

Intervention - Iceland

2nd Intersessional Meeting of UNSCD, 15-16 December 2011

Distinguished Co-Chairs,
Dear Colleagues,

[Discussion on the compilation document: comments and guidance for the zero draft outcome document.]

The outcome of Rio + 20 must be a renewed political commitment and a shared vision for advancing sustainable development to the future. Iceland puts special emphasis on four sectoral areas in this endeavour, that is the marine environment, renewable energy, sustainable land management and gender equality. Let me elaborate briefly on these issues.

Firstly, economic prosperity and food security is dependent on healthy oceans. Sustainable use of living marine resources contributes substantially to human food security, as well as dietary variety. The improved management of fish stocks and improved handling of catches, together with an increase in the supply of fish from aquaculture, will improve the food security of the communities in question and create a basis for increased export revenues.

Secondly, Iceland believes that the emphasize at the conference in Rio should be on the pivotal role that the world's vast renewable energy resources can play in the green economy, taking into account that only a limited share of the renewable resources have been utilized. (Sustainable utilization of renewable energy resources and equal access to renewable energy should be at the core of our deliberations.) Such promotion can i.a. be in the form of cooperation and

sharing of scientific knowledge, or by means of financing investments and research in renewable energy projects. Harnessing geothermal energy resources is an option with wide potentials for many developing countries especially in areas within Central and South America, East Africa and Southeast Asia.

Thirdly, land degradation and desertification rank among the world's greatest environmental challenges, greatly affecting climate, biodiversity, soil quality, food and water security, human well-being and peace on Earth. Yet, this great challenge is not receiving due attention globally, and loss of soil and decline in ecosystem services may be regarded as the silent crisis. Iceland proposes that the Rio +20 Summit delivers a strong message for a joint action by the international community on land management as a major aspect of advancing sustainable development.

Last but not least, mainstreaming gender perspectives into green economy policies and ensuring women's equal participation in decision making at all levels is a key to accelerating sustainable development and achieving a more inclusive outcome. Adequate resources have to be provided in order to ensure women's rights and full and equal participation in decision-making, implementation, equal benefits, financing and access to funding. Iceland would like to emphasize this and the need to increase efforts in capacity building for sustainable development and gender equity.

Thank you.