

Business and Industry Major Group **Governance Document**

At the 1992 Earth Summit, the first UN Conference on Environment and Development, it was recognized that sustainable development could not be achieved by governments alone. Thus, the United Nations established the nine Major Groups: women, indigenous peoples, NGOs, children and youth, workers and trade unions, local authorities, business and industry, scientific and technological community, and farmers.

At Rio+20, Member States committed to working more closely with Major Groups and other Stakeholders to encourage their active participation in processes that contribute to decision-making, planning and implementation of policies and programmes for sustainable development at all levels.

This commitment was further reinforced during the Rio+20 Conference in 2012 and embodied in several paragraphs of the outcome document “The Future we Want”.

46. We acknowledge that the implementation of sustainable development will depend on the active engagement of both the public and the private sectors. We recognize that the active participation of the private sector can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including through the important tool of public-private partnerships. We support national regulatory and policy frameworks that enable business and industry to advance sustainable development initiatives, taking into account the importance of corporate social responsibility. We call on the private sector to engage in responsible business practices, such as those promoted by the United Nations Global Compact.

47. We acknowledge the importance of corporate sustainability reporting and encourage companies, where appropriate, especially publicly listed and large companies, to consider integrating sustainability information into their reporting cycle. We encourage industry, interested governments and relevant stakeholders with the support of the United Nations system, as appropriate, to develop models for best practice and facilitate action for the integration of sustainability reporting, taking into account experiences from already existing frameworks and paying particular attention to the needs of developing countries, including for capacity building.

In **Resolution A/67/L.72**, which establishes the High Level Political Forum¹, Member States stressed the need for the Forum to promote transparency and implementation by further enhancing the consultative role and participation of the Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders deciding, that, while retaining the intergovernmental character of the forum, the representatives of the Major Groups and other Stakeholders will be allowed to:

1. Attend all official meetings of the forum;
2. Have access to all official information and documents;
3. Intervene in official meetings;
4. Submit documents and present written and oral contributions;
5. Make recommendations;

The input of the Major Groups to the intergovernmental processes on sustainable development is facilitated by UN DESA Division for Sustainable Development Major Groups program and coordinated through Organizing Partners (OPs). The Major Groups program is designed to be

¹ Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Resolution A/67/L.72. 2013

inclusive and transparent, to reach and facilitate the participation of a variety of constituents and involve them in intergovernmental processes to the extent possible.

The Business and Industry Major Group Organizing Partner role will include the following responsibilities:

1. Coordinate the business input to intergovernmental processes;
2. Continuous outreach to various networks to disseminate information to keep constituency informed of various developments and to help inform business positions to different themes and issues;
3. Organize side events, briefings and collaborate with other major groups and stakeholders to co-host activities;
4. Identify representatives to fill speaking and other roles as requested;

Selection of Business and Industry Organizing Partner

1. Announcement made to the business and industry constituency about open nominations.
2. Nominees must represent an organization or sector.
3. No single practitioner or company will be eligible for nomination. Companies are welcomed to join the activities through the organisations they are member of that would inform them of the various available opportunities to engage.
4. Priority will be given to organizations that have UN Consultative status with ECOSOC. Referring to the 1996 ECOSOC requirements, the following are basic criteria for NGOs to be eligible for UN ECOSOC accreditation, and as a consequence of the above, to be operative in the HLPF. The NGOs shall:
 - be of recognized standing within the particular field of its competence or of a representative character;
 - have a representative structure and possess appropriate mechanisms of accountability to its members;
 - have members that shall exercise effective control over its policies and actions through the exercise of voting rights or other appropriate democratic and transparent decision-making processes;
 - have mechanisms for appropriate accountability that needs to be institutionalized;
 - integrate the fact that the legitimacy for an NGO begins with the individual who uses it as an instrument of voluntary association; From ECOSOC resolution 1996/31 on NGOs.
5. OPs must represent a trade or sectoral association with a broad constituency either by sector or region.
6. No individual practitioner or company will be eligible to be nominated as organizing partner to ensure that OP brings the broader business voice.
7. Final selection will be reached by consensus.

Criteria for Organizing Partners

1. OPs must possess expert knowledge and understanding of the HLPF and its successor bodies, intergovernmental decision-making processes and the work of the UN more generally.
2. OPs have the responsibility to communicate to their constituencies UN rules and procedures and protocols
3. OPs must possess the organizational capacities (i.e. time and resources) to perform the required tasks and responsibilities associated with the position without monetary compensation.

4. OPs are obligated to report on governance practices every two years to UN-DESA including the particulars of outreach to regional networks, communications, accountability practices, representation and decision-making processes.
5. OPs must circulate statements and position papers to be presented enough time in advance for proper consultation with constituents.
6. OPs must be engaged with UN-DESA on a continual basis on planning activities, requiring the timely response to emails, outreach to constituencies, active leadership in the production of reports and written documents and regular attendance and contribution to monthly meetings with UN-DESA.
7. Coordinating with other OPs from other Major Groups and actively listening to other perspectives to arrive at compromise.

Code of Conduct

1. The Business and Industry Major Group will operate in a transparent fashion.
2. All organizing partners aim to work in a fair and reliable manner based on mutual trust. Partners are entitled to adopt their own independent view points.
3. Organizing partners must undertake to ensure that the business and industry constituency is fully informed about activities they plan to take independently which may affect the activities of the Business and Industry major group;
4. Partners shall ensure that there is no conflict of interest, or declare their interest, in relation to any matter discussed in the major groups framework.

Current list of OPs

1. **Andrew Wilson**
Permanent Representative to the United Nations
for the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)
2. **Nicholas Palombo**
International Agri-Food Network (IAFN)
nick@emergingag.com
3. **John Drexhage**
Consultant
International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM)