

Australian Statement on Inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues

This CSD cycle began last year with a review of the steps that countries have taken to implement the undertakings we agreed to in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals.

We have participated in several sessions reviewing progress, new initiatives and lessons learned in energy for sustainable development – we agree with the Chair that the time has now arrived for action.

Mr Chairman

We know that the text we negotiate in May will be a long list of points that attempt to cover succinctly the full range of related issues that come under the banner of sustainable development. All these issues will be important but after listening closely to the discussions of the last week, one cross-cutting issue emerges above all others. In our region it is difficult to see any more compelling case than that put forward by the Pacific Island Countries. Their calls, echoed by other SIDS members, require a clear, unambiguous and practical response from CSD 15.

A clear priority for the CSD should be working towards an outcome that focuses on practical initiatives to address the needs of SIDS and least developed countries, including our neighbours in the Pacific. Australia is committed in the lead up to CSD to work in partnership with our Pacific Island neighbours to identify clear strategies to facilitate access to GEF funding for SIDS and least developed countries to help them address their environmental challenges.

In particular the cross-cutting issues of climate change adaptation, energy access and poverty reduction, as they emerge in small island economies, require a more integrated approach and simplified procedures to funding sources and streamlining of reporting. We need to commit at CSD to fixing the problems of programme design and delivery that create so many problems for small agencies in SIDS states.

On a different point Mr Chairman. As demonstrated by the case studies Australia has contributed to the matrix and our participation in the CSD review years, we are willing to put our experiences and practices on the table. However, we need to avoid cumbersome, time-consuming and ongoing policy review mechanisms. Instead we want to ensure that these exchanges are free-flowing and constructive, and occur on a voluntary

basis, mindful of the already heavy demands of the multilateral environment agenda. Mr Chairman, action rather than review is called for.