



**Intervention on behalf of Denmark, Norway and Ireland on the occasion of the
Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals meeting on**

Sustainable Consumption and Production, including Chemicals and Waste

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Check against delivery

- In “**The Future we want**” Heads of States recognized that “fundamental changes in the way societies consume and produce are indispensable for achieving sustainable development” It is therefore key to us to look at how SCP could be integrated into the SDG’s framework – in the goals, targets and indicators.
- The current **pressure on the planet’s natural resources** and life support systems will increase with population and economic growth - The challenge is very clear to us all: - 1.2 billion people currently live in extreme poverty and deprivation without fulfillment of basic needs
- Current unsustainable consumption and production patterns have led to **escalating resource use** and environmental impacts, such as increasing water and air pollution, land and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity, overfishing, climate change, waste generation and the use and release of harmful chemical substances. This makes SCP a universal challenge for us all.
- Unsustainable consumption and production patterns are therefore **key barriers to poverty eradication and socio-economic development**. Current patterns of consumption and production present a common concern to human kind and in particular a threat to the worlds’ poorest communities as well as indigenous peoples. Those groups’ livelihood systems are directly reliant on their local environment and associated natural resources for survival. Resources, which are vulnerable to the impacts of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and their externalities. More sustainable consumption and production patterns are therefore crucial for **poverty eradication**.
- We must move to greener growth paths that **maximize natural resource efficiency, minimize waste, pollution and carbon emissions and build resilience**. This will mean changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production everywhere. Particular attention must be given to reducing the carbon foot print of consumption in developed countries. It will also mean that as we put prices on environmental externalities we also develop effective ways of paying for the production of global climate and environmental goods in developing countries.
- There is an **urgent need to manage resources more sustainably** and to strive for **decoupling** of economic growth from resource use. We need to develop an incentivizing policy framework and avoid environmental degradation. A shift to a sustainable and resource efficient economy can help drive innovation, contribute to the creation of green and sustainable employment and enable countries to grow within planetary boundaries.

- The way we measure and report on economic performance must change so that we can better measure sustainability. We need to look beyond simple measures of Gross Domestic Product and introduce **environmental capital accounting** and **capture the costs of environmental externalities**. Corporate transparency and accountability is important in this regard and the use of corporate sustainability reporting should thus be expanded.
- Companies increasingly play a role in providing solutions to the world's most pressing problems, including SCP, through their core business. **Corporate sustainability reporting** may enhance transparency and accountability, inform financial and consumer decisions and may lead to much wider application of sustainable business practices. Businesses should take responsibility for their impacts and governments need to identify incentives to make Corporate Social Responsibility valued and profitable
- Public expenditures provide huge opportunities to catalyse SCP. By utilizing the massive purchasing power of the public sector at all levels, **sustainable public procurement** can contribute to transforming production and consumption.
- **Unsound chemicals management** is a **global challenge**, closely interlinked with the quality of important key resources, living conditions and ecosystems. Harmful chemicals are spread through air, water, soil and animals, and product and waste streams, even to remote areas where there is no production. This is very visible in the Arctic.
- We need to keep in mind that the **health risks from chemicals are many**, including poisoning, cancer, effects to the nervous system and fertility. Since the risks are often related to work exposure, food or content in products, these are areas that need focus. We must reduce the hazardous nature of the products we produce, and improve the conditions they are produced under.
- According to the Global Chemicals Outlook report from UNEP, we are seeing a **change in production patterns**, with increased production and higher growth rates in a number of developing countries. We need to be aware that this can increase the challenges in those countries.
- We agree with UNDP's assessment that there is an established **link between chemical and waste and poverty and gender**, and that strong chemicals management will contribute towards the achievement of the MDGs, especially those related directly and indirectly to health and the environment.
- **Many countries lack the capacity** for sound management of chemicals and waste, resulting in their citizens, especially the poor, being exposed to toxic chemicals, for

example from factories or waste dumps or from polluted water, pesticides and mining activities.

- In relation to gender and relevant for all countries, is that **risks are influenced by biological factors**; women's exposure can cause miscarriages and birth defects, posing risks to the future generations, which we need to prevent.
- Regarding waste it is **critically important**, environmentally, economically and socially, that we **manage our resources in a sustainable manner** throughout their life cycle so as to further **reduce, reuse and recycle waste** with a view to managing the global waste as a resource and in an environmentally sound manner.

Mr. Co-chair

- **SCP is key to improving quality of life** without increasing environmental degradation, and without compromising the resource needs of future generations, by promoting efficient, responsible and clean production systems and sustainable lifestyles.
- The **adoption of the 10 YFP on SCP** at the Rio+20 Conference in 2012 in Rio is an important milestone and a significant step in the right direction and its rapid operationalization is very important
- SCP may **contribute to**:
 - provide a crosscutting, holistic, life-cycle based approach to the complex environmental, economic and social challenges faced by humankind
 - tackle the challenges at source, changing both production and consumption patterns
 - decouple the link between economic growth and environmental degradation and thus provide the necessary ecological space and access to basic needs crucial for poverty eradication and socio-economic development
 - enable countries to leapfrog to more resource-efficient and resilient economies and to grow within planetary boundaries
 - engage and incentivize businesses and civil society towards still more sustainable products
 - the creation of green and decent jobs
- Changing current consumption and production patterns requires an **enabling and incentivizing policy framework using a mix of different policy instruments** and addressing all key actors across value-chains paying particularly attention to the areas of food, housing and mobility.
- SCP can only be promoted by **addressing market failures and getting prices right** paying attention to vulnerable groups, educating consumers and young people in particular,

shifting investments, broadening the use of sustainable public procurement, promoting eco-innovation, sustainable products and non-financial company reporting, and other measures.

- **Poor people are the most vulnerable to the environmental impacts** of unsustainable production and consumption, however they are also those most at risk in the processes of economic change that will be needed to move towards SCP. Policies and actions for SCP must also **deliver opportunities for poor** people's livelihoods and for poverty reduction. This requires the effective involvement of ordinary people, including the poor, in determining strategies for SCP.

- Progress on SCP would contribute to **achieving key objectives** on issues such as food security, energy, water and health.

- Since **hazardous chemicals and wastes are closely** interlinked with the quality of important key resources, living conditions and ecosystems, their sound management will help ensure safer food, water quality, clean air, human health and biodiversity with healthy wildlife.

- In the past three decades achievements have been made in the chemicals and waste area; **the global strategy SAICM has been agreed and several conventions adopted**, most recently the Minamata Convention on mercury. But implementation has been insufficient, and the instruments inadequate because of the size and nature of the evolving challenges. This was acknowledged at the Rio +20 conference, where there was a call for further implementation and international cooperation. Following that call will be important for the necessary progress.

- An **overarching aim and focus of SCP** could be to decouple resource use and environmental degradation from economic growth including through taking a lifecycle approach.

- Finally, **we should acknowledge the crosscutting and interlinked nature of SCP**. Important elements to address in this respect include
 - Gradual decoupling of material use, carbon, waste generation, land use and water consumption from economic growth
 - Strengthening the application of green public procurement
 - Increasing recycling and reducing the generation of waste as well as reducing food waste
 - Publishing and using economic, social and environmental accounts in governments and major companies and capture the costs of environmental externalities
 - Sound management of chemicals and waste also taking into account food production and agriculture, including the use of pesticides, workers' protection,

as well as water, encompassing water quality, protection of water sources and wastewater.

More **sustainable consumption and production patterns will be crucial for poverty eradication**, human health and the environment, and therefore need to adequately integrated in the sustainable development goals and the post 2015 development agenda.

Thank you Mr. co-chair.