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AN INFORMATION NOTE ON PROMOTING INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE AT CSD-18

Background Paper
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The 18th session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18) will be held from 3-14 May 2010 at the UN Headquarters, New York. According to Commission's multi-year programme of work, the CSD-18 being the review year will evaluate the progress made in implementing internationally agreed agenda in the areas of: waste management, chemicals, mining, transport and 10 year framework of programme on SCP patterns.

Lately, the CSD has embraced many innovations in its organization of work--one being to promote an interactive dialogue among participants and discourage reading of pre-prepared statements. To further strengthen this practice, the Bureau of CSD-18 has prepared a tentative list of questions to steer the thematic discussions in an interactive manner. Delegates and other stakeholders are encouraged to use the framework provided by these questions to make their interventions.

Transport

1. What are the main challenges and barriers faced by the developing countries in particular in promoting sustainable transport policies, projects and programmes?

2. The provision of affordable transport infrastructure and services in rural areas is an important social equity concern. How can transport services in rural areas be improved?

3. Spatial planning and public transport can offer significant co-benefits for sustainable development in urban areas. How can their contributions to sustainable development be enhanced?

4. How can information exchange be further enhanced with regard to successful policies and measures to manage the avoidable growth in transport demand, encourage the shift to more environmentally sound modes of transport, and enhance further technological progress?

5. How can the necessary transition towards more sustainable low-carbon transport systems be accelerated?

Chemicals

1. How can the CSD help in ensuring that policies and programmes on sound management of chemicals are prioritized into national development plans and in the broader sustainable development agenda?

2. What are the key challenges and barriers involved in bringing developing countries into compliance with the Conventions on chemicals management and in strengthening risk assessment, prevention and reduction?

3. What lessons have been learned in implementing the life-cycle approach for enhancing chemical safety?

4. What actions are needed to promote effective partnerships with the business sector, industry and other stakeholders on the sound management of chemicals?

5. What new issues have emerged in relation to chemicals management and safety, and how can these be addressed?

Waste Management

1. What should be the key elements of a successful waste management strategy, and what actions could empower municipalities and local authorities to expand waste services?

2. How waste management strategies can be tailored to local conditions to promote a shift from managing waste to treating waste as a resource?

3. What challenges are faced by the waste management utilities in ensuring cost recovery and the long-term financial viability of waste management systems? What actions could lead to strengthening of their technical, financial and institutional capacities?

4. What best practices have emerged to promote better waste management services, especially those with the potential for scaling up?

5. How the needs of the informal waste management sector can be addressed and mainstreamed, with a view to improving their working conditions?

6. How effective partnerships can be forged for the expansion of waste management services?

Mining

1. What policies are needed to help ensure that mining contributes to long-term prosperity and greater economic diversification?

2. How can the contribution of artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) to sustainable livelihoods be maximized?

3. Are mining companies doing enough to improve their environmental and social performance or does being a good corporate citizens demand more?

4. How effective have various efforts to increase transparency in the minerals and mining sector, e.g. Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), been?

5. How can mining contribute to the Green Economy?

Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns

1. What methodologies and frameworks exist to help decision makers design and implement policies and sectoral priorities for resource efficiency and decoupling?

2. Since the piecemeal policies and measures are unlikely to be enough, what mix of policies is needed to ensure that proper signals are sent to producers and consumers to make sustainable choices?

3. What best practices have emerged to promote better management of materials throughout their life cycle? What is needed for scaling up of these practices?

4. If SCP is to be achieved, developing countries will need to be an integral part of resource- and energy-efficient technology development and deployment. What effective mechanisms for technology cooperation and sharing could be put in place to realize technological leapfrogging?

5. Education is and will continue to be important. What is the best approach to inspire citizens, in particular young people, to change unsustainable practices and adopt sustainable lifestyles?

6. Given all the existing communities of interest in many SCP areas, how can we strengthen links among partnerships, networks and communities to achieve greater synergies and facilitate broader knowledge sharing and get more for the buck?

Inter-linkages, Cross-cutting Issues and Means of Implementation

1. What are the key challenges and obstacles faced in dealing with the five thematic areas in an integrated manner?

2. Can a life-cycle perspective such as that provided by sustainable consumption and production help in addressing the interlinked challenges faced by the thematic areas reviewed by the current CSD cycle? In this regard, what successful lessons have been learned so far?

3. Highlight specific capacity building and technology transfer needs that are common to all thematic areas, and could help in scaling up of best practices in these areas?

4. How can predictable financial flows be secured and what actions countries need to take to put these resources to effective use in these thematic areas?

Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Partnerships

1. What is the added value of partnerships as an effective implementation mechanism and how can the UN extend its reach as a development partner?

2. What specific characteristics generally ensure the success of a multistakeholder partnership (MSP)?

3. What role for the target/client group in the partnership ensures meaningful outcome in the delivery of services?

4. Is there need for a more dynamic platform for the engagement partnerships within the CSD? Should CSD consider a more pro-active approach to fostering partnerships, so as to promote further advancement of sustainable development through these initiatives?

Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Implementation

1. What innovative means would you propose that could catalyze a new groundswell of activity in implementation of CSD decisions?

2. What can the UN system do, or do better, to sharpen the focus and expand the UN response to decisions related to sustainable development?

3. How do we marshal the political will to bring adequate means of implementation – such as financing, capacity building, technology transfer -- to bear on the real challenges to sustainable development?