

Comments on the text for “Institutional framework for Sustainable Development”

The following paper has been produced by Stakeholder Forum for Our Common Future, regarding the text for “Institutional framework for Sustainable Development”, as an input to the Fourth Preparatory Committee meeting for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

General Comments

This paper offers a brief breakdown of the governance text on "Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development". The key findings of our analysis that should be particularly noted are:

1. Principles

There is no or minimal reference in the text to the principles of good governance that should underlie governance frameworks at all levels, particularly important is the lack of reference to the principles of subsidiarity and participation. In addition good governance/political frameworks should be seen as a fourth pillar of Sustainable development.

2. Scale

There is insufficient language on coordinating between different scales of spheres of governance. The text is still too top-down in its approach to governance with minimal reference to local and community-based governance. It would benefit significantly from adopting a more two-way flow of decision-making, information, learning and exchange of experience, particularly for the national, regional and global levels to better incorporate local level experiences of governance and implementation.

3. Targets and timetables

There are no (other than a brief mention of the Millennium Development Goals and the NSSD 2005 target) references to actual target dates to help schedule institutional developments and review.

4. Strategies and action plans

There is reference to NSSDs but little reference to the need for support for local and sub-national strategies. There is no reference to the need to establish a programme of work for governance reform/enhancement at different levels.

5. Finance

There is some mention of financial mechanisms, particularly GEF, but there are no specific financial commitments in the text, targeted toward supporting the process of enhancing governance frameworks. There is no mention of establishing new financial mechanisms to support capacity building, monitoring, implementation of good governance.

6. Education and awareness raising

There is little or no reference to the role of education or awareness raising in improving governance frameworks for sustainable development, both of which are essential to assist decision-making processes for governments, stakeholders, and civil society as a whole.

7. Stakeholder involvement / participation

There is no reference to ensuring balanced participative processes or the provision of support (technical, financial etc) for stakeholder participation, particularly those from developing countries. There is inconsistent reference to the need for multi-stakeholder processes. There is also no recognition of the need for flexibility regarding which stakeholders or major groups should be involved in a participative process. The stakeholder groups identified are dependent on the issues being addressed, therefore a more issue-specific (i.e. not fixed groups) approach should be encouraged. This would imply a wider definition of major groups than currently exists in the CSD. There is no reference to potential importance of allowing participation right from the outset of any one process. Additionally there is no reference to the role of parliamentarians in enabling greater peer review of national governments.

8. Environment/social/economic pillars

There are some brief references to these areas regarding better integration of these areas but a lack of consideration of their relationship to cultural or political aspects. There is poor consistency in how these areas are referenced addressed, which is problematic because it may lead to a mis-interpretation of the governance commitments, causing a biased focus on one pillar of sustainable development, whilst neglecting the others.

9. Institutional mechanisms

Some of the positive references for institutional reform in the PC3 text have been lost, in particular the proposal for the regional commissions changing to Sustainable Development Commissions has been removed. There is no or little discussion about how to improve capacity, compliance and development of regulatory frameworks for SD Governance. Although discussed in the main body of the "Chair's text for negotiation" there is no reference here to the anticorruption convention, the international criminal court and other tools to assist good governance.

10. Coordination

References in the text to coordination within and across institutions are not strong. In addition there is no reference to the need to integrate good governance/political frameworks at different levels.

11. Information for decision-making/Monitoring and analysis:

The reference to the role of stakeholders in review at the national and local levels is good but it does not refer to other levels. A new proposal to introduce a World Commission on Globalisation and Sustainable Development to assess, analyse, and make policy recommendations about the relationships between these areas.

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Comments on Specific Sections

This section bullet-points some of the key gaps in the current text and identifies some factors which could be included in each section, according to the following elements:

- Principles
- Scale
- Targets and timeframes
- Strategies and action plans
- Targets
- Finance
- Technology transfer, capacity building
- Education and awareness raising
- Stakeholder involvement
- Environment
- Society/Culture
- Economics
- Institutional mechanisms
- Co-ordination
- Information for decision making: Monitoring, analysis, reporting, indicators

Introduction (ref. 1 – 2)

- Principles: No reference to Human Rights, Rio principles
- Scale: No reference to sub-national regions
- Targets and timeframes: No reference
- Strategies and action plans: No reference to building upon outcomes of Johannesburg WSSD (para 2.).
- Finance: No reference
- Technology transfer, capacity building: No reference to sub-national regions, or Countries with economies in transition
- Education and awareness raising: No reference
- Stakeholder involvement: No reference to providing support (financial, technical, information) for stakeholder involvement, particularly marginalized groups
- Society/Culture: No cultural reference
- Institutional mechanisms: Need to include a reference to “cultural and political frameworks” (para 2.g). Additional references should be made to the “development of Strategies for Sustainable Development and establishment of facilitation bodies at all levels”, (not just at the national level).
- Co-ordination: No reference to IFIs, WTO and other non-UN bodies at global, regional and sub-regional levels
- Information for decision-making: No reference to review/analysis of work or indicators

International level (ref. 3 – 16)

International Community (ref. 3)

- Principles: No reference to Human Rights, Rio principles
- Scale: No reference to relationship of international community to regional or local scales
- Targets and timeframes: No reference
- Finance: No reference to relationship of GEF with other financial mechanisms or institutions bodies. No reference to establishment of National/Regional Environmental Funds. No reference to encourag-

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ing other sources of finance, including establishing new financial mechanisms. No reference to specific financial estimates to support programme(s) on SD Governance.

- Technology transfer, capacity building: No reference to technology transfer
- Education and awareness raising: No reference to implication of linkages to levels other than the national level i.e. local, sub-national, regional, global (3.d))
- Stakeholder involvement: No reference to stakeholder engagement with IMF, regional development banks
- Environment: No reference to the need for assessed annual financial contributions to UNEP. No reference to national adoption, regional, sub-regional of Principle 10
- Society/Culture: No reference to cultural impacts
- Economics: Need reference to adoption of a more flexible approach in developing macroeconomic policies "according to developing country need" and taking into account sustainable development priorities of host/recipient countries
- Institutional mechanisms: No reference to establishing a World Commission on Globalisation and SD to monitor linkages and cross over, and make policy recommendation to enhance globalisation's positive contribution to Sustainable Development
- Information for decision making: No reference

Role of General Assembly (ref. 4-5)

- Principles: No reference to Human Rights, Rio principles
- Scale: No reference of linkages between GA and other levels
- Targets and timeframes: No dates listed other than reference to Millennium Development Goals
- Strategies and action plans: No reference
- Finance: No reference
- Technology transfer, capacity building: No reference
- Education and awareness raising: No reference
- Stakeholder involvement: No reference
- Environment: No reference
- Society/Culture: No reference to cultural aspects
- Economics: No reference
- Co-ordination: No reference. No reference to other international processes over the last 10 years e.g. the + 5 and + 10 Summits
- Information for decision making: No reference

Role of ECOSOC (ref. 6)

- Principles: No reference to principles other than Sustainable Development
- Scale: No reference of linkages between Global scale and other levels
- Targets and timeframes: No indication of when the three year high level coordination segment will begin (6.b))
- Strategies and action plans: No reference
- Finance: No reference
- Technology transfer, capacity building: No reference
- Education and awareness raising: No reference
- Stakeholder involvement: No reference
- Environment: No reference
- Society/Culture: No reference
- Economics: No reference
- Co-ordination: No reference to interagency coordination, i.e. of task managers from Agenda 21 and WSSD outcomes and whether the Interagency Coordination Committee will continue or not.
- Information for decision making: No reference to monitoring of ECOSOC agreements and Commissions and UN A21 task manager institutions

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Role and Function of Commission on Sustainable Development (ref. 7 –11)

- Principles: No reference
- Scale: No reference of linkages between CSD and sub-regional, sub-national and local levels
- Targets and timeframe: No reference
- Strategies and action plans: No reference
- Finance: No reference
- Technology transfer, capacity building: No reference to enhancing and increasing these areas
- Education and awareness raising: No reference
- Stakeholder involvement: No reference to other stakeholder groups, the need for particular support (financial, information, training) of marginalised interest groups to participate and bring their experience e.g. women, indigenous communities, community based organisations. No reference to the introduction of new stakeholder groups, to be included according to the issues being addressed e.g. education community, faith community, media etc). No reference to cooperation of CSD with parliamentarians.
- Environment: No reference to maintaining and enhancing integrity. No reference to restoration of damaged systems.
- Society/Culture: No reference to redressing imbalances, cultural aspects, supporting a sustainable livelihoods approach
- Economics: No reference to redressing the balance of decision-making to better reflect social and environmental dimensions in decision-making
- Institutional mechanisms: No reference to how frequently CSD should meet
- Co-ordination: No reference to cultural and governance/politics elements
- Information for decision-making: No reference to indicators

Role of International Institutions (ref. 12-16)

- Principles: No reference to principles other than “non-discrimination”
- Targets and timeframes: No reference
- Strategies and action plans: No reference
- Finance: No reference to permanent GEF financing for other MEAs e.g. Migratory and straddling fish stocks agreements
- Technology transfer, capacity building: No reference
- Education and awareness raising: No reference
- Stakeholder involvement: Avoid segregation of private sector from civil society reference or at least define all nine major groups. No reference to how participation of major groups should be enhanced e.g. support for marginalised groups through establishing a trust fund, informational resources etc. No reference to cooperation of UN with parliamentarians.
- Institutional mechanisms: No reference as to how SD will be incorporated within institutions e.g. environmental auditing/accounting, Sustainability Impact Assessments, EMAS
- Co-ordination: No reference to other processes over the last 10 years i.e. +5 and +10 Summits. No reference to cultural and political/governance dimensions of SD
- Information for decision-making: No reference to indicators

Regional level (ref. 17 – 21)

- Principles: No reference
- Scale: No reference to of regional and sub-regional relationship to global level and subnational levels
- Targets and timeframes: No reference
- Finance: No reference to estimate the level of financial assistance needed
- Technology transfer, capacity building: No reference to capacity building

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- Education and awareness raising: No reference
- Stakeholder involvement: No reference to supporting more marginalised groups to take part in such processes
- Institutional mechanisms: No reference to changing regional commission to Commission on SD. No reference to integrating cultural and political / governance aspects of SD in regional Commissions
- Information for decision-making: No reference to review of regional and subregional strategies and work programmes. No reference to indicators

National level (ref. 22 – 30)

- Principles: No reference to promotion of Sustainable Development at sub-national and local levels
- Scale: No reference to sub-national regional level
- Strategies and action plans: No reference to supporting sub-national and local SSDs. No reference to incorporating cultural, political/governance policies in SSDs
- Finance: No reference
- Education and awareness raising: No reference
- Stakeholder involvement: No reference to participation at sub-national and local level communities, particularly in the further support of LA 21. No reference to the involvement of stakeholders, particularly local communities, in the formulation of criteria, implementation, review and follow-up of WSSD
- Environment: No reference to incorporate environmental polices in sub-national strategies for SD
- Society/Culture: No reference to incorporate social/cultural polices in sub-national strategies for SD. No reference to supporting a sustainable livelihoods approach
- Economics: No reference to incorporation of environment polices in sub-national strategies for SD
- Institutional mechanisms: No reference to supporting sub-national regional or local strategies.
- Co-ordination: No reference to sub-national or regional strategies. No reference to inter-departments coordination at the national-local levels of government, particularly to help ensure effective process of implementation of NSSDs, including how different departments involve stakeholder groups. No discussion of the relationship between national and subnational/local levels of government.
- Information for decision making: No reference to assessment of national and sub-national governance and participatory frameworks

Participation of Major groups (ref. 31-33)

- Targets and timeframes: No reference
- Strategies and action plans: No reference
- Finance: No reference to ensuring financial support for participation, particularly marginalised stakeholders in developing countries and economies in transition, including women, youth, indigenous peoples etc.
- Technology transfer, capacity building: No reference
- Education and awareness raising: No reference
- Stakeholder involvement: No reference to encouraging participation at different stages of decision making from strategy formulation, policy development, programme and project implementation, monitoring and review
- Economics: No reference
- Institutional mechanisms: No reference to introducing new stakeholder groups, to be included according to the issues being addressed e.g. education community, faith community, media etc. No reference to national and local implementation of Principle 10
- Co-ordination: No reference to role of other institutions to encourage and utilise participative processes
- Information for decision-making: No reference

We would finally recommend the insertion of a new section on sub-national and local/community governance.

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This paper was produced as part of the *Towards Earth Summit 2002* project.
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