



SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW GROUP (SIRG)

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PRESENTATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
SIRG MEETING,
WASHINGTON DC, 14 JANUARY, 2009**

UNEP Mandate



Provide general policy **guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes** within the United Nations system. Keep under review the world environmental situation in order to ensure that emerging environmental problems of wide international significance receive appropriate and adequate consideration by governments – **Resolution 2297 (XXVII)**

UNEP is to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment – **Resolution S/19-2, 28 June 1997**

Reaffirms the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the principal body within the United Nations system in the field of environment, which should take into account, within its mandate, the sustainable development needs of developing countries – **Resolution 63/220, 19 Dec 2008**

Natural resources foundation of wealth



Humankind depends on the environment, which is critical for both development and human well-being

Natural resources – compared to financial, material and human resources – are the foundation for much of the wealth of countries

Environmental change can affect people's security, health, social relations and material needs

Environmental state-and-trends



Evidence of unprecedented environmental change at global and regional levels:

- the Earth's surface is warming
- unsustainable land use and climate change are driving land degradation
- per capita availability of freshwater is declining globally
- contaminated water remains the greatest single environmental cause of human sickness and death
- aquatic ecosystems continue to be heavily exploited, putting at risk sustainability of food supplies and biodiversity
- great majority of well-studied species are declining in distribution, abundance or both

Current environmental degradation represents a serious challenge for human well-being and sustainable development

Environment for development



Ecosystem management – Facilitate a cross-sectoral, integrated approach to ecosystem management to reverse the decline in ecosystem services and improve ecosystem resilience with respect to such external impacts as habitat degradation, invasive species, climate change, pollution and overexploitation.

Environmental governance – Ensure that environmental governance at the country, regional and global levels is strengthened to address agreed environmental priorities.

Climate change – emphasizes the synergies between development and climate policies as well as the co-benefits of climate change actions and their contribution to environmental sustainability.

Environment for development



Disasters and conflicts – build national capacities to minimize threats to human well-being from the environmental causes and consequences of existing and potential natural and human-made disasters.

Harmful substances and hazardous waste – Objective is to minimize the impact of harmful substances and hazardous waste on the environment and people.

Resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production – Promote policy to reduce the impact of economic growth and development on resource depletion and environmental degradation. Advise on policies and actions to increase resource efficiency and reduce pollution based on a product life cycle approach.

Interlinkages – promoting sustainable development



Current global food, energy and financial crises as well as climate change would adversely impact sustainable development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs

Strengthening **international environmental governance**

Identifying **interlinkages** offers opportunities for more effective responses at national, regional and global levels

Strengthening environmental knowledge, education and awareness by making the best-available scientific research and data

The challenges and opportunities of the early 21st century require a Global Green New Deal and strong and creative leadership at national and international levels

A Global Green New Deal



Stimulus packages could be re-focused and redirected to catalyze and unleash markets towards a more resource efficient, low carbon, less polluting one:

- One that generates new and green jobs in developing and developed economies alike and encourages investments into clean and renewable energies and a recycling economy.
- Investments in the planet's natural capital and nature-based assets such as forest ecosystems with multiple benefits, including carbon storage and improvements in water supplies, biodiversity and soils benefit rural and urban dwellers alike at the level of communities, countries, regions and the globe.

Thank you