

18th Session of the UN Commission of Sustainable Development

Thematic Discussion on Sustainable Consumption and Production

**Statement delivered by Mrs Djaheezah Subratty (Ministry of Environment
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New York, 7 May 2010

Distinguished Chair, Thank you.

I wish to thank the panelists of yesterday and today for their very thought-provoking presentations and their enthusiasm.

Mauritius wishes to associate itself with the statements made on behalf of the G77&China and on behalf of AOSIS.

Mr Chair,

Over the past years, Mauritius has been implementing SCP practices in a number of fields, using economic instruments such as through progressive and differential tariffs in the electricity and water sector, and through public awareness campaigns. The primary and secondary school curricula now include modules on waste avoidance, and focus on empowering children and youth in adopting more sustainable lifestyles. However, activities and initiatives were scattered and were not viewed as being sufficiently integrated and effective and needed to be catalysed and upscaled, especially within the new policy of ‘Maurice Ile Durable’ – ‘Mauritius Sustainable Island’, which we are pursuing since 2007. In this spirit, our new 2007 National Environment Policy highlighted SCP as a priority area of intervention which required multistakeholder commitment and action.

Mr Chair,

In 2008, with assistance of UNEP, Mauritius was privileged to be one of the pilot countries in Africa to have developed a National Programme on SCP, after wide national multistakeholder dialogue. During that process, Mauritius tested the methodological approach in the development of SCP programmes, entitled ‘Planning for Change’.

Our SCP programme is now under implementation by various agencies. Activities have been completed or are under way in fields such as youth empowerment, sustainable public

procurement, rainwater harvesting and extended producer responsibility, in many instances with assistance from UNEP. Consumer education for sustainable choices range from social consumption, e.g. financial services, to eco-choices related to packaging.

Mr Chair,

Although we believe that Governments need to ‘lead by example’, in Mauritius, the private sector has been fully involved in the process and are continuously encouraged to come up with innovative SCP approaches that would meet their needs. The significant potential productivity and competitiveness gains represent the best advocate for SCP. However, we realize that specific support is required for the small, medium and micro enterprise sector to embark in SCP practices, as small size and market forces, especially in a SIDS, represent serious barriers to SCP.

Mr Chair,

As a net-importing country, we have been overwhelmed with imported goods, services and lifestyles, and are struggling with unsustainable consumerism. However, implementing SCP only at local and national levels, without a global shift towards more sustainable patterns of production and consumption, runs the risk of making our export-oriented economy more vulnerable to exogenous shocks.

Traditional island living was more sustainable and needs to be revalorized. However, in 2010, access to appropriate infrastructure (such as cycling lanes, low-carbon transport options, sustainable resource utilization, cleaner technology), to appropriate information and to adequate financing in a timely manner, is essential to ensure this transition to more sustainable lifestyles.

Mr Chair,

Sustainable development is not possible without SCP.

Thank you.