

Major Group Position Paper

NGOs Major Group's vision and priorities for the Sustainable Development Goals

March 2014

Introduction

This short position paper details the NGOs Major Group's vision and priorities - including themes, goals, targets and indicators – for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the wider post-2015 development agenda and the High Level Political Forum (HLPF). It forms part of the European Commission-funded multi-stakeholder engagement programme “*Sustainable Development 2015*” (*SD2015*). This paper provides an opportunity for the Major Group to communicate and consult on its position as a basis for ongoing stakeholder engagement, capacity building and advocacy.

The paper sits alongside similar position papers authored by the other Major Groups. A synthesis report of these position papers is provided by Stakeholder Forum in order to identify common priorities and important differences across the Major Groups' positions and compare them with the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals' (OWG) 'focus areas', published in February 2014. The review will be used as a basis for engagement between the Major Groups and the OWG, and to establish priority clusters for further coordination and advocacy work on those themes. The individual papers will be updated by the respective Major Groups in September 2014 following a series of global and regional capacity building, outreach and advocacy exercises under the *SD2015* programme.

The NGO Major Group is the largest and most diverse group of organisations, with even a broader spectrum of activities around the globe. Our strength is to bring them all together, with a rich exchange of knowledge, experiences and networks as result. This group are also embedded at all levels of society, it is well placed for the mobilisation, monitoring and implementation of the future set of goals.

Summary

NGOs urge for systemic change in our economic thinking and acting, as we see the Business-as-Usual economy as the main driver for unsustainability and impoverishment. We want to move away from the old paradigm of development as growth of GDP, towards creating well-being for all. Poverty eradication can only be achieved if we focus on taking away all kind of inequalities and emphasize redistribution of wealth. A rights based approach is crucial.

The SDGs need to be universal, worked on in partnership by all governments and stakeholders and based on the common but differentiated responsibilities. Monitoring and accountability mechanisms have to be a part of the framework, as well as guaranteed funding.

Our position:

We recognise that humanity is confronted with increasing resources constraints fuelled by **unsustainable production and consumption patterns**. To exceed social and environmental planetary boundaries is to compromise our own development and well-being, in the present and in the future, as is painfully illustrated by the multiple and interlinked social, environmental and economic crises. **We need a sustainable model of development and lifestyles.**

We see the **post-2015 Sustainable Development agenda** as a historical **opportunity** to establish a global framework of **sustainable development**, that can be tailored to national realities. As civil society we are advocating to take immediate and transformative action to keep the economy within **planetary boundaries**. To this end it is essential to guarantee a **fair sharing of ecological space** and **commons** among nations, with special consideration given to

poverty eradication through redistribution of wealth. At present there is ever increasing **inequality** between and within nations. **The (over)consumption** of a minority comes at the expenses of the majority and the degradation of our biophysical support systems. It is imperative that the **basic needs of all** are met and in order to do this, the SDGs need to be different from the MDGs: from a trade & aid-approach to a rights-based approach.

The concept of sustainable development must mean the transition from **fossil fuel- to renewable energy-**economies; a **change in consumption and production** patterns (including agricultural production) going beyond **efficiency into sufficiency** directives; conservation and restoration of the **natural support systems**; eradication of extreme **poverty**; reduction in the **inequality** gap, both in developing and developed countries; and new indicators for measuring development based on an integral concept of **well-being**. Our constituents stress the importance of the **universality character** for the post-2015 agenda, where the framework, targets and directives are established at global level, but the implementation of the overall targets is translated into all national and local levels with citizen inputs, based on the **common but differentiated responsibilities**.

To ensure access to sufficient energy and natural resources in the “Global South” for their endogenous development, fair **resource- and energy- use caps** should be put in place. These need to be worldwide and in line with the proposals of tough **contraction and convergence** scenarios proposed by the UN International Resource Panel.

We also underline the importance of **disaster risk reduction (DRR)** and resilience building, **health, water** access sanitation and hygiene (WASH), **biodiversity** protection, forest protection and restoration, **animal welfare**, oceans and seas, stopping ecocide and the protection of **indigenous peoples** and marginalised groups.

We call for special attention to **climate change**, in a way that reinforces and fills the gaps for the existing UNFCCC process. Climate change is a fundamental threat to development and the fight against poverty.

We stress that the post-2015 Sustainable Development agenda must be **built on existing declarations and conventions**, and that existing international agreements must not be overruled or weakened, but must bring renewed energy in their implementation and close existing gaps. The post-2015 agenda has to ensure **cooperation** among parties and **coherence** between agreements and issues.

Anchoring SDGs in a **human rights framework** stems from a vision where the primacy of rights, inherent in the rule of law, is a central value. In such a vision, the **principle of non-regression** is key to preventing backsliding on acquired environmental and social rights.

Commitment in the post-2015 Sustainable Development framework must be legally **binding** and **enough funding** must be made available.

Goals and Targets:

Goal Area 1:	Goals	Targets/Indicators
REDUCING INEQUALITY, SECURING SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ERADICATING POVERTY	Guarantee everyone a minimum level of well-being compatible with human dignity by ending extreme poverty and severe relative poverty by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0% of population living on less than \$2 (at purchasing power parity) per day. • Universal access to quality education, which includes cognitive and non-cognitive skills and critical thinking. • National social protection floors in all countries.
	Significantly reduce inequalities within and between nations by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate gender inequalities • Ensure that all people have equitable access to democratic participation in decision making, political and civil rights, information, justice • GDP per capita of the richest 10% of the population is not more than 5 times larger than the share going to the poorest 10% • Gini coefficient, Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI)
	Reduce Disaster Risks (DRR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise reducing disaster risk for the most vulnerable (including animals/livestock); greater action to reduce underlying vulnerabilities; reduce the impacts of recurrent small-scale disasters, support local actions (resilience building)

Goal Area 2:	Goals	Targets/Indicators
SECURING SUSTAINABLE, CLEAN ENERGY FOR ALL WITH CLIMATE PROTECTION	Secure Universal access to electricity from national/regional grids or more local supplies, with xx % of global electricity generated from clean, renewable resources by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of households with access to electricity • % of public buildings (e.g. schools, clinics) with electricity • % of electricity generated from renewable sources • Ratio of median annual cost of electricity per household to median national household income
	Secure Universal access to clean cooking fuels by 2030, with zero reliance on solid fuels combusted in ways which cause health hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of households with access to clean cooking fuel and introduction of solar cooking options • Ratio of median annual cost of clean cooking fuel per household to median household national income
	Ensure universal phase out of fossil fuel subsidies by 2020, reduce the total energy use of developed country by xx % and of developing countries xx % until 2030 and supply xx % of total energy use by renewable energy sources by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of subsidy in overall fossil fuel sales • % of total energy demand met by renewable sources • energy use in the developed countries decrease by xx % • energy use in the developing countries decrease by xx %
	Reduce, year on year, the global morbidity and mortality due to air pollution, halving the health burden by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure levels for indoor and outdoor air pollutants most dangerous to human health, parts per million • Estimates of life years lost due to indoor and outdoor air pollution
	Increase investments in clean energy and energy efficiency innovation globally by 2030, including in research and development, with emphasis on tackling energy poverty in developed and developing world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of GDP and % of ODA

Goal Area 3:	Goals	Targets/Indicators
ENSURING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY	End hunger, ensure every adult and child receives adequate nutrition, with a focus on local and regional food security Reduce obesity and under-consumption rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0% of children suffering from hunger, obesity • Average calorie intake of lowest decile/quintile by income • Ratio of average annual price of food staples per household to median household income
	Sustainable agriculture is standard – food sovereignty a right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2030 the establishment of a zero-emission agriculture that does not invest more energy than the areas used for agriculture generates. Based on renewable energy sources and local cycles. • The regulation of global factory farming and linking the number of livestock with the farming area's capacity in order to defend farm animal's welfare. • Food speculation is not allowed.
	Fair distribution of water- and land use in agriculture with a focus on local and regional food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2020 the prevention of land- and water grabbing; the binding implementation of the voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of tenure of Land, agreed by the Committee on World Food Security to safeguard land rights; the establishment of human-rights-based mechanisms to control investors in their home countries.
	Reduce food loss and food waste along the chain by xx % by 2030, from post-harvest losses to consumer waste. Zero landfilling of food waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of food wasted or lost: post-harvest and in storage, in manufacturing and processing, in distribution and retail and by final consumers.

Goal Area 4:	Goals	Targets/Indicators
ENSURING	Ensure Universal access to drinking water,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Right for access to safe drinking water and

CLEAN WATER, SANITATION + HYGIENE AND INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT	sustainable sanitation and hygiene (WASH)	sanitation inside or adjacent to everyone's home, school and workplace by 2030, with an end to open defecation
	Protection of all natural water resources and sustainable management of water by implementing Integrated Water Resources Management Plans (IWRM) in all nations, with active participation of citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring freshwater withdrawals in line with sustainably available water resources] Restore and maintain ecosystems to provide water-related services Increase water productivity for all uses and Fair share of water footprint per capita in all nations
	Reduce water use and water pollution through waste water treatment and re-use of water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 2030 recycle or treat all municipal, industrial and point source agricultural wastewater prior to discharge Reduce diffuse pollution to increase the proportion of receiving water bodies meeting water quality standards (nitrogen & phosphorous as a minimum)

Goal Area 5: ENSURING SUSTAINABLE NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT , PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS	Goals	Targets/Indicators
	Transform progressively the economies of all nations towards radically improved resource and material efficiencies and a fair share of the global material footprints (MF) per capita.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fair share of Material Footprint: the total weight of raw materials extracted/grown overseas minus domestically extracted/grown raw materials that go into exports A fair share of individual nations' global per capita footprints in terms of CO2 emissions, water, farmland, timber and raw materials Introduction of Raw Material Consumption Indicator
	The extraction Industry works along strong legal international frameworks where interests of local communities and the protection of the environment are fully respected and industry is accountable for its actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global ban on fossil fuel exploration Number of cases brought to a new International Environmental Criminal Court for companies. Fair distribution of the income generated by extraction industries.
	Reduce the annual rate at which natural and semi-natural habitats are being converted to farmland, urban land and other uses that compromise or diminish ecosystem services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction by xx % by 2030
	Reduce global deforestation to zero by 2020, increase reforestation and afforestation rates by xx % per annum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero loss of forests and % of forests under sustainable management Increase of protected areas No illegal logging
	Ensure xx % of global land and sea area for key ecosystem services. Areas rich in biodiversity enjoy full protection by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of terrestrial & marine areas protected by law, effective voluntary agreements with community or public ownership Measures of effectiveness of protection in securing biodiversity and ecosystems Establish National targets for land & marine protection.

Goal Area 6: ENSURING ACCES TO HEALTH CARE FOR ALL	Goals	Targets/Indicators
	Protect and promote health and wellbeing for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on poorest, most vulnerable and marginalized populations.
	Promote Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of Sexual and Reproductive health service centres per xxx habitants. Education programs and activities for preventing and treating HIV and AIDS.
	Prevention of 4 most common NCDs (cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease and diabetes).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education programs for healthy lifestyles, clean environment and healthy social conditions Reduction of non-therapeutic use of antibiotics in

		livestock production
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Goal Area 7: RESTORING OCEAN'S HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES	Goals	Targets/Indicators
	Global fisheries policies require implementation of sustainable fisheries that take the precautionary principle and ecosystem approaches into account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0% harmful fisheries subsidies • Stock management 20% below the “maximum sustainability yield”
	All marine genetic material is common good. Full protection of coastal and marine areas (CBD Convention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ban on patenting marine species and on geo-engineering experiments, moratorium on ore mining, CO2 sequestration and oil extraction in sea and arctic

Goal Area 8: ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (SCP)	Goals	Targets/Indicators
	Effective implementation of the 10 year Framework of Programmes, along with national action plans on SCP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of implementation of national SCP action plans • % Decrease global natural resource use • Amount of yearly created waste • % Reduction of water ,air, soil pollutions
	Adopting social and environmental accounting by all governments and major corporations with market capitalization over \$3bn by 2020, with natural capital accounts, regularly updated sustainability indicators and regulation and policy based on charging and make them accountable for environmental damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of nations to have adopted appropriate methodologies, conventions, regulation and policy • % of corporations with market capitalization over \$3bn integrating material sustainability issues throughout their report and accounts
	Government, local government and major public services in all nations to have sustainable procurement policies in place by 2020, taking full account of environmental damage and use of natural resources along supply chains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of national governments, local governments and major public services to have mandated sustainable procurement policies
	Green budgeting: governmental spending is only directed towards socially and environmentally neutral or - positive activities. (Phase out harmful subsidies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all economic and fiscal policies to be subject to environmental and social screening, and taxation shifted from use of labour to use of natural resources.

Goal Area 9: PRACTISING GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	Goals	Targets/Indicators
	Implementation of all existing UN-agreements/conventions. Review mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle of no-regression • On-going coherence checks between global, regional and national policies, including the adaptation of WTO agreements, bilateral trade agreements and IFFs policies
	Institutionalisation of Sustainable Development in national/regional policy strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All nations define (in consultation with civil society) and implement National Strategies of Sustainable Development (NSSD). All nations establish Advisory Council for Sustainable Development and coordination between the several ministries.
	Legal Frameworks: accountability for social and environmental damage and recognise them as crimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full compliance with existing legislation regarding dangerous industrial activities causing environmental damage and/or ecocide • Creation of national and international Courts for environmental crimes.
	Empowering citizens and governments by providing information, public participation and access to justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarantee the public’s right to information and data; increase transparency of public budgets and ensure open access to scientific information; improve skills and

	participation of citizen engagement; ensure public participation and access to justice of all persons, without exceptions
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Cross-cutting Issues:

The implementation of the SDGs demands on-going coherence between global, regional and national policies. Proposed issues need to be addressed in an integrated, systemic manner at all levels, and particularly on a community level. Policies of WTO, bilateral trade agreements and IFFs need to be compatible with SDG agreements, not vice versa. A coherence-checking mechanism with the authority to flag-up and challenge international agreements that undermine the SDGs is needed.

Proposed goals are highly interlinked and interdependent; therefore they should be also adequately addressed within each other. Good governance for Sustainable Development has to take care of overall coherence and cross cutting issues, such as mainstreaming gender, inequality, climate, .. into all goals.

Education for Sustainable Development needs to have a high priority in formal and non formal education, to engage citizens from very young into the change towards sustainable lifestyles.

No regression:

Existing international agreements must not be overruled or weakened by the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. Rather, frames and goals should build on existing United Nations declarations, agreements and conventions, and bring renewed energy in their implementation and close existing gaps.

The post2015 Sustainable Development Agenda has to be based on commitment, accountability and human rights, including other aspects like full implementation of the polluter-pays principle and precautionary approach, appropriate transparency mechanisms, regular reviews, collective pressure and the option of holding states and private sector responsible and accountable for non-compliance. In collaboration with the regional and local groups and communities, the Agenda must be broken down to the national level; Financing has to be binding, but managed fairly and justly between the states.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

For an international leadership and monitoring, existing specialised UN-bodies should have an important role in the relevant issues (WHO, FAO, UNEP, UNDP, ..). This will give a stronger mandate to those bodies, as well a coherent framework for their future work. The High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development should take a coordinating and facilitating role in the overall review and implementation of the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The SDGs are universal, but can be broken down in national targets and strategies on the national and local levels. Those targets and indicators have to be presented in national Sustainable Development Strategies (NSSD). All goals have to be covered in all nations, but depending on needs and possibilities, the strategies can be different.

To evaluate improvement the current situation should be diagnosed, with additional research where necessary to establish concrete needs and reference lines. Evaluation should allow the use of qualitative- along with quantitative- indicators. A dashboard of (existing social, environmental and economic) indicators should be used, to monitor the SDGs and the cross cutting issues on a yearly basis.

Sustainable Development is a long-term process; evaluation should not be based on short term results only.

Next Steps:

Non-governmental organizations, in cooperation with various stakeholders, have played a major role in pushing for sustainable development at the local, regional and international levels and will continue to do so. Particularly, NGOs take steps towards having people of different backgrounds think and act together. NGOs understand the need to bring the unheard voices, the knowledge and the experience of all people to all aspects of design, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of policies and programs. NGOs also function as watchdogs.

We plan to continue our contributions, for example through modelling methods of monitoring, work on legal proposals, targeted campaigns, producing sustainable living programmes or lobbying for systemic change.

NGOs allow expertise and opinions from many groups of society to be shared actively and constructively, an unique and valuable contribution. The NGOs also need to further ensure the implementation of SDGs and rights-centred approach as a practical tool for policy makers, which can guide governments in designing their public policies.

Conclusion

We envision a world in 2030 where we see 'no one left behind', where the principles of integrity, sustainability, equity and respect for the Human Rights and common good, all life and nature have been firmly and systemically established. Progress will depend upon the progressive development of effective global/national/local partnership processes where there is an end to unnecessary conflict and violence and our respective societies will be places we can call home.

To be most effective the post-2015 sustainable development framework must include a focus on marginalised communities and groups (rural communities, women, indigenous people) enabling their agency and access to justice and progressive good governance. It also needs to emphasize the equitable access to a fair share of natural resources while at the same time building climate resilient livelihoods through low carbon development pathways.

The SDGs and post-2015 agenda should allow simultaneously top-down and bottom-up approaches ensuring that valuable voices of members of society, especially people living in poverty, are heard and incorporated in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of SDGs.