. Such recycling activities are essential elements of a sustainable operation, but they need to be extended.

It should be noted also that a small number of governments who made positive responses to this question seemingly misunderstood the question to mean sustainable practices at the local or regional level, rather than specific internal government operations.

Apart from the varied waste collection and recycling systems, and other efficient practices, such as energy- and water-saving schemes, the actions of many governments to implement Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and audit schemes, ISO 14001 accreditation, and triple bottom-line reporting, are all extremely encouraging.



Graph 3.11 Countries with sustainable practices in government departments

Brazil's Ministry of Environment developed a programme, Environmental Agenda for Public Administration, to induce, on a voluntary basis, the adoption of management models that correct and minimise negative impacts of administrative work (for example, recycling of paper, and water use).

Canada is examining the government's transportation sector and attempts are being made to use green vehicle fleets ('envirobuses') which operate on alternative fuels and provide a demonstration of new technologies, as well as a proposed transit pass programme.

An integral component of a legitimately sustainable government is the need for sustainable or green government procurement.

Given that government purchasing can sometimes exceed 15% of national purchasing, governments have a clear and direct role in improving conditions for recycled products.

Some governments, primarily from OECD countries, have (or are developing) procurement guidelines that encourage the use of recycled products. Various governments have developed (or are developing) green procurement websites. One focal point is often the desire to phase out the use of non-recycled paper. But going further and including replacing of as many products as possible remains a challenge.

Building partnerships provides further opportunities. For example, the North American Green Procurement Initiative will foster and promote the purchase and sale of green products and services throughout North America. It is envisaged that a network of suppliers and purchasers will be created for this initiative.

Governments from all regions have started to request their departments to compile environmental reports, ensuring an increased consciousness of the importance of implementing sustainable practices. A holistic approach to this reporting exercise, outlining time-bound and measurable targets, remains a challenge for all governments.

Governments should lead by example and effectuate the enormous potential to directly motivate change (for example, sustainable/green procurement).

Endnotes

1 Some specific comments regarding the guidelines paragraphs include the possibility of shortening and modifying Paragraph 43, the spitting of Paragraph 45 into two separate points, the clarification of 47, 51 and 53 (making it more precise from a measurement point of view) and an addition of text to Paragraph 44.

2 Home page of the Danish EPA: www.mst.dk

3 See www.blauer-engel.de for more information

4 UNIDO and UNEP have joined forces to help introduce Cleaner Production in developing countries and countries in transition. The UNIDO/UNEP Programme for National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPCs) is a unique programme of capacity development to help achieve adoption and further development of the Cleaner Production concept at the national level. There have been 22 Centres established in the following countries, since late 1994: Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Kenya, Korea, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Slovak Republic, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Vietnam and Zimbabwe.

4 National case studies

Overview

The national case studies here represent a selection of examples of good practice in relation to implementing sustainable consumption policy in line with the UN Guidelines.

Countries were chosen in terms of the quality of their survey responses and their willingness to provide expanded accounts of their progress towards complete implementation of the Guidelines. The researchers attempted to balance responses from developed and developing countries, with coverage of the major world regions.

Some of the countries are more advanced than others in their progress, but all case studies highlight varying and interesting initiatives and approaches towards implementing the various elements. Governments intent on starting or advancing their own implementation efforts should learn valuable lessons from the following case studies.

Although the focus of the case studies range from highlighting measures directed at industry to those directed at consumers, they all demonstrate the commonality of respectable progress and strong support of the usefulness of the Guidelines for achieving sustainable consumption.

Australia

Australia is one of a group of countries that has taken a leadership role in supporting and facilitating international work on changing consumption and production patterns.

Australia considers that the UN Guidelines contain some useful recommendations for the Government to take into account in policy development, and provide a sound framework for the development of strategies to foster sustainable consumption within Australia.

Australia has been aware of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection from their inception and has participated in international negotiations on the proposal to encompass sustainable consumption in them.

Australia considers the Guidelines easy to understand and useful for policy making. Australia notes, however, that some recommendations may need to be assessed in a cost-benefit framework as, in some instances, the costs of implementing the Guidelines may outweigh the benefits.

Australia is a federation of states, and strategies to promote sustainable consumption are developed and implemented at Federal and State government levels. The national environment department, Environment Australia (EA) provides national leadership on consumer protection issues related to sustainable consumption. EA's initial involvement with the UN Guidelines was in 1996, when the Commission on Sustainable

Development first considered the inclusion of matters related to sustainable consumption in the Guidelines.

The Federal Government, various State and Territory governments and some local councils have undertaken a variety of programmes aimed at promoting sustainable consumption. A document, *More with less*, published by the Federal Government in 1996, outlines many such initiatives which existed at that time. Numerous other programmes have been established since, including:

- The Green Games initiative, encompassing the development, application and promotion (to international visitors as well as the Australian public) of 'green' solutions and technologies in the design and construction of the 2000 Olympic village and venues at Homebush Bay, Sydney.
- An energy consumption labelling scheme for household electrical appliances.
- Excise tax on leaded petrol to accelerate its phase-out.
- Subsidies for installation of solar hot water heaters in homes.
- Numerous national- and state-initiated education programmes encouraging the purchase of products which are recyclable, or have recycled content or minimal packaging. Two recent consumer information sources are the booklet *Your home* (also on CD-ROM and website) on passive home design, 'green' building materials and furnishings, and water and energy efficient appliances; and the booklet *Shop smart: buy green* advising consumers on the likely environmental impact of commonly purchased products and services.
- A discounted GreenSmart home loan that rewards environmental features in houses (an initiative of the Australian Housing Industry Association resulting from an Eco-efficiency Agreement with the Federal Government).
- Household recycling programmes.
- Household Greenhouse Action Programme (addressing energy consumption).
- Legislation related to manufacture, sale and importing of ozone-depleting substances.

The Australian Government is involved in a range of activities that indirectly relate to sustainable consumption policy. For example, the Government develops voluntary Eco-efficiency Agreements with peak and sectoral industry associations. Through these agreements, industry associations undertake to promote the concept and practice of eco-efficiency to their member companies (that is, producing goods and services using less energy and fewer natural resources, resulting in less waste and pollution).

In developing specific programmes to encourage sustainable consumption (for example, education and differential petrol pricing), the Government engages with all relevant stakeholders including consumer organisations, industry and environment NGOs.

Australia has encouraged and facilitated international work on changing consumption and production patterns in recent years. The main focus of Australia's work to date has been through the provision of support to the OECD Work Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production and Increasing Resource Efficiency.

Australia contributed funds for a workshop held in Korea in September 1995. In February 1997, Environment Australia hosted the OECD Experts Workshop on Sustainable Consumption of Water and the OECD informal review meeting on the Sustainable Consumption and Production Work Programme in Sydney. The main focus of the review meeting was to develop a report to OECD Ministers on the Work Programme.

Australia provided further funds to host an OECD workshop on eco-efficiency in Sydney in March 1999. A national round table was also held in March 1999 to promote the concept of eco-efficiency to Australian industry.

Australia contributed to the cost of running the UNEP/CI Workshop on Sustainable Consumption in Asia and the Pacific, held in Kuala Lumpur in August 2001. This workshop agreed on priorities for action to achieve sustainable consumption in the region as input for the report on the global status of sustainable consumption, to be presented at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002.

Implementing the Guidelines

The following section provides a selection of highlights from the survey and follow-up interview.

Has your government encouraged the development and use of environmentally-sound products and services and new technologies that take into consideration full life cycle impacts? (Paragraphs 45, 50)

Most Australian governments have initiated programmes which foster the development and use of environmentally-sound products and services, and of new technologies that take account of life cycle impacts. However, cost implications have limited the extent to which full life cycle assessment is undertaken.

Some recent projects are as follows.

- Environment Australia recently completed a project to introduce life cycle assessment techniques into the Australian construction industry. Project outcomes include a dedicated LCA website (<http://buildlca.rmit.edu.au>) that includes a series of LCA case studies, and a draft framework for collecting and reporting LCA data specific to the construction industry.
- The New South Wales State Department of Public Works developed LCAid, a software package for assisting in the life cycle assessment of construction projects for Sydney Olympics projects.
- Under the Green Buildings initiative, a National Building Environmental Rating System is being developed. This will provide an accurate indication of the environmental impact of both commercial

and residential buildings. The draft system will assess all relevant environmental issues simultaneously: energy consumption during building operation, material choice, water consumption, land use and biodiversity impact, resource efficiency, transport and location issues, internal health and comfort, and waste production. When launched, the scheme will be promoted to the construction and real estate industries and to consumers.

- In April 2001, the Government released the publication *Product innovation – The green advantage: An introduction to design for environment for Australian business*. The booklet encourages manufacturers to reduce environmental impacts at each stage in the life cycle of their products and hence increase the availability of innovative and environmentally-sustainable products.
- In September 2001, the Government launched the Environment Industries Action Agenda, an ambitious ten-year plan to foster excellence, growth, competitiveness and innovation in the Australian environment industry, with a view to delivering better environmental outcomes in Australia and the region.

Does your government have in place national recycling schemes? (Paragraph 45)

Overall responsibility for waste and recycling lies with State and Territory governments, while on-the-ground management is the responsibility of local councils.

For example, State jurisdictions are responsible for implementing and enforcing regulations regarding waste management and recycling, while local councils within each jurisdiction operate the landfill and the waste and recycling collection systems. A range of recycling schemes have been established in all jurisdictions, with the vast majority of urban areas in Australia covered by household recycling schemes. Most schemes collect mixed household recyclables (with paper being separated out) which are then sorted at collection facilities and sent for recycling. In rural areas, household collections are rare, but

many have recycling collection points in nearby towns.

Latest industry estimates are that Australia is recycling 70% of old newsprint, 92% of paper packaging, 64% of aluminium containers, 25% of liquid paperboard used for milk and juice cartons, 32% of PET, 15% of HDPE and 40% of steel cans.

There are also a number of industry-led initiatives, often developed in collaboration with governments, which provide a national focus to recycling activities. Some examples include:

- A component of Australia's National Packaging Covenant (a self-regulatory agreement between industry in the packaging chain and all spheres of government to promote a product-stewardship and life cycle approach to packaging waste) is the Industry Transitional Funding Arrangement. Packaging supply chain signatories are contributing up to \$A17.45 million to undertake national projects directed at developing viable markets for materials recovered from domestic recycling collection systems.
- The aluminium can industry operates a national aluminium beverage container recycling programme. Kaal Australia manages a network of recycling centres that pay cash for used aluminium beverage cans. 'Cash for Cans' community centres pay people for used aluminium beverage cans delivered to the centre. Local community groups, such as scouts, sport groups and local schools, operate the centres.
- drumMUSTER is a national programme for collecting and recycling empty, cleaned, non-returnable crop protection and animal health chemical containers. The programme, an initiative of the Australian Local Government Association, the National Farmers' Federation and the National Association for Crop Production and Animal Health Veterinary Manufacturers and Distributors Association, involves farmers, local councils, chemical manufacturers and resellers. Local councils

usually operate the programme, and industry provides financial and planning assistance to ensure the collection programme is effective and cost-neutral.

- The mobile telephone industry operates a recycling collection programme for mobile phones, batteries and accessories. The programme is voluntary, funded by manufacturers and carriers. Consumers are asked to take their unwanted mobile phone handsets, batteries or accessories to participating carrier stores or special recycling bins located in retail outlets.
- The Australian newsprint industry is actively working towards a national recycling target of 74% by 2005. Industry has committed \$A1million a year in advertising space in newspapers and magazines to encourage newsprint recycling.

In addition, the Federal Government has recently initiated a number of recycling projects with a national focus, as follows.

- A national specification/guide has been developed in consultation with State governments and the construction industry to use recycled concrete and masonry materials in new concrete applications, providing the technical basis for their use. This will be published this year as an Australian Standard.
- There is an Australia-wide approach to the management of waste tyres, focused on encouraging recycling. Approximately 57% of waste tyres go to landfill in Australia, and 13% are illegally dumped. Various policy options within a product-stewardship framework are being assessed, including take-back arrangements, advance disposal fees, benefits to recyclers or collectors and funding for research and development.

Has your government created or strengthened effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers, including aspects of sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 51)

The Trade Practices Act 1974 (TPA) is Australia's primary consumer protection

legislation. The TPA covers a range of unfair trading practices and is mirrored by legislation adopted by each of Australia's State and Territory governments.

The consumer protection provisions of the TPA are contained in Part IVA (unconscionable conduct), Part IVB (framework for industry codes of conduct), Part V (consumer protection), Part VA (liability of manufacturers and suppliers of defective goods) and Part VB (price exploitation).

Recently, the TPA was amended (Trade Practices Amendment Act 2000) to improve the way the Act delivers protection to Australian small businesses and consumers. The amendment has not changed the substantive legal rights or obligations of any person, but has ensured that the enforcement and remedy provisions of the TPA will remain relevant in Australia's current economic and social environment.

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission Act 2001 provides equivalent protection for consumers in the financial sector through provisions similar to those contained in Parts IVA and V of the TPA.

In relation to aspects of consumer protection and sustainable consumption, Australia actively participates in international fora, such as the OECD Committee on Consumer Policy (CCP). The past work of the CCP has included consideration of issues relating to the environment and sustainable consumption. This issue is also listed on the future work programme of the CCP.

Does your government have in place economic measures (e.g. taxes, subsidies) that promote sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 52)

Australia employs a range of economic measures to promote more sustainable consumption. Some examples are:

- increase excise tax on leaded petrol (leaded petrol has been prohibited altogether since 1 January 2002);

- \$A200 levy on Sydney car park spaces (encouraging use of public transport or car pooling);
- bridge and road tolls (as above);
- making CNG excise-free (encouraging use of natural gas vehicles);
- State government rebates for energy-efficient homes;
- local council rebates on water-efficient toilets and showerheads;
- State government grants for installation of solar water heaters; and
- charges for waste collection and use of landfill sites.

One recent example (in more detail) relates to waste oil. In 2001 the Federal Government introduced product stewardship arrangements for waste oil, to encourage better management and economic recycling. A tax of 5 cents per litre has been collected on base lubricating oils since 1 January 2001. The revenue is used to pay volumetric benefits to oil recyclers as incentives to collect and recycle more waste oil. In addition, an industry transitional assistance fund of \$A60 million is being provided by the Government over a four-year period. This funding is designed to accelerate the uptake of waste oil from urban and rural Australia, facilitate the transition of the industry and the community to product stewardship arrangements, and address special difficulties with recovering and managing waste oil in remote parts of Australia.

Does your government provide public information (for example, statistics, indicators, databases) that measures progress towards sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 53)

Australia's official statistical organisation, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, regularly undertakes surveys of environmental behaviour and practices in Australian households. For example, in March 2001, a supplementary survey run in association with

the Monthly Population Survey sought information on the use of environmentally-friendly products, and fertilisers and pesticides/weedkillers in Australian households, and on household water use and conservation.

In 2002 an Australia-wide survey of household energy use and conservation will be undertaken, and for 2003, a survey of household waste management, transport use and vehicle ownership is planned. Stakeholders and interested parties are being encouraged to participate in drafting the questionnaires.

The results of these surveys are made publicly available.

Does your government encourage the impartial environmental testing of products? (Paragraph 47)

In 1991 the Federal Government initiated an eco-labelling programme, Environmental Choice Australia. The programme's aims were to verify environmental claims made by manufacturers and to ensure that producers and consumers were adequately informed of the environmental impacts of products and services. Lack of interest by industry in participating in the scheme meant that it never became self-funding. Lack of resources precluded adequate promotion of the programme and therefore consumer awareness of it was not high. The programme ceased operation in 1993.

Since then, the Government has relied on the Trade Practices Act 1974 to ensure that environmental claims made by companies are accurate and not misleading for consumers.

Federal and State governments have participated in the establishment of energy, fuel and water conservation eco-labelling systems, as follows.

- A mandatory Energy Rating System applies to all electrical appliances and to gas room heaters, ducted heating systems and water heaters. The Energy Rating Label, first introduced in 1986, has two main features: the star rating gives a quick comparative

assessment of the model's energy efficiency (measured in accordance with Australian Standards); and the comparative energy consumption provides an estimate of the annual energy consumption of the appliance based on the tested energy consumption and information on the typical use of the appliance in the home.

- Following extensive negotiations between government and industry, the Energy Rating Label was revised in October 2000, resulting in more rigorous measurement of energy efficiency.
- The Water Services Association of Australia, with the involvement of governments, has a National Water Conservation Labelling Scheme to provide consumers with information on the water efficiency of appliances such as washing machines, dishwashers, toilet suites and taps. Products with such labels must have been tested by an independent approved laboratory for both water efficiency and for conformity to the relevant Australian Standard for performance. The test results are submitted to Quality Assurance Services, a subsidiary of Standards Australia, which then awards the appropriate Water Conservation Label. Water conservation labelling is not mandatory, but most manufacturers now participate in the scheme.
- Motor vehicle manufacturers must display fuel consumption labels on all new vehicles up to 2.7 tonnes. The label indicates the average consumption in litres/100km, allowing the consumer to compare different makes and models.
- The Federal Government is currently working on formulating a position on the issue of verification of environmental technologies. Australia has established a domestic inter-governmental framework for considering environmental verification of technologies, as well as being involved in international discussion of this issue.
- In addition to the above, environmental testing is undertaken by the Australian Consumers' Association (ACA), an independent, non-profit educational and

consumer-oriented product testing centre funded by member subscriptions. ACA undertakes testing in its Research and Test Centre laboratories, which have been accredited by the National Association of Testing Laboratories (NATA). ACA technical experts sit on national and international standards committees. The Research and Test Centre also undertakes product testing for international governments, Australian regulatory authorities and industry.

Does your government promote research on consumer behaviour (related to environmental damage) in order to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable? (Paragraph 55)

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) undertakes research and analysis of environmental and energy issues based on ABS and non-ABS data. The time series, *Environmental issues: People's views and practices*, provides valuable information on household consumption patterns related to water, energy, transport and waste.

Note that through the United Nation's ESCAP programme, ABS officers have assisted developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region with identifying, collecting, processing, analysing and utilising environmental data needed for formulating environmental policies and programmes.

Has your government introduced 'sustainable practices' in its own operations (for example, green procurement, recycling schemes)? (Paragraph 54)

In May 2001 the Government encouraged all Federal agencies to develop an Environment Management System (EMS) by December 2002 (allowing for agencies not to proceed if they can demonstrate it is not cost-effective to do so), and certify at least one major site by December 2003 against ISO 14001 or equivalent. The Government also encouraged agencies to join the Australian Greenhouse Challenge Programme, aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Federal agencies have annual reporting obligations that require documentation of the effect of their actions and policies on the environment, steps taken to minimise the impact, and mechanisms to increase the effectiveness of mitigating measures. Agencies are also required to meet specific energy intensity targets and to report to Parliament annually on their energy consumption.

Finally, all Australian governments have endorsed the National Government Waste Reduction and Purchasing Guidelines, which commits them to work towards agreed waste minimisation targets and implement purchasing policies for recycled goods. Other tools are presently being developed to encourage more sustainable procurement by Federal agencies, and these will be included on the Sustainable Government Website www.ea.gov.au/industry/sustainable/greening-govt/index.html.

To help agencies meet these obligations, EA has developed a model EMS which agencies can adapt to their specific requirements. The Model EMS incorporates detailed guidance notes and an electronic procedures manual into which agencies can enter agency-specific information. Tailored training is being offered in 2002 to assist officers in developing and implementing agency EMSs. EA has also developed generic tender documents, with clauses requiring tenderers to consider environmental impacts and whole-of-life costs in developing bids.

The green office guide, an initiative of Federal, state and territory governments, was released late last year. It provides a checklist and detailed 'green' analyses of goods and services most frequently purchased by government agencies.

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Brazil

Brazil has started to implement policies in-line with all of the requirements of the UN Guidelines.

The Ministry of Environment acknowledged the existence of the Guidelines by consulting the UN website. The Ministry considers them as an important instrument for all stakeholders in divulging and implementing sustainable consumption patterns.

The Government believes that Section G of the Guidelines should be more flexible so as to better consider social and cultural differences in developing countries, mainly regarding specific technical and technological capacities.

The Ministry of Environment has developed some initiatives focused on sustainable consumption.

- The Environmental Agenda for Public Administration programme to induce, on a voluntary basis, the adoption of management models that correct and minimise negative impacts of administrative work (for example, recycling paper, water use).
- The Guidelines on Good Practices of Sustainable Consumption, an electronic guide with tips of sustainable behaviour and attitudes for consumers.

The entities below are responsible for specific areas of formulation of policies regarding consumer rights and clean technologies:

- Ministry of Justice, Department for the Protection of Consumer Rights
- Ministry of Development, Industry and Trade
- Ministry of Planning
- Ministry of Environment

Implementing the Guidelines

The following section provides a selection of highlights from the survey and follow-up interview.

Has your government encouraged the development and use of environmentally-sound products and services and new technologies that take into consideration full life cycle impacts? (Paragraphs 45, 50)

The Brazilian government encourages the green labelling of products, on a voluntary basis, and in accordance with internationally agreed procedures and standards. For example, the Ministry of Environment encourages the green labelling of forestry products. Another initiative encouraged by the Government is the establishment of Clean Technology Centres around the country.

Does your government have in place national recycling schemes? (Paragraph 45)

The Brazilian government supports private initiatives being implemented on national, state and local levels, concerning recycling schemes for paper products, aluminum cans and glass that have an important positive impact on the quality of life of unemployed, poor communities.

Has your government created or strengthened effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers, including aspects of sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 51)

The Brazilian government has strengthened the regulatory mechanisms and the role of the National System of Consumer Protection, responsible for the formulation, co-ordination and implementation of the national policy for the protection and safeguarding of consumer rights.

Does your government have in place economic measures (for example, taxes, subsidies) that promote sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 52)

The Water Resources Act (1997) established mechanisms for payment of water consumption royalties for several uses, which are being implemented in some States.

Does your government provide public information (for example, statistics, indicators or databases) that measures progress towards sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 53)

The Ministry of Environment is developing a collaborative effort with the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics aiming at formulating, monitoring and making public environmental indicators, in some cases connected to consumption sustainability.

Does your government encourage the impartial environmental testing of products? (Paragraph 47)

The National Institute of Metrology and several non-governmental organisations that work with consumer rights have implemented, with encouragement from the Government, independent product testing and disseminating the results through the mass media.

Does your government promote research on consumer behaviour (related to environmental damage) in order to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable? (Paragraph 55)

In 1996, 1998 and 2002, the Ministry of Environment promoted national surveys called 'What do Brazilians think about the environment', which included consumption pattern concerns.

Has your government introduced 'sustainable practices' in its own operations? (for example, green procurement or recycling schemes) (Paragraph 54)

The Government has implemented the Environmental Agenda for Public Administration programme, which is designed to induce, on a voluntary basis, the adoption of management models that correct and minimise negative impacts of administrative work (for example, recycling paper, water use).

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Chile

Chile is among the leaders in the Latin America/Caribbean region in implementing sustainable consumption-related policies and initiatives.

The National Consumer Protection Agency (SERNAC), a partner of both CI and UNEP on recent projects, is actively involved in building partnerships and promoting sustainable consumption policies. However, the agency is interested in receiving training in order to further the implementation process of the UN Guidelines in its country.

The expanded UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection are well known to the Chilean government and the Chilean National Consumer Protection Agency (SERNAC) works with them on a day-to-day basis. Chile was represented at one of the preparatory meetings (Sao Paulo, 1998) dealing with the expansion of the UN Consumer Guidelines to include elements on sustainable consumption.

SERNAC is an active member of the Latin American and Caribbean Sustainable Consumption Network, which was initiated after the joint UNEP/CI/CDG workshop on sustainable consumption, held in Sao Paulo in November 2001.

From the point of view of the country's consumer protection agency, the sustainable consumption section of the Guidelines is valuable. However, it could be improved in three main areas.

- It could emphasise the need to analyse the macroeconomic impact in order to make the necessary balance between both challenges. Without this balance, it is very difficult to promote sustainable consumption.
- It could be more explicit in emphasising the need to promote education for sustainable consumption, as a principal instrument in consolidating change.

- It is necessary to clarify the strategic objectives that lie behind each of the Guidelines, to make the implementation process easier.

SERNAC has organised campaigns to promote sustainable consumption in the basic services, domestic waste management, and by highlighting environmental impacts of consumer decisions.

A number of agencies and ministries are involved in promoting changes in consumption patterns, including the National Environment Agency, the National Council for Cleaner Production and the National Energy Commission.

SERNAC has a close on-going working relationship with CI's Regional Office for Latin America/Caribbean and is also an affiliate member of CI.

SERNAC maintains solid relationships with consumer organisations throughout the country, although they have yet to incorporate sustainability issues into the discussions. However, they have been working with other state agencies, such as the State Environmental Commission (CONAMA), with whom they are planning on developing an eco-labelling scheme. SERNAC and CONAMA have also initiated a training programme for young people called Environmental Pioneers. The programme aims at training 40, 000 environmental monitors all over the country, on various aspects, including sustainable consumption.

Another SERNAC initiative sees them combining with the Ministry of Education for training teachers about consumer protection issues. The curriculum includes a number of topics on sustainable consumption.

Implementing the Guidelines

The following section provides a selection of highlights from the survey and follow-up interview.

Has your government encouraged the development and use of environmentally sound products and services and new technologies that take into consideration full life cycle impacts? (Paragraphs 45, 50)

The National Environment Agency, the National Council for Cleaner Production and the Ministry for Health are conducting work in this area. SERNAC and the National Energy Commission recently published an analysis of gasoline consumption and its environmental impacts.

SERNAC and the National Environment Agency are currently developing a Type II eco-labelling scheme.

The state agency, CORFO, a division of the Ministry of Economy, has recently launched a programme on cleaner production. This five-year programme will involve all stakeholders, while the challenge remains to co-ordinate it with other existing initiatives.

Does your government have in place national recycling schemes? (Paragraph 45)

Although the country does have in place a number of recycling schemes, further co-ordination between the various agencies involved could provide future benefits.

SERNAC has been involved in promoting recycling schemes through education programmes for teachers.

Has your government created or strengthened effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers, including aspects of sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 51)

The Chilean Consumer Protection Act states that consumers have as rights 'the protection of health and the environment and safe access to goods and services'. The government is responsible for informing, educating and protecting consumers. Elements of sustainable consumption, such as the punishment of misleading environmental claims, are included in the Act.

Does your government promote research on consumer behaviour (related to environmental damage) in order to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable? (Paragraph 55)

SERNAC promotes research on the impacts of consumer choices on the environment. It is interested in how to sensitise consumers about the related impacts on the environment of their purchasing decisions. The agency would also like support in providing accurate information for consumers.

SERNAC accepts that one of the main priorities for changing consumption patterns is to provide consumers with accurate information on the impacts of their consumption behaviour. If this can be achieved, it would help stimulate the desire for environmentally-sound products.

Support

Our government would welcome the following support:

- promotional material (for example brochures, posters);
- easy-to-understand training guides or toolkits;
- more information on the topic of sustainable consumption;
- more high-level coverage of sustainable consumption and the UN Guidelines (for example, at WSSD);
- opportunities to attend/organise international meetings on the topic of sustainable consumption and the UN Guidelines;
- case studies from countries that have successfully implemented the Guidelines;
- involvement/creation of support networks, web resources etc.; and
- an international convention on sustainable consumption (a binding or voluntary international agreement).

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China

China is a developing country with a huge population and limited per capita resources. So it is most important for China to advance sustainable consumption and ensure sustainable development.

China's Consumer Association has put 'green consumption' on its agenda as the main theme of the current century to advocate and promote sustainable consumption among Chinese consumers.

Following the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 issued at the Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Brazil in 1992, countries began to formulate their own Agenda 21s. In 1994 the Chinese government published its Agenda 21, in which Chapter 7 specifically focuses on issues concerning sustainable consumption. This was followed by developments in the following areas in 1996: certification work concerning ISO 14000 and products complying with the environmental protection standards, and the promotion of, for example, green and organic foods. Our overall impression of the UN Guidelines is that they emphasise and clearly specify the role of government in this issue.

While ensuring the attainment of better living standards for the Chinese people, the aim of sustainable consumption in China is to:

- keep the per capita consumption of energy and raw and processed materials at the current level;
- reduce the environmental pollution by pernicious wastes;
- improve the consumption structure of the residents;
- narrow the gap between the rich and the poor; and
- pursue common prosperity.

The principal steps to be taken in this direction are:

- to develop social productive forces;

- build up a low-consumption, high-efficiency, low-pollution or pollution-free production system;
- multiply, diversify and improve the means of livelihood; and
- initiate the product mix in keeping with the rational consumption structure, and develop the green industry.

The Law on the Protection of Consumer Rights and Interests also promotes sustainable consumption through publicity and education of the community at large.

To push ahead with sustainable consumption, China instituted the environmental labelling system in 1993 and, in May 1994, formed the Chinese Committee for Certifying Products with Environmental Markings. At present environmental-marking certifications have been given to over 40 kinds of products in 12 categories. These products mainly include chlorofluorocarbon-free products, harmless silk products, harmless paints, lead-free petrol, recycled toilet paper, mercury-free and cadmium-free batteries, fluorine-free refrigerators, mercury-free dry cell batteries and phosphorus-free detergent. In recent years, the certification of energy-saving products has been in full swing in China. At present, 13 kinds of energy-saving products have been certified.

China has made comparative experiments on commodities with definite aims and made the results of these experiments known to the public regularly at new briefings. These consumer goods include foodstuffs, cosmetics, refurbishing materials, telecoms equipment, clothing, daily-use small commodities and household electrical appliances.

The comparative experiments involve carbonic acid beverages with artificial sweetening and antiseptic, small foodstuffs with six kinds of synthetic additives, reinforced composite wooden flooring and detergents. These experiments have exerted great social impacts and aroused widespread interest among consumers. In the experiments, China's Consumer Association has been very concerned about the assessment of products'

effects on the environment and introduced the concept of 'green testing' (for example, testing whether the products would yield pernicious materials to pollute the environment and harm the users' health; whether excessive waste is produced after their use; and whether the products can save energy). When a comparative experiment is carried out on a household electrical appliance, energy saving is an important index for the assessment of the product.

Energy-saving levels and power consumption are tested and compared in the comparative experiments on household electrical appliances, including air-conditioners, TVs, DVD players and vacuum cleaners, advising the consumers to opt for the low power-consuming and high-efficiency products, as long as the requirements for use are met.

China's Consumer Association is going to launch experiments on energy-saving lamps to help consumers buy genuine energy-saving, good quality and reasonably priced lamps, and to avoid poor-quality and fake energy-saving lamps to spread the use of energy-saving lamps around the country.

On 15 March 2001, a 'Green Consumption' campaign was launched by China's Consumer Association in collaboration with other related government departments. The first Chinese Forum on Sustainable Consumption was held in Beijing in May 2002.

The campaign involved millions of 'green' volunteers. It was jointly planned by China's Consumer Association and Beijing Cultural Center of Global Environment. China's Consumer Association gave a news briefing in the News Briefing Hall at Xinhua News Agency in Beijing. The 'Investigation and Promise' cards were issued by six national newspapers and periodicals in Beijing, 16 local newspapers and periodicals and at least four websites. Ten million 'Investigation and Promise' cards were issued by organisations such as China's Consumer Association. The two-tier sampling statistic method was used in the investigation. The result was that over 94% of people who had filled out the cards made a promise to support the questions raised about green consumption.

Major operations in co-operation with the mass media include:

- A public welfare advertising contest taking 'green consumption' as the main theme was organised in 2001, together with the media. China's Consumer Association together with China Advertising Association gleaned from all fields over 600 pieces of visual, broadcasting and printed work. The selection through public appraisal of the works was announced in August 2001, and the awarded works were published in a book form and issued to the public to widen the knowledge of sustainable consumption and green consumption in particular.
- Energetically taking part in the activities of broadcasting, TV and other news media. Spreading the viewpoints of China's Consumer Association through setting up special working groups, taking part in activities and discussions on consumption hot issues, explaining doubts and questions raised by consumers, and giving a guide to consumption and advocating sustainable consumption among consumers.

Implementing the Guidelines

The following section provides a selection of highlights from the survey and follow-up interview.

Has your government encouraged the development and use of environmentally-sound products and services and new technologies that take into consideration full life cycle impacts? (Paragraphs 45, 50)

China has introduced certification standards for environmentally-sound products since 1996. Today, more than 1,400 products in 44 categories, including automobiles and painting materials, have passed the certification process.

Does your government have in place national recycling schemes? (Paragraph 45)

There are waste-recycling organisations all over the country. Standards have still to be progressively established to govern the recycling process, mechanism and pricing.

Has your government created or strengthened effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers, including aspects of sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 51)

China has set up consumer associations all over the country, the functions and structures of which are underpinned by law and provided with suitable manpower. Sustainable consumption is being promoted nationwide to enhance public awareness of this concept.

Does your government have in place economic measures (for example, taxes or subsidies) that promote sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 52)

In 2001, the Finance Bureau and the Tax Bureau of China announced a 30% sales tax reduction until 2004 for light vehicles that could meet the European emission standard.

Does your government encourage the impartial environmental testing of products? (Paragraph 47)

For example, in view of the wide public concern over pollution caused by household interior renovations and whether painting materials and range hoods (for kitchen use) are environmentally friendly, the Government has laid down standards in this regard to facilitate green testing. The general public has responded positively to such initiatives.

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Germany

Germany, as one of the leading governments in the drive to implement the UN Guidelines, has recently embarked on a new course, designed to internalise sustainable consumption into the country's mainstream thinking.

Germany has identified the need to clarify the link between consumer protection and sustainable consumption, and is calling for increased co-operation, communication and capacity-building.

Between 1996 and 2000, CI was co-sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety and the Federal Environment Agency to integrate the issue of sustainable consumption within their international activities of consumer protection. Within this context, Germany was actively involved in the discussion on the modification of the UN Guidelines.

The inclusion of Section G was an important step to reorient consumer protection policies towards the new paradigm of sustainability, and specify cross-sector activities between consumer protection policies and other policy fields, like environmental policy. In the government's opinion, Section G reflects a very broad approach to the issue of sustainable consumption. This has a positive effect, because different activities and policy measurements can thus be summarised under this one umbrella.

At the moment, it is not necessary to modify Section G of the Guidelines. They are an important instrument for putting the issue of sustainable consumption on the international political agenda.

The advancement of sustainable consumption and production patterns is a central field of activity for German environmental policy. It is becoming a more and more important aspect of the discourse on creating a policy of sustainability. The discussion about the advancement of sustainable consumption and production patterns in Germany shows that beneath creating able conditions through legislation, the strengthening of self-

responsibility for those who are directly dealing with sustainable consumption and production patterns, has to be seen as a central recommendation for the German policy of sustainability. Specifically, the advancement of supply-side approaches and instruments of information (for example, environment management systems, eco-design and environmental controlling) and consumption-orientated approaches and instruments of information (for example, eco-labels, consumer protection and education, environmental consultancy and education for sustainable development) have a high priority.

In the past, widespread and diverse actors from government, business and civil society have undertaken numerous activities, projects, initiatives and measures in this area.

In Germany, sustainable consumption as a cross-sector field of policy lies within the responsibility of different ministries (for example, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Research, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Consumer Protection and Agriculture, and the Ministry of Development and Economic Co-operation). Therefore, there is no one point responsible for the implementation or the compliance monitoring of the Guidelines at this stage.

In the past, activities to promote sustainable consumption were launched by several government institutions at national, regional and local levels. For example, the Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety has launched various activities and projects that could be summarised into five conceptual elements:

- sustainable consumption as a field of applied socio-ecological research;
- initiating a nation-wide stakeholder dialog to promote sustainable consumption;
- sustainable consumption as a challenge for environmental communication;
- instruments/measurements to promote sustainable consumption (for example, as an element of Integrated Product Policy); and
- sustainable consumption and capacity-building/knowledge transfer.

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research has launched various programmes to stimulate research on the different technical, socio-ecological, socio-economical and cultural aspects of sustainable consumption and related innovations (for example, housing, food and mobility). The Federal Ministry of Education and Research is launching research programmes on strategies for product use, socio-ecological transformation and institutional innovations for sustainable business.

Awareness raising through different instruments of environmental communication plays an important role within the activities of environmental policy. Therefore, the Federal Ministry of Environment, in co-operation with other government bodies, has launched a wide spectrum of activities, focusing on different aspects of sustainable consumption (for example, energy saving/standby campaign, green energy, recycling, mobility, tourism and climate change) and targets groups (for example, youth, schools and home owners), using the whole spectrum of media.

Furthermore, the Federal Ministry of Environment and the Federal Environment Agency have launched projects to improve the role of environmental communication strategies within the field of sustainable consumption and to focus on co-operation with relevant stakeholders (for example, industry, retailers and consumer protection) in order to bring the issue of sustainable consumption into the public realm (for example, through advertising).

Implementing the Guidelines

The following section provides a selection of highlights from the survey and follow-up interview.

Has your government encouraged the development and use of environmentally-sound products and services and new technologies that take into consideration full life cycle impacts? (Paragraphs 45, 50)

The German government has established various instruments and measurements in the field of production and product-orientated environmental policy. Besides supporting companies to develop new technologies and products, the activities of the Federal Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety focussed mainly on the development and widespread application of the various instruments and methods of an Integrated Product Policy (for example, environmental management systems, design for environment, life cycle assessment and life cycle management, eco-labelling and environmental/sustainability reporting).

Does your government have in place national recycling schemes? (Paragraph 45)

Based on the 1996 restructured regulation on waste policy, several recycling schemes were established (for example, organic waste, cars, batteries, packaging and building materials). Besides glass and paper, where recycling quotas are high, it is the objective of the waste policy to reduce waste through waste-minimisation strategies for different sectors and to improve quotas for recycling. A very well known recycling scheme is the Green Dot (Grüner Punkt) that operates by recycling different packaging materials.

In the future, it is proposed to introduce recycling schemes for electrical equipment and appliances (WEEE-Directive). To increase purchasing of recycled products (private consumer and public procurement), a range of recycled products is integrated in the Blue Angel scheme (see www.blauer-engel.de for details).

Has your government created or strengthened effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers, including aspects of sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 51)

There is quite a wide spectrum of regulatory mechanisms in Germany for the protection of consumers, related to the different ecological, health and technical aspects (for example, related to chemical substances in products, safety standards or environmental aspects of

products). Most of the regulatory mechanisms are primarily directed to protect the consumer (environmental risks, health risks) and to ensure high technical standards and to increase overall resource efficiency of products. As research shows that regulatory instruments have only an indirect impact on consumption patterns and do not significantly influence socio-economical behaviour and socio-cultural orientations of the consumer, voluntary schemes (complementary instruments) such as eco-labelling (for example, the Blue Angel scheme) are considered a better instrument to safeguard high standards of consumer protection and sustainable consumption.

Does your government have in place economic measures (for example, taxes or subsidies) that promote sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 52)

Economic instruments have played a crucial role in the implementation of environmental policies in the past. Important elements here include the establishment and implementation of an ecological finance and tax reform package in Germany.

Since 1998, the German government has been introducing a five-step eco-tax on mineral oil and other energy materials to reduce energy consumption and resource depletion. At the moment, it is not widely documented what effects on consumption patterns economic measures will have. Recent research has identified that the existing economic instruments have only a limited influence over consumption levels in Germany.

Does your government provide public information (for example, statistics, indicators or databases) that measures progress towards sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 53)

In co-operation with the Federal Statistical Agency, the Federal Environmental Agency is collecting, analysing and aggregating relevant environmental data of different aspects of sustainable consumption on a permanent basis (for example, energy consumption, waste, water consumption, mobility and tourism). The information is made publicly available.

Does your government encourage the impartial environmental testing of products? (Paragraph 47)

The major institution of product testing in Germany is the Stiftung Warentest, which was established in 1964 as an independent body. The Stiftung Warentest has a wide range of services in the field of product testing. Besides product performance, technical aspects, health aspects and environmental aspects play an important role in the testing procedures of products and services. The results of the testing are distributed widely through publications and the Internet and are recognised as highly reputable by the public.

Does your government promote research on consumer behaviour (related to environmental damage) in order to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable? (Paragraph 55)

As stated above, the German Government launched various research programmes that are directly or indirectly related to the different economic, social, technological and cultural aspects of sustainable production and consumption. As a cornerstone, the Federal Ministry of Environment and Federal Environmental Agency launched an R&D project (1997-1999) that focused on the various aspects of sustainable consumption:

- instruments;
- social science aspects;
- indicators; and
- strategic dialog with stakeholders.

Has your government introduced 'sustainable practices' in its own operations (for example, green procurement or recycling schemes)? (Paragraph 54)

The Federal Ministry of Environment sees green public procurement as an important element to stimulate sustainable consumption practises within government institutions. Several projects were initiated to develop relevant instruments (like EMS, purchasing

guidelines and eco-labelling) and to disseminate information on how green procurement and other instruments could be implemented (Handbuch umweltfreundliche Beschaffung, Handbuch Umweltcontrolling in der öffentlichen Hand). The Federal Ministry of Environment and the Federal Environment Agency are now supporting a project to build up an Internet platform on green public procurement (www.beschaffung-info.de).

The way forward: Going beyond the status quo

In Germany, the experiences to promote sustainable production and consumption patterns has demonstrated that several driving forces and general factors should be considered as important:

- development of environmentally-sound products;
- environmental transformation of markets within sub-sectors;
- stabilisation of sustainable patterns of consumption within niches;
- increased differentiation on the supply side;
- increase of 'rebound effects';
- establishment of different patterns of sustainable consumption within different areas of consumption; and
- counter-productive influences through societal, economical and political mega-trends.

As empirical research shows, the following aspects should be considered when evaluating the past implementation of existing instruments to promote sustainable patterns of production and consumption in Germany:

- variety of social and political contexts;
- variety of involved players and stakeholders;
- variety of measurements and instruments;

- high complexity of interlinked factors;
- low grade of co-ordinated action;
- limited manoeuvrability through governmental activities; and
- the potential of self-organising processes is not very well developed.

At the moment, the situation in Germany could be characterised as paradoxical. On one side, a variety of programmes, measurements, instruments and activities were initiated to stimulate and enhance awareness and action towards sustainable production and consumption patterns more or less successfully. But on the other hand, actual trends in consumption show that these activities produce no results in the decoupling of overall resource depletion and the growth of household consumption levels.

The major obstacle is that the meanings and far-reaching challenges of sustainable patterns of production and consumption in Germany are not yet well understood (especially by consumers). Furthermore, the actual debate in Germany on sustainability in general – and on sustainable patterns of production and consumption specifically – is highly polarised.

This means that, on the one hand, there is a scientifically-orientated discussion of the carrying capacities of ecosystems and the limits of growth that is concerned with processes consisting of material and energy flows, that can be (ideally) defined in quantitative terms. On the other hand, a debate is taking place concerning the necessity of changes in values and ways of living in our culture and society that is concerned with symbolic cultural contexts.

This polarity of the ecological discourse is particularly true for the topic of consumption. On the one side, there is a discussion focused on specific measures, and on the other side, a general discussion on orientation. One side leans towards concrete projects and actions; the other is centred around questions regarding the possibilities and starting points for reorientation of social values and economic practice, including agreement

among different agents on respective viewpoints and ideas. As far as strategies and measures for sustainable consumption are concerned, however, both areas – those focused on measures and those concerned with orientation – should be seen as complementary. Apart from this lack of environmental communication to anchor a broad understanding of sustainability (and the related visions and practical implications) within society, there is also a wide spectrum of practical barriers to establish sustainable patterns of production and consumption within society.

Information barriers

These can take the form of objective hindrances and situational obstacles, such as the absence of precise information, and disputes among experts on isolated questions, that cause unease among consumers, or the lack of (perceptible) alternative action or possibilities of disposal.

Behavioural barriers

Negative experiences or assumptions about negative effects of environmentally-sound behaviour in certain circumstances prevent just such behaviour, for example, when the result is greater expenditure of time, higher prices and more effort.

Perception barriers

Here, a failing perception of negative changes in the environment and a low assessment of individual contributions make themselves felt.

Emotional barriers

Fears can lead to defensiveness, in the form of suppression and feelings of powerlessness, for example.

Social barriers

Certain social conventions, such as the particular importance of cars and clothing for image cultivation, can act as obstacles to ecologically-sound consumer behaviour.

The way forward: promoting social innovations for sustainable consumption

Within the actual debate on sustainability in Germany, it has become more evident that the

issue of sustainable production and consumption should be seen as a long-term process of social innovation and cultural reorientation, because the idea emerged that an 'ecologisation' of patterns of production and consumption could also be seen as a new stage in the modernisation of societies and cultures. Here, it became clear that political objectives were required for the whole of society, and that it cannot simply be a question of cultivating a particular 'ecological lifestyle' in society niches.

Therefore, the challenge we face is the question of how we can reorient existing lifestyles toward sustainability, and find practical starting points for concrete political action to promote the relevant innovations. In order to manage such demanding innovation in dealing with production and consumption, it is crucial to facilitate 'social innovations' that have to be developed in the interplay between different agents. This concerns among other things, market supply and consumer behaviour as well as the development of general conditions and the appropriate infrastructure. But social innovations in particular receive little attention in connection with reorientation at the moment, compared with technical and organisational innovations. Here, social innovations are important in overcoming the 'diffusion barriers' associated with products and services that are new from the ecological viewpoint.

Recent research has identified a number of examples that are appropriate to the required social innovations, such as self-organised networks for new forms of product use and informal exchange markets. The so-called 'pioneers' could be identified as good examples of the potential of civil society in Germany to realise the socio-ecological transformation associated with the challenge of sustainability.

Besides investigating and supporting those initiatives, it is important for further policy development to enhance the self-organisation capacities (in structural, managerial and financial terms) and to support the diffusion of those models into society, through strategic alliances, co-operation and communication. Here, shaping a more consistent and

integrated policy framework to promote sustainable production and consumption patterns should be seen as crucial.

Integrated product policy as a new strategic approach toward sustainable production and consumption in Germany

Considering the evolution of environmental policy concepts in the past three decades, sustainability means also a new understanding of policy decision-making and the development of new patterns of societal problem-solving (new models of governance). Within this understanding, creating and shaping a policy for sustainability implies new strategic alliances and co-operation between stakeholders and players of the political and governmental system, and economic and civil society to find new ways to influence consumer behaviour. Therefore, the implementation of a policy for sustainability could be seen as a process that requires stronger efforts to stimulate multi-stakeholder integration, and participation through co-operation and communication.

On the national and the European level, the issue of promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns will be discussed more and more within the new framework concept of an integrated product policy (IPP). Generally, IPP means a governmental policy that promotes the permanent environmental improvement of products and services along the whole life cycle, reducing overall resource depletion, and establishing new markets for sustainable products and services. The challenge of an IPP is to stimulate target-oriented innovations, either on the production side or the consumption side of products. The major bottleneck to further success of an IPP lies in the need for all market players to rise to the challenge of creating and purchasing sustainable products. Therefore, strengthening producers' and consumers' capabilities and self-responsibilities to deal with this challenge should be seen as an important task for the future. Apart from further development of the IPP-relevant instruments, complementary actions have to focus on the stimulation of a broad public debate and alliances for innovation.

The role of multi-stakeholder dialogue and strategic alliances

Initiating multi-stakeholder dialogue and strategic alliances are crucial in order to bring the issue of sustainable production and consumption forward, strategically and practically. Apart from the integration of all players in an overall process of sustainability, the major objective of a multi-stakeholder dialogue is to build up a strategic framework for co-operative action, considering the specific conditions under which the different players act. Here, the German Government sees the need to initiate and moderate such strategic approaches and to support the process of capacity-building. The actual discussion shows that strategic alliances should be first production and product-related and, second, on the consumption side, to stimulate consumer demand (purchasing behaviour and preferences) and overall socio-cultural orientations.

A first attempt to initiate a national process of understanding for the promotion of sustainable consumption patterns was made in 1997, and was more thoroughly developed in 1998/1999. The results of the preparatory activities (for example, consultation with relevant stakeholders, survey of stakeholder positions) was the finalisation of a common strategic framework (memorandum of understanding) for sustainable consumption in Germany, which was finally discussed and adopted in the year 2000 by over 20 major stakeholder groups (for example, industry, retailers, trade unions, churches, consumer protection, environmental groups and development groups).

Further activities of the German Government are to continue with this national process of understanding, and to stabilise this process through associated projects. In current and forthcoming phases, the Federal Ministry of Environment and the Federal Environmental Agency, in co-operation with relevant stakeholder groups, are investigating on the concrete possibilities for practical co-operation and projects at the following cross-sections:

- sustainable consumption and integrated product policy;

- sustainable consumption and local Agenda 21;
- sustainable consumption and consumer protection;
- sustainable consumption and education for sustainable development; and
- sustainable consumption and knowledge transfer.

To complement these, the Federal Environmental Agency also launched two research projects focusing on specific aspects of the process:

- sustainable consumption as an element of integrated product policy – development of practical guidelines for co-operation; and
- a feasibility study for the establishment of an Internet-based information portal ‘Sustainable living’.

It is envisaged that, in the next phase of this process (November 2002 to October 2004) a national platform for sustainable consumption projects in the different fields will be built up. It will function as a ‘social organic web’ to promote the issue of sustainable production and consumption within society through co-ordinated actions (to establish a ‘living culture of sustainability’) and to organise the needed knowledge transfer between the involved stakeholder groups and consumers.

Some other upcoming activities include:

- development of new concepts of product use;
- the role of fair trade products and sustainable consumption; and
- gender aspects of sustainable consumption.

Conclusion

As already stated, the broad approach of Section G of the Guidelines to the issue of sustainable consumption has a positive effect, because different activities and policy measurements can be summarised under the

one umbrella. However, this broad approach does not reflect the perspective of consumer protection in detail, nor does it cover the strategies required by consumer protection institutions for supporting sustainable consumption.

Considering the international and national debate on sustainable consumption, promotion of sustainable consumption needs a strong conceptual framework, in which the role of consumer protection activities is specified. The ongoing discussion on integrated product policy could be one of these conceptual frameworks, designed to integrate different policy approaches (for example, supply side, demand side) and instruments.

Furthermore, a strong focus is needed to organise the relevant stakeholder dialogues, because sustainable consumption cannot alone be implemented by legislation, but should be seen as a process of co-operation, communication and capacity building. Here, a clearer consumer (protection) perspective on sustainable consumption in the future would be advantageous. Ultimately, clarifying the link between consumer protection and sustainable consumption is something that can be more effectively achieved by formulating multi-stakeholder partnerships. The link between national and international programmes and activities should be also clarified to identify fruitful co-operation for the future (for example, with international organisations such as UNEP and CI).

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Japan

Although the Environment Ministry was not directly aware of the existence of the sustainable consumption section of the UN Guidelines, the government has made commendable progress on a number of policy fronts.

Japan is prepared to share their experience of policy making in this area with other interested parties.

The government of Japan believes that the UN Guidelines are both easy to understand and useful for sustainable consumption policy making. The ideas displayed in the Guidelines are useful in the sense that they clarify the necessary policies required for promoting sustainable consumption patterns.

Based on the Law Concerning the Promotion of Procurement of Eco-Friendly Goods and Services by the State and Other Entities (Law on Promoting Green Purchasing), which was enacted in May 2000, the Ministry of Environment has been providing information on eco-labelling and other related issues.

The government has also been assisting activities that encourage regional societies to organise networks for green purchasing, and holding green purchasing seminars for local governments.

The Government participated in the Seminar to Improve the Environmental Performance of Public Procurement, organised by the OECD from 29-31 December 2001. The OECD Council approved a recommendation that member governments should embrace 'green' procurement.

The government is willing to share information on laws and regulations, and to provide some practical examples on the laws and regulations related to the green-purchasing scheme.

Implementing the Guidelines

The following section provides a selection of highlights from the survey and follow-up interview.

Has your government encouraged the development and use of environmentally-sound products and services and new technologies that take into consideration full life cycle impacts? (Paragraphs 45, 50)

The Law Concerning the Promotion of Procurement of Eco-Friendly Goods and Services by the State and Other Entities (Law on Promoting Green Purchasing) encourages consumers to consider environmental aspects of products and services when purchasing them. This Law is the first of its kind in the world. Therefore, the government would like to compile updated information on similar initiatives outside Japan – information from WTO (government procurement), OECD meetings (policy on public procurement) and ICLEI would be useful.

The law for promoting green purchasing took effect in April 2001. An objective behind this law is to create an information database and set up a network with local governments in order to share good examples of promoting the procurement of goods that have low environmental impacts. Through this mechanism, the information will be disseminated throughout the local community.

Work on life cycle impacts is carried out by other government agencies, such as the Environmental Association of Japan.

Does your government have in place national recycling schemes? (Paragraph 45)

The Basic Law for Establishing the Recycling-based Society was enacted in June 2000. The law aims to help create a 'society with sound material cycle' through restraining consumption of natural resources and reducing environmental burden.

With the intent of strengthening recycling activities, the Waste Management and Public Cleansing Law was amended. The Japanese

government set out law enforcement guidelines within the first paragraph of Article 5-2 of the Waste Management and Public Cleansing Law on 7 May 2001. These guidelines established the target amount of waste reduction for 2010 on the basis of the amount in 1997. Specifically, the government intends to reduce the amount of final disposal in 2010 to half of the level in 1997.

Several laws focussing on recycling were amended or newly enacted last year [2000]. Now recycling laws cover such items as container and packaging, some household electrical appliances, construction materials and food waste. The government is considering enacting an automobile recycling law. Public information about some of the above initiatives has been disseminated through such resources as brochures, seminars, TV, radio, newspapers and websites. The government will promote efforts toward the establishment of a 'recycling-based society' through integrated operation of these laws.

Has your government created or strengthened effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers, including aspects of sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 51)

Taking into consideration the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard (ISO 14020), the Government is promoting eco-friendly labelling. The Japanese Environmental Association had played a key role in promoting the Eco Mark, which is the only Type I Eco label in Japan.

With reference to the Green Purchasing Law, the Fair Trade Commission will take action against enterprises that commit fraud in relation to false 'eco-friendly' claims.

Does your government have in place economic measures (for example, taxes or subsidies) that promote sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 52)

The government provides tax incentives for automobiles that demonstrate low environmental impacts, such as electric vehicles, natural gas vehicles, methanol

vehicles and hybrid vehicles. Buyers of electric vehicles only pay 2.3% automobile acquisition tax (a reduction of 2.7%) in contrast to the normal purchasing tax of 5% (local tax). Furthermore there will be a 50% reduction in the automobile property tax (local tax), effective for two years.

The taxation system also promotes the buying of petrol (gasoline) cars and trucks as opposed to diesel cars and trucks because of the high nitrogen oxides and suspended particle matters emitted from diesel-powered vehicles, particularly in a urban areas.

Does your government promote research on consumer behaviour (related to environmental damage) in order to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable? (Paragraph 55)

The government has implemented a research study on consumer behaviour in order to measure the progress of green purchasing activities in households.

A sample of the findings include the following.

- 70% of respondents stated that citizens should be educated in the importance of the environment, in order to create awareness about the reduction of waste emission and the promotion of reuse and recycling. Other respondents were of the opinion that there should be some economic incentives implemented.
- 90% of respondent are concerned about waste.
- Over 80% of respondents are aware of the benefits and they want to buy ecologically-friendly goods. However, half of the respondents complained of the difficulties when they want to buy ecologically friendly goods. The reasons are, for example, lack of information (30%) and price (20%). They request for more reliable information in order to understand the contents of ecologically friendly goods.

From this point forward, the government will conduct continuous consumer research studies of this sort.

Has your government introduced 'sustainable practices' in its own operations? (for example, green procurement or recycling schemes) (Paragraph 54)

The national government (for example, the Diet, government ministries and agencies and courts) and Independent Administrative Institutions are promoting comprehensive and planned procurement practices based on the Green Purchasing Law. The Law includes the participation of government offices. The items concerned range from products such as automobiles to services, such as the construction of public places like hospitals and bridges. The reason behind this process is that the government wishes to lead the way in the carrying out of voluntary actions towards a 'greener society' and is part of the process for implementing 'green' government operations.

The Ministry of Environment has to co-ordinate the preparation of basic policy, in co-operation with other ministries and government agencies. Each ministry has to prepare and publish green procurement plans in line with the basic policy.

Support

Our government would welcome the following support:

- more information on the topic of sustainable consumption.

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Mauritius

Mauritius has made respectable progress towards implementing a number of the elements of the UN Guidelines. However, the government is calling on the United Nations and other parties to provide more support and information.

The government of Mauritius had originally learnt of the existence of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection through an issue of a UNEP newsletter. Overall, the government believes the Guidelines represent a very useful exercise. Although it believes the Guidelines are generally easy to understand, the means of implementation are not very explicit, and a more descriptive *modus operandi* would have been more effective.

The Ministry of Environment has initiated sensitisation campaigns on the following themes:

- energy conservation;
- use of solar systems;
- water saving and reuse;
- use of ozone-friendly substances and products;
- reuse of paper;
- recycling of plastic; and
- the prudent use of plastic and related products.

This year (2002) has been declared The National Environmental Stewardship Year, where the whole population will be inculcated with a stronger sense of environmental responsibility.

CI's Mauritius-based member organisation, the Institute of Consumer Protection (ICP), is working with the Ministry of Environment to produce the *Consumer handbook on the environment*, which will outline consumer responsibility in ensuring a clean and healthy environment. ICP is also working with the Ministry of Education through consumer

education outreach in schools to develop a brochure on *Children as consumers*, which seeks to introduce consumer education, especially in reference to sustainable consumption habits and patterns, in children.

The government could consider hosting a regional conference on the issue.

Implementing the Guidelines

The following section provides a selection of highlights from the survey and follow-up interview.

Has your government encouraged the development and use of environmentally-sound products and services and new technologies that take into consideration full life cycle impacts? (Paragraphs 45, 50)

The government is fast shifting to recycled and recyclable plastic. In fact the government has already shifted to Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET) bottles for soft drinks and related products. At the same time the street lighting has seen the introduction of efficient neon bulbs. The use of energy-saving bulbs is also being encouraged.

Campaigns have been run on the efficient use of water as well as electricity and the government is introducing the use of unleaded petrol, as of 1 September 2002.

Does your government have in place national recycling schemes? (Paragraph 45)

Recycling PET bottles has started. The bottles are collected, compacted and exported to other countries, including South Africa. The government intends to extend the programme to other areas.

Does your government have in place economic measures (for example, taxes or subsidies) that promote sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 52)

Various fiscal incentives have been given to the business community. Products that adversely affect the environment are being removed from the market in phases. For example, the government is currently

promoting recycled and recyclable paper. Incentives have been provided in order to shift from the importation of electric stoves to gas stoves, thus decreasing energy use.

Does your government provide public information (for example, statistics, indicators or databases) that measures progress towards sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 53)

The Central Statistic Office caters mainly for economic activities, but it has also started to publish environmental statistics. There is a project to extend it to sustainable consumption. There is a need for capacity building in this area.

A study on consumer behaviour and sustainability has been done by the University of Mauritius, but it is expected that more in-depth research will be conducted soon.

Has your government introduced 'sustainable practices' in its own operations? (for example, green procurement or recycling schemes) (Paragraph 54)

To decrease the use of paper the government is in the process of moving towards 'e-government'. Initiatives have been taken to use recycled paper, as well as to recycle printer cartridges.

New government buildings are designed to make optimum use of sunlight and use solar energy heaters.

Support

Our government would welcome the following support:

- promotional material (for example brochures, posters);
- easy-to-understand training guides or toolkits;
- more information on the topic of sustainable consumption;

- more high-level coverage of sustainable consumption and the UN Guidelines (for example, at WSSD);
- opportunities to attend/organise international meetings on the topic of sustainable consumption and the UN Guidelines;
- case studies from countries that have successfully implemented the Guidelines;
- involvement/creation of support networks, web resources, etc.; and
- an international convention on sustainable consumption (a binding or voluntary international agreement).

Contact

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Senegal

Although Senegal may be somewhat behind with regards the implementing of sustainable consumption-related policies, the government is willing to effect change, and is requesting support from parties that have experience in developing and encouraging sustainable consumption policies and initiatives.

Senegal was aware of the existence of the UN Guidelines, but had not received the sustainable consumption section prior to the commencement of the UNEP/CI research project.

A workshop was organised by the government of Senegal, with the assistance of international organisations (such as UNDP), on 21-22 August 2001. The meeting (Axe de Reflexion sur la Mise en Ouvre de l'Agenda 21) was divided into 21 groups/committees, Committee 4 being responsible for sustainable consumption issues. The workshop resulted in the development of a sustainable consumption programme, under the auspices of Agenda 21. Agenda 21 was at the time considered the reference document for the promotion of sustainable consumption in Senegal.

The government would be interested in organising international meetings on the topics of sustainable consumption and the UN Guidelines.

The government of Senegal admits to being somewhat behind regarding the international momentum on sustainable consumption. Poverty in Senegal has led to a situation where the need for a vast quantity of produced goods and services has dominated the need for quality of the produced goods and services. Such a proviso is based on the need to feed the population.

Senegalese consumer associations (including ASCOSEN, ADEETÈLS, ASDEC and ADEC) are presently unable to fulfil their obligations, owing to a lack of tools. The main weaknesses of these organisations are their lack of expertise, skills in some particular aspects of consumer work (for example, lobbying,

communication and information, education and testing) and lack of simple equipment in order to be operational.

Senegal would benefit from support and partnerships with those parties who have been successful at developing and encouraging sustainable consumption policies.

In Senegal, the deficiency of the appropriate tools constitutes a barrier to the implementation of these Guidelines. There are several laws and regulations in Senegal, the major difficulty being to provide a constructive synthesis of the relevant ones. For example, there is a clause in the penal code relating to consumer protection. It is necessary that consumer organisations call on the Government to implement appropriate changes in this area. Furthermore, the Government notes that as the framework for Section G is rather general. The clarity and accuracy of the sustainable consumption section of the UN Guidelines could be improved by identifying the key strategic objectives that must be followed.

The government has conducted some information campaigns on sustainable consumption issues. There have been programmes focussing on saving energy (water and electricity) and a transportation (mobility) plan in Dakar has also been implemented.

Implementing the Guidelines

The following section provides a selection of highlights from the survey and follow-up interview.

Has your government encouraged the development and use of environmentally-sound products and services and new technologies that take into consideration full life cycle impacts? (Paragraphs 45, 50)

The government promotes the research and use of renewable and sustainable energy resources. The government has also implemented legislation that controls the operation of machines that use gas and have adverse greenhouse gas effects.

Does your government have in place national recycling schemes? (Paragraph 45)

There is a recycling and garbage-disposal initiative in Senegal. There are three or four recycling factories in the country. A group of women have come together in Ouakam (Dakar) and are currently in the process of recycling plastic rubbish.

The government would like to form partnerships with the UN or private businesses in order to recycle plastic waste.

Does your government have in place economic measures (for example, taxes or subsidies) that promote sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 52)

Under international pressure, the Senegalese government was forced to gradually remove subsidies on gas and other products and services. There is an environmental benefit and it does have relevance to sustainable consumption in the context that if the gas price rises, households would use charcoal (charbon de bois). This would accelerate the deforestation and threaten the fragile forest reserves in the southern part of the country. In other words, this form of consumption is not considered sustainable, according to the government.

Does your government provide public information (for example, statistics, indicators or databases) that measures progress towards sustainable consumption? (Paragraph 53)

The office of Economic Studies and Statistics provides practical information on the evolution of sustainable consumption. The government does not conduct research on consumer behaviour because of a lack of financial resources.

Support

Our government would welcome the following support:

- more information on the topic of sustainable consumption; and

- opportunities to attend/organise international meetings on the topic of sustainable consumption and the UN Guidelines.

Contact

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5 Conclusions

Awareness of Guidelines

General awareness of the sustainable consumption section of the UN Guidelines was rather low in both OECD and non-OECD countries – about two-thirds (70%) of OECD countries were aware of their existence, compared with just over half (55%) of non-OECD countries.

The lack of non-English versions of the Guidelines has also impeded progress. The sustainable consumption section of the Guidelines was translated into French and Spanish specifically for this survey. Only once the initial stages of the research project were underway were the complete Guidelines translated into French and Spanish by UNCTAD, almost three years after their expansion.

Numerous communications were received throughout the research process from governments and other bodies requesting further information about the Guidelines and the topic of sustainable consumption. This clearly demonstrates that a better and more systematic approach to spreading knowledge and understanding of the Guidelines is required. Publicity campaigns, further language translations and greater practices of accessibility must be instigated.

Recommendations

- Governments should initiate a five-year global framework programme, aimed at comprehensive and integrated implementation of the guidelines at national, regional and international level. Note: The Ten Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production was adopted at the WSSD.
- It remains a cornerstone of the advancement of the work on the Guidelines that materials that promote and highlight the existence and importance of the Guidelines are made available to all governments and other relevant parties. Outputs should include a brochure, poster and CD-ROMS.
- The Guidelines should be translated into more languages.

'Given that I just came to know about these Guidelines after receiving this questionnaire, I believe that there are more people that are not aware of them and I urge those people responsible for this to find other ways to improve their outreach to people around the world.'

Farran Redfern, Ministry of Environment and Social Development, Kiribati

Modification of Guidelines

Governments in all parts of the world have identified difficulties in understanding the meaning and related requirements of some parts of the Guidelines. Some of these misconceptions may arise from language constraints or complicated wording.

Despite this, the vast majority of non-OECD countries support the current wording and content of the sustainable consumption section of the Guidelines. Less than a third (30%) of non-OECD governments, compared with exactly half (50%) of OECD governments, felt that certain components of the paragraphs needed modifying. (This may be partly due to the fact that only a minority of such governments have made significant progress towards implementation and are therefore not fully aware of the practical policy elements required.)

Now that the Guidelines are at least available in three languages and, with a sample of developing countries in support of the current framework, it is hoped that implementation can begin in earnest.

Although at a later stage some form of official modification may be required, the key issue is clarification of what is practically expected.

In this regard, UNEP and CI envisage the need to provide an accompanying toolkit to help governments understand their obligations

under the specific elements. Training and information-sharing workshops are also deemed necessary.

Recommendations

- A toolkit should be provided in all official UN languages to advance the full implementation of the Guidelines by providing pointers (practical solutions) to governments in formulating appropriate policies to meet the various elements of the Guidelines.
- Other initiatives designed to better explain the Guidelines should be developed, including training sessions, and providing good-practice case studies and access to Internet-based training and information resources.

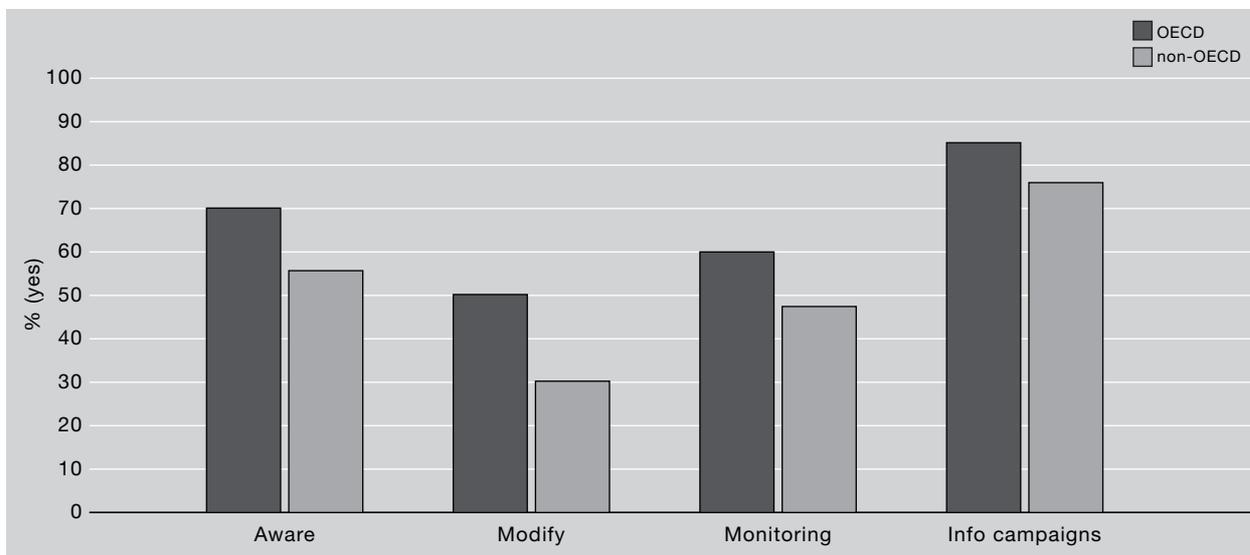
‘The Guidelines are very useful in developing policies and revising or strengthening existing laws.’

Beom-Sik Yoo

**Deputy Director, International Affairs,
Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea**

Monitoring implementation

Fewer than half (48%) of non-OECD governments and just under two-thirds (60%) of OECD ones have a focal point for monitoring compliance with implementation of the Guidelines, so there is much room for improvement (even though sustainable consumption is a cross-sector issue and often



Graph 5.1 Guideline awareness, modification, monitoring of implementation and information

requires a multi-ministry task force to measure activities).

As was suggested in UNEP’s work in 2000 on sustainable consumption indicators, measuring progress in this area is crucial to help define goals and to reference achievements. In this regard, the project partners envisage the need to present measurable targets in order to gauge progress toward implementation.

For example, a respectable achievement would be to reduce the proportion of governments that are not aware of the existence of Section G of the Guidelines from the current 34% to 5% in three years (by 2005). A global follow-up review of the status of implementation could be carried out at this time.

All governments should be expected to measure their own progress toward implementation of Section G of the Guidelines. A government checklist would help with this.

Recommendations

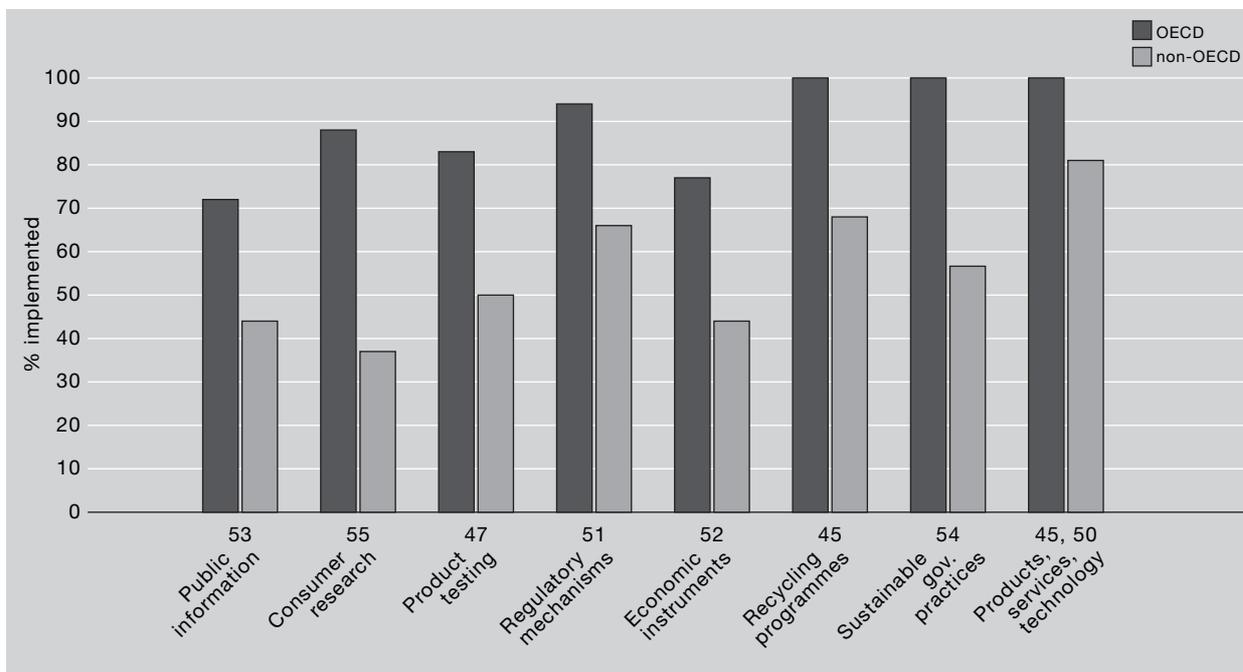
- Further research is needed to more fully investigate the level to which initiatives or legislation have been implemented in support of each of the sustainable consumption elements of the Guidelines. The information should be publicly available.

- The international community should set measurable targets. Progress should be measured towards these goals.
- Every two years a global review should be conducted by impartial bodies to review progress towards the targets and overall global implementation.
- Governments should carry out their own monitoring activities and nominate a department or organisation to be responsible for compliance monitoring.

‘Defining and tracking sustainable consumption is an area that requires more conscious attention.’
Duncan Bury
Head, Product Policy, National Office of Pollution Prevention, Environment Canada

Consumer information

One of the undoubted success stories unearthed in this review has been the large number of governments that have raised consumer awareness about sustainable consumption issues. Eight in ten governments have promoted such practices in recent years and many others have devised campaigns for the future.



Graph 5.2 Implementation of specific paragraphs of the Guidelines

The most common activities revolve around disseminating information about saving energy and water resources, or about protecting the environment by recycling or buying recycled products.

Consumer awareness in this area is by no means limited to consumers in OECD countries either – around three-quarters (76%) of non-OECD governments have initiated such efforts.

Awareness and information campaigns have been carried out in the full range of media, including TV, magazines, newspapers and the Internet. National consumer organisations or NGOs often manage the campaigns.

Consumers must be aware in order to make valid and informed choices, and this remains a critical policy area for governments. Governments, in conjunction with civil society and, in particular, with consumer organisations, should advance activities, providing consumers with the right tools to take action.

Governments, especially those in non-OECD countries, could learn from examples in other countries, and extend their campaigns beyond the traditional resource-saving sphere. Focusing on the direct consumer role in bringing about sustainable consumption is a critical theme.

Recommendations

- International organisations, such as UNEP and the OECD, should promote good-quality and reliable information about sustainable consumption to governments, business, non-governmental organisations and the public.
- A library of good cases and a communication planner should be made publicly and globally available.
- Global outreach by organisations, such as UNEP and CI, should be improved in order to better equip governments in their efforts to implement the Guidelines.
- An evaluation of the current content and means of providing information to consumers by governments could provide an opportunity for a dissemination of good practices between governments.

‘The government of Kuwait promotes sustainable consumption information campaigns with seminars, courses and booklets.’

Mohammad A. Al-Sarawi
Chairman and Director General,
Environment Public Authority, Kuwait

Support for developing countries

Behind this record of overall progress lies a more complex picture of diverse experiences across countries, regions and major country aggregates. Overall implementation rates must be viewed with caution, as they do not take account of the varying levels of progress in the respective policy areas.

A serious limitation to progress towards comprehensive global implementation lies in the disparity between the accomplishments of OECD and non-OECD countries. Non-OECD implementation rates of sometimes less than half the OECD average speak for themselves.

In all eight sustainable consumption-related policy areas measured, non-OECD countries have achieved comprehensively lower implementation rates than OECD countries (see graph 5.2, opposite).

The status of implementation of the specific elements of the Guidelines varies widely. Policies associated with providing public information, conducting consumer research and utilising regulatory mechanisms and, specifically, economic instruments are the least implemented paragraphs.

All OECD countries indicated that they had some form of a recycling programme in place, and also encouraged in some way the design, development and use of environmentally-sound products and services. By contrast, fewer than half of non-OECD governments have implemented related policies in the domains of public information, consumer

research or economic instruments. OECD countries should also be encouraged to make further progress. For example, fewer than three-quarters (72%) of OECD countries have instigated relevant public information programmes that measure progress towards sustainable consumption.

With just half of governments in non-OECD countries incorporating environmental product testing and any elements of sustainable government practices, there is a long way to go before acceptable levels of implementation are reached. Target setting and ongoing measurement activities will be essential in this context.

Overall, the survey has revealed that governments in both developed and developing countries have a strong interest in supporting the implementation of the Guidelines. Encouragingly, policy makers all over the world are aware of the urgency of protecting their citizens from environmental and social disasters by inspiring changes in consumption and production patterns.

It is clear that many governments need support to formulate policies in line with those highlighted by the Guidelines. Nevertheless, the fact remains that a good deal of the solutions are already available and are being practised by various authorities. These practical solutions need only be transferred to other governments. This calls for better communication, more co-operation between governments, and training, feedback and monitoring of results. Enthusiasm and good practices should be shared so that global policy implementation in this field can be boosted without duplication or wasted effort.

Governments are calling for training and other opportunities to learn from the international community, including consumer organisations, NGOs and other interested parties. A number of governments have suggested that they would be interested in organising or hosting workshops for the dissemination of experiences and also in organising other forms of support, including developing training and promotional materials. Sharing good practices and, in

particular, supporting implementation efforts in developing countries remains the challenge at hand.

Recommendations

- Industrialised countries are generally further advanced in the implementation process and should therefore share knowledge and experiences with developing countries. Industrialised countries should support developing countries with direct knowledge transfer.
- Training and information dissemination workshops should be organised in all major world regions. National policy experts and other relevant parties could provide information on their own experiences (successes and failures) in pushing ahead with implementing the Guidelines.
- Support is needed for developing country representatives to attend the regional training and experience-sharing sessions.
- An interactive training and resource website should be developed, providing governments and other interested parties with access to case studies, toolkits and an opportunity to discuss experiences online.

'I sincerely hope that UNEP will be able to support the Ministry of Environment to reinforce its capacities in the field of sustainable consumption. We also hope that executives of the Ministry will be able to take part in future initiatives, including possible training courses and other activities relating to the promotion of sustainable consumption.'

Jean-Pierre Moise
Co-ordinator, Climate Change Programme, Ministry of Environment, Haiti

'We like the co-operation between UNEP and CI and we would be happy if they could focus on concrete cases and studies.'

Robert Brnak
Ministry of the Environment, Slovak Republic

‘China is a developing country with a huge population and limited per capita resources. So it is most important for China to advance sustainable consumption and ensure sustainable development. China’s Consumers Association has put “green consumption” on its agenda as the main theme of the current century to advocate and promote sustainable consumption among the Chinese consumers.’

China Consumers Association

Scoring implementation

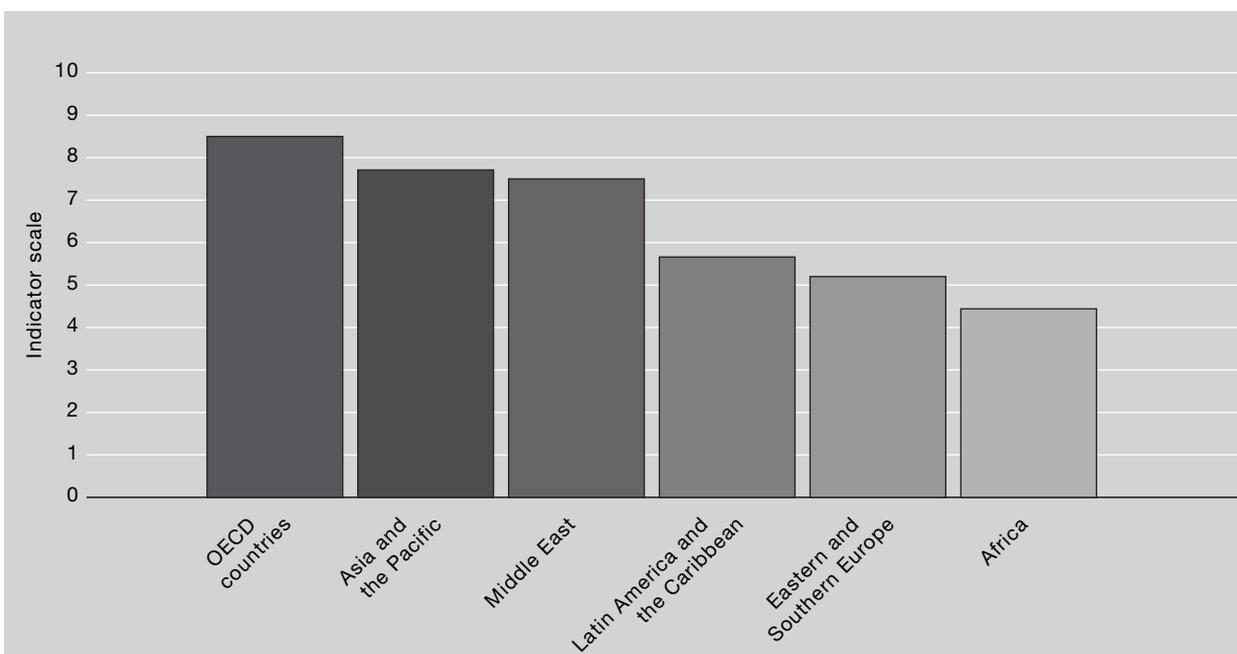
Each country was given a score for its progress with implementing eight key paragraphs of Section G of the UN Guidelines, from 0 (no policy implementation) to 10 (implementation in line with all paragraphs started, along with information and monitoring activities). Bear in mind that the score indicates only that implementation has begun, and not how far it has progressed.

Scores for all countries participating in the study are given in the table, right. An analysis of scores by region is given in graph 5.3, below.

Score Countries

10	Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, Sweden
9	People’s Republic of China, Germany, India, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Vanuatu
8	Canada, Hong Kong (China SAR), Kuwait, Seychelles, Slovak Republic
7	Argentina, Chad, El Salvador, Fiji, Israel, Japan, Zimbabwe
6	Kiribati, Mauritius, New Zealand, Senegal, Switzerland ¹
5	Austria, Chile, Croatia, Indonesia, Italy, Uruguay,
4	Bulgaria, Côte d’Ivoire
3	Costa Rica, Haiti
1	Burundi, Ecuador, Kenya
0	Cyprus, Zambia

¹ incomplete survey returned



Graph 5.3 Implementation indicator score by region

Appendix 1:

United Nations Guidelines

for Consumer Protection

Section G. Promotion of Sustainable Consumption

The Paragraphs focused on in the study are in **bold**.

42. Sustainable consumption includes meeting the needs of present and future generations for goods and services in ways that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

43. Responsibility for sustainable consumption is shared by all members and organisations of society, with informed consumers, Government, business, labour organisations, and consumer and environmental organisations playing particularly important roles. Informed consumers have an essential role in promoting consumption that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable, including through the effects of their choices on producers. Governments should promote the development and implementation of policies for sustainable consumption and the integration of those policies with other public policies. Government policy making should be conducted in consultation with business, consumer and environmental organisations, and other concerned groups. Business has a responsibility for promoting sustainable consumption through the design, production and distribution of goods and services. Consumer and environmental organisations have a responsibility for promoting public participation and debate on sustainable consumption, for informing consumers, and for working with Government and business towards sustainable consumption.

44. Governments, in partnership with business and relevant organisations of civil society, should develop and implement strategies that promote sustainable consumption through a mix of policies that could include regulations; economic and social instruments; sectoral policies in such areas as land use, transport, energy and housing; information programmes to raise awareness of the impact of consumption patterns; removal of subsidies that promote unsustainable patterns of consumption and production; and promotion of sector-specific environmental-management best practices.

45. Governments should encourage the design, development and use of products and services that are safe and energy and resource efficient, considering their full life cycle impacts. Governments should encourage recycling programmes that encourage consumers to both recycle wastes and purchase recycled products.

46. Governments should promote the development and use of national and international environmental health and safety standards for products and services; such standards should not result in disguised barriers to trade.

47. Governments should encourage impartial environmental testing of products.

48. Governments should safely manage environmentally harmful uses of substances and encourage the development of environmentally sound alternatives for such uses. New potentially hazardous substances should be evaluated on a scientific basis for their long-

term environmental impact prior to distribution.

49. Governments should promote awareness of the health-related benefits of sustainable consumption and production patterns, bearing in mind both direct effects on individual health and collective effects through environmental protection.

50. Governments, in partnership with the private sector and other relevant organisations, should encourage the transformation of unsustainable consumption patterns through the development and use of new environmentally sound products and services and new technologies, including information and communication technologies, that can meet consumer needs while reducing pollution and depletion of natural resources.

51. Governments are encouraged to create or strengthen effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers, including aspects of sustainable consumption.

52. Governments should consider a range of economic instruments, such as fiscal instruments and internalisation of environmental costs, to promote sustainable consumption, taking into account social needs, the need for disincentives for unsustainable practices and incentives for more sustainable practices, while avoiding potential negative effects for market access, in particular for developing countries.

53. Governments, in cooperation with business and other relevant groups, should develop indicators, methodologies and databases for measuring progress towards sustainable consumption at all levels. This information should be publicly available.

54. Governments and international agencies should take the lead in introducing sustainable practices in their own operations, in particular through their procurement policies. Government procurement, as appropriate, should encourage development and use of environmentally sound products and services.

55. Governments and other relevant organisations should promote research on consumer behaviour related to environmental damage in order to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable.

The full version of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection can be found at: www.uneptie.org/pc/sustain/guidelines/un-guidelines.htm

Appendix 2: survey questionnaire

Survey of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection

The questions relate to Section G of the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection: Promotion of Sustainable Consumption (please see enclosed document). You can choose the language of your preference, English, French or Spanish. We would like to encourage you to provide any relevant supportive documentation along with the completed questionnaire.

Government: Your Name:

Your Title: Date:

Contact Details (address, phone number, e-mail)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Before receiving this survey were you aware of the existence of the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection?

- Yes
- No

If yes, how did you come to know of them; what is your overall impression?

2. After reviewing the UN Consumer Guidelines (Section G - 'Promotion of Sustainable Consumption') what is your opinion of them? (maximum of two responses)

- Easy to understand
- Confusing
- Useful for policy making
- Other (please explain below)

3. Do you believe that Section G (Sustainable Consumption) of the Guidelines needs to be modified?

- Yes
- No

Please comment:

4. If your government has started to adopt Section G of the Guidelines, is there a focal point who is responsible for the implementation or the compliance monitoring of the Guidelines?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide contact details and description of responsibilities:

5. Has your government promoted awareness raising and information campaigns that focus on sustainable consumption?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide details:

GUIDELINES IN GREATER DETAIL: (SECTION G: PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION)

PRODUCTS, SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY

(Refer to Guidelines, Section G, sub-sections 45, 50 opposite)

6. Has your government encouraged the development and use of environmentally sound products and services and new technologies that take into consideration full life cycle impacts?

- Yes
 No

45a. Governments should encourage the design, development and use of products and services that are safe and energy and resource efficient, considering their full life cycle impacts.

50. Governments, in partnership with the private sector and other relevant organisations, should encourage the transformation of unsustainable consumption patterns through the development and use of new environmentally sound products and services and new technologies, including information and communication technologies, that can meet consumer needs while reducing pollution and depletion of natural resources.

If yes, please provide some examples:

POLICY INSTRUMENTS

(Refer to Guidelines, Section G, sub-section 45 opposite)

7. Does your government have in place national recycling schemes?

- Yes
 No

45b. Governments should encourage recycling programmes that encourage consumers to both recycle wastes and purchase recycled products.

If yes, does your government have plans to expand/improve such initiatives?

(Refer to Guidelines, Section G, sub-section 51 opposite)

8. Has your government created or strengthened effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers, including aspects of sustainable consumption?

51. Governments are encouraged to create or strengthen effective regulatory mechanisms for the protection of consumers, including aspects of sustainable consumption.

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide some examples:

(Refer to Guidelines, Section G, sub-section 52 opposite)

9. Does your government have in place economic measures (e.g. taxes, subsidies) that promote sustainable consumption?

52. Governments should consider a range of economic instruments, such as fiscal instruments and internalisation of environmental costs, to promote sustainable consumption, taking into account social needs, the need for disincentives for unsustainable practices and incentives for more sustainable practices, while avoiding potential negative effects for market access, in particular for developing countries.

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide some examples:

(Refer to Guidelines, Section G, sub-section 53 opposite)

10. Does your government provide public information (e.g. statistics, indicators, databases) that measures progress towards sustainable consumption?

53. Governments, in cooperation with business and other relevant groups, should develop indicators, methodologies and databases for measuring progress towards sustainable consumption at all levels. This information should be publicly available.

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide some examples:

RESEARCH

(Refer to Guidelines, Section G, sub-section 47 opposite)

11. Does your government encourage the impartial environmental testing of products?

47. Governments should encourage impartial environmental testing of products.

- Yes
 No

If yes, please provide some examples:

(Refer to Guidelines, Section G, sub-section 55 opposite)

12. Does your government promote research on consumer behaviour (related to environmental damage) in order to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable?

55. Governments and other relevant organisations should promote research on consumer behaviour related to environmental damage in order to identify ways to make consumption patterns more sustainable.

- Yes
 No

If yes, please provide some examples:

WHAT IS YOUR GOVERNMENT DOING IN ITS OWN OPERATIONS?

(Refer to Guidelines, Section G, sub-section 54 opposite)

13. Has your government introduced 'sustainable practices' in its own operations? (e.g. green procurement, recycling schemes)

54. Governments and international agencies should take the lead in introducing sustainable practices in their own operations, in particular through their procurement policies. Government procurement, as appropriate, should encourage development and use of environmentally sound products and services.

- Yes
 No

If yes, please provide some examples:

OTHER COMMENTS

Please return completed survey to:

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Appendix 3: survey responses

'Yes' answers to Questions 1 to 13 of the questionnaire (excluding Question 2)

See Appendix 2: survey questionnaire, page 66, for questions. Indications are given only when questionnaire contained a clearly marked positive response. Unanswered or illegible responses have not been included, unless they were later verified.

	Q.1	Q.3	Q.4	Q.5	Q.6	Q.7	Q.8	Q.9	Q.10	Q.11	Q.12	Q.13
Argentina	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Australia	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Austria		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
Belgium	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brazil	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bulgaria	✓			✓	✓	✓						✓
Burundi	✓											
Canada	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chad			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Chile	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓
China, People's Republic of	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Costa Rica		✓		✓	✓	✓						✓
Côte d'Ivoire	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓				✓	
Croatia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓		
Cyprus												
Czech Republic	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Denmark		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ecuador		✓			✓							
El Salvador	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Estonia		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fiji				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Finland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Germany	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Haiti				✓	✓						✓	
Hong Kong, China SAR				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hungary		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
India		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Indonesia	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Israel	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

	Q.1	Q.3	Q.4	Q.5	Q.6	Q.7	Q.8	Q.9	Q.10	Q.11	Q.12	Q.13
Italy	✓			✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
Japan				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Kenya							✓					
Kiribati			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		
Korea, Republic of	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kuwait	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lithuania				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mauritius	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Mexico	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Netherlands		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Zealand	✓				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Nicaragua	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Norway	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Poland	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Senegal	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Seychelles	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Slovak Republic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Sri Lanka	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sweden	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Switzerland ¹		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Uruguay					✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Vanuatu			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Zambia												
Zimbabwe	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

1 Incomplete survey returned

Appendix 4: resources

Consumers International (1997) *A discerning middle class?* Malaysia: CI ROAP

Consumers International (1997) *A matter of living on earth: green vs. sustainable consumption: choosing sustainable consumption* Malaysia: CI ROAP

Consumers International (1997) *A matter of living on earth: solar electricity programme in Pulimarong village of Nepal* Malaysia: CI ROAP

Consumers International (1997) *A matter of living on earth: The Mumbai Grahak Panchayat innovative distribution model* Malaysia: CI ROAP

Consumers International (1998) 'India's Middle Class Consumers: Their (sustainable) consumption patterns'

Consumers International (1999) *Green claims* London: CI

Consumers International (1999) *Green labels* London: CI

Consumers International (1997) *Consumers and the environment: meeting deeds, changing lifestyles* Chile: CI

EOLSS (2000) *Encyclopaedia of life support systems* (includes 'Sustainable consumption indicators', UNEP article) Paris: EOLSS

IIED (1998) 'Consumption in a sustainable world' London: Waterside Press (A report of the workshop held in Kabelåg, Norway, June 2-4 1998)

IIIEE, Lund University (2002) *International journal of cleaner production* (includes 'Getting the message across through regional networks') Lund: IIIEE

OECD (1999) 'Towards more sustainable household consumption patterns: Indicators to measure progress' Paris: OECD

OECD (2001) 'Policies to Promote Sustainable Consumption: An Overview' Paris: OECD

The Netherlands (1995) 'Facilities for a Sustainable Household Workshop: Report' The Hague: Netherlands

UN DESA (1998) *Measuring changes in consumption and production patterns: A set of indicators* New York: United Nations

UN Secretary General (1999) 'Report of the Secretary General Changing Consumption Patterns' New York: UN CSD

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UNEP (2000) *Global environment outlook 2000* London: Earthscan

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UNEP (2001) *Consumption opportunities: strategies for change* Geneva: UNEP

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UNEP DTIE (1999) Report: 'UNEP International Expert Meeting on Advertising and Sustainable Consumption' Paris: UNEP

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UNEP DTIE (2001) *Cleaner production: a guide to sources of information* Paris: UNEP

UNEP DTIE (2001). *Industry and environment: sustainable mobility* (includes 'Consumer Trends and Expectations: An international survey focussing on environmental impacts') Paris: UNEP

UNEP DTIE (2001) 'Report on the First Africa Round table on Cleaner Production and Sustainable Consumption' Paris: UNEP

UNEP DTIE (2001) 'The Role of Product Service Systems in a Sustainable Society' Paris: UNEP

UNEP DTIE (2002). 'Advertising a Better Quality of Life for All' (WSSD, Advertising Sector Report, submitted by the World Federation of Advertisers and the European Association of Communication Agencies) Paris: UNEP

UNEP/CDG (2000) Sustainable Consumption and Production. 'Creating Opportunities in a Changing World: Report of the 4th International Business Forum' Berlin, 1999

UNEP/CDG (2002) 'Workshop on Sustainable Consumption for Latin America and the Caribbean: Meeting Report'. Sao Paulo: UNEP

UNEP/CI/CDG/Department of the Environment and Heritage, Australia (2001) 'Workshop on Sustainable Consumption for Asia Pacific: Background Paper'. Malaysia: CI ROAP

UNEP/UNESCO (2002) *Youth, sustainable consumption and life styles* (MOST Series) Paris: UNEP/UNESCO

United Nations (1999) 'United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection' New York: UN CSD

About the project partners

The United Nations Environment Programme Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP DTIE)

The mission of the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics is to help decision-makers in government, local authorities, and industry develop and adopt policies and practices that:

- are cleaner and safer;
- make efficient use of natural resources;
- ensure adequate management of chemicals;
- incorporate environmental costs; and
- reduce pollution and risks for humans and the environment.

The UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP DTIE), with the Division Office in Paris, is composed of one centre and five branches.

The International Environmental Technology Centre (Osaka) which promotes the adoption and use of environmentally sound technologies with a focus on the environmental management of cities and freshwater basins, in developing countries and countries in transition.

Production and Consumption (Paris) which fosters the development of cleaner and safer production and consumption patterns that lead to increased efficiency in the use of natural resources and reductions in pollution.

Chemicals (Geneva) which promotes sustainable development by catalysing global actions and building national capacities for the sound management of chemicals and the improvement of chemical safety worldwide, with a priority on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and Prior Informed Consent (PIC, jointly with FAO).

Energy and OzonAction (Paris) which supports the phase-out of ozone-depleting substances in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and promotes good management practices and use of energy, with a focus on atmospheric impacts. The UNEP/RISØ Collaborating Centre on Energy and Environment supports the work of the Unit.

Economics and Trade (Geneva) which promotes the use and application of assessment and incentive tools for environmental policy, and helps improve the understanding of linkages between trade and environment and the role of financial institutions in promoting sustainable development.

Coordination of Regional Activities Branch which co-ordinates regional delivery of UNEP DTIE's activities and ensures coordination of DTIE's activities funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

UNEP DTIE activities focus on:

- raising awareness;
- improving the transfer of information;
- building capacity, fostering technology co-operation;
- partnerships and transfer;
- improving understanding of environmental impacts of trade issues;
- promoting integration of environmental considerations into economic policies; and
- catalysing global chemical safety.

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Consumers International

Consumers International (CI) supports, links and represents consumer groups and agencies all over the world. It has a membership of over 250 organisations in 127 countries. It strives to promote a fairer society through defending the rights of all consumers, including poor, marginalised and disadvantaged people, by:

- supporting and strengthening member organisations and the consumer movement in general; and
- campaigning at the international level for policies which respect consumer concerns.

The organisation was founded in 1960 as the International Organisation of Consumer Unions (IOCU) by a group of national consumer organisations. The group recognised

that they could build upon their individual strengths by working across national borders. The organisation rapidly grew and soon became established as the voice of the international consumer movement on issues such as product and food standards, health and patients' rights, the environment and sustainable consumption, and the regulation of international trade and of public utilities.

CI is an independent, non-profit organisation. It is not aligned with or supported by any political party or industry. It is funded by fees from member organisations and by grants from foundations, governments and multilateral agencies.

CI's Head Office is in London, as is its office for Developed and Transition Economies. Regional Offices are located in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Santiago (Chile) and Harare (Zimbabwe).

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