



**Belgian Federal Council for Sustainable Development (FRDO-CFDD)**

**Advice for the**

**World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg**

- **Own initiative**
- **Prepared by the Council's working groups**
- **Approved by the General Assembly on 16 April 2002** (see Annex 2)

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## 1. Context and summary

- [1] In 1992 the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - also known as the Earth Summit - took place in Rio de Janeiro. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) which will be held in Johannesburg (South Africa) this summer (from 26 August to 4 September) – 10 years after the Summit in Rio - has two objectives: Firstly, to assess the current state of the Agenda 21 Action Plan adopted in Rio, and secondly, to further boost efforts to meet the commitments made in Rio regarding sustainable development.
- [2] Preparations for the World Summit in Johannesburg are taking the form of broad regional discussions. In fact, the Ministerial Declaration of 25 September 2001 was a product of such meetings in the EEC-UN region (Europe plus the United States and Canada). The main general topics covered will be combating poverty and developing models of sustainable production and consumption. The crucial horizontal theme will be how to finance sustainable development. The UN Commission on Sustainable development (CSD) was designated the Preparatory Committee (or Prepcom) for the WSSD. With the World Summit fast approaching, the Committee scheduled four preparatory meetings: Prepcom I (30 April to 2 May 2001), Prepcom II (28 January to 8 February 2002), Prepcom III (25 March to 5 April 2002), Prepcom IV (24 May to 7 June 2002). Care was taken to ensure that the various stakeholders could play as active a role as possible in these Prepcoms. The World Summit will set its sights on achieving two types of outcome: On the one hand, a policy document linked to a global action plan, and on the other, so-called 'type 2' outcomes, entailing the creation of partnerships and commitments between stakeholders with a view to implementing the Agenda 21 Action Plan.
- [3] To prepare for the World Summit the FRDO-CFDD organised a conference in June 2001 on the theme "Rio+10 in Belgium: the gap between commitments and policy". The main focus was on analysing the main obstacles to sustainable development in Belgium and on drawing up policy proposals. This symposium was the subject of a documented report. The Council used these suggestions when drawing up the present advice. The Council is convinced that there is still a huge divide between commitments and the policy and believes it is essential that this trend be broken.
- [4] In the present advice, the Council wishes to present the Belgian government 10 priorities on policy geared towards sustainable development which it is hoped will indeed help to break the trend. In making its contribution by implementing the Rio agreements, the government will be in a much stronger position in the international forum to call for major efforts to be made by the European Union and the United Nations concerning international sustainable development policy.
- [5] First and foremost, the Council defends the idea of using sustainable development as a political framework for all government policy and the notion of further boosting social participation in this policy. Secondly, the Council's main focus in the present advice is on sustainable production and consumption. The Council ascertains that whilst various initiatives have been taken at federal, regional and community level, there is no national strategy for promoting sustainable production and consumption, as also pointed out in Belgium's *Country Report* for the World Summit in Johannesburg. Nonetheless, here the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" (principle 7 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, June 1992) applies to industrialised countries in particular. Finally, the Council sets out a number of proposals relating to EU policy and to the sound management of public affairs at international level. The Council is calling upon Belgium's political leaders to include these proposals in the positions they adopt in Johannesburg.
- [6] As a societal advisory Council, the FRDO-CFDD attaches particular importance to encouraging the involvement of various stakeholders in the policymaking process. Consequently, on 24 April 2002 the Council organised a symposium on "Sustainable production and consumption: a shared responsibility" where it aimed to suggest, among



other things, ways in which the authorities could encourage collaboration and partnerships between stakeholders with a view to facilitating sustainable production and consumption.

[7] Summary

The Council's advice can be summed up in 10 priorities:

*The federal policy framework for sustainable development*

1. Integrating the three pillars of sustainable development
2. Using sustainable development as a political framework for the entire government and for public authorities
3. Bolstering the policy of sustainable development through social participation and by consolidating the partnerships between stakeholders

*Federal policy on sustainable production and consumption*

4. The vital need to break current trends in mobility and energy policy
5. Taking account of social, economic and ecological factors in an Integrated Product Policy
6. Promoting sustainable development by means of adequate information, communication and publicity
7. Securing financing for sustainable development and sustainable production in the Third World

*International sustainable development policy*

8. Setting out clearly defined objectives which can be attained and monitored in the Commission Communication concerning sustainable development (Seville Summit), and establishing a link with the internal component of the EU's policy
9. Measuring is knowing: acknowledging the important role that indicators play in integrating sustainable development into European policy
10. Guaranteeing good international governance for sustainable development

*Technical information sheets*

The Council draws up additional or more detailed proposals or remarks on a number of priorities (see the technical information sheets in annex).

## **2. The Council's 10 priorities for the Belgian government**

### **2.1. Priority 1: Integrating the three pillars of sustainable development**

- [8] The Council appreciates the efforts made by the various governments to make sustainable development a policy priority. However, the Council believes closer attention must be paid to a balanced and integrated approach to the three pillars of sustainable development, i.e. the environmental, social and economic.

The members of the Council feel that the environmental and social pillars should be strengthened, but without undermining sustainable economic development. According to the Council an effort should be made to ensure that social and environmental costs are passed on in prices.

- [9] The idea behind sustainable development is to make sure that our planet remains liveable for both us and future generations. Consequently, particular attention needs to be paid to the poorest people, since they are the ones most badly affected by our society's failure to opt unswervingly for sustainability.



- [10] The Council believes that the Belgian authorities have two main responsibilities. Firstly, they should conduct and promote a sustainable policy within Belgium itself. Secondly, they should make the promotion of sustainable development the common theme underlying their speeches and comments in multilateral forums.

## **2.2. Priority 2: Using sustainable development as a political framework for the entire government and for public authorities**

- [11] Economic, social and ecological development are still too often considered separate processes. This is not in line with the integrated approach acknowledged by the approval of the law of 5 May 1997 concerning the coordination of the federal government's sustainable development policy. As was reiterated in the European Summit in Cardiff in 1998, it is essential that environmental aspects be taken into account in the other areas of the policy. Not only environmental policy should be based on the principles of sustainable development. Consequently, the Council feels that the broad theme of sustainable development and Agenda 21 in particular should be regarded by all members of the government as a point worthy of general and constant consideration in a policy context. Specifically, the FRDO-CFDD suggests that the 'core cabinet' lend its full consideration to the light of the principles of sustainable development when taking decisions and that the impact of policy decisions on society, the environment and the economy is properly analysed and taken into account in a consistent, balanced and coordinated manner.
- [12] As well as the need for horizontal integration, the Council also stresses the importance of vertical integration, especially bearing in mind the complicated distribution of powers in Belgium. To achieve an effective sustainable development policy greater coordination between the different political levels in our country is required. The government should encourage this coordination and dialogue both at international level and within the communities, regions and local authorities. The aim in future should be to produce a 'national' (i.e. federal + regional + community) sustainable development plan which is drawn up and implemented in unison by the respective Belgian governments at federal, regional and Community level (see the FRDO-CFDD advice on the preliminary draft of the Federal Plan on Sustainable Development, April 2000). The Council advocates the setting up of an Inter-Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Development in addition to administrative coordinating structures and the Inter-ministerial Conference for the Environment. This could be done on the basis of the experience we gained recently at the 'extended' Inter-ministerial Conference for the Environment.
- [13] The Council is delighted that Belgium is one of the first European countries to have set about developing an institutional framework at federal level to pursue the Rio agreements. Sustainable development is one of the four priorities of the federal government's agreement. However, there is still a major difference between proposing policies and actually implementing them. What is more, Belgium has no systematic, consistent sustainable development policy. Therefore, the Council calls for greater importance to be given to implementing the first Federal Plan on Sustainable Development. This will require an increase in staff and resources for the administrations involved. Before a second Federal Plan on Sustainable Development is drawn up, the first plan must be thoroughly assessed; more specifically, the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development within the policy must be evaluated along with the social, economic and environmental impact of the favoured measures and the degree to which the public and stakeholders were consulted. This full evaluation must also be communicated to the general public before it is consulted any further. Furthermore, the evaluation could be incorporated into the next federal report on sustainable development, which will be published at the beginning of 2003. The next Federal Plan on Sustainable Development should be structured differently and needs to display greater consistency and set a number of clear priorities. Moreover, the Council is putting forward a number of additional proposals for the more efficient use of the instruments provided for in the law of 5 May 1997 (see technical information sheets [2.1], [2.2] and [2.3]).



- [14] The Council would like the Parliament to pay more attention to following up the Federal Plan on Sustainable Development and to its results. Whilst this is not part of the federal government's duties, the Council feels it would be useful to create a parliament committee on sustainable development.

### **2.3. Priority 3: Bolstering the policy of sustainable development through social participation and by consolidating the partnerships between stakeholders**

- [15] The Council feels that social participation must also be an important objective when conducting a policy centred on sustainable development. The involvement of representative organisations in the policy should mean increased transparency and a broader basis for the measures to be taken. Furthermore, this involvement should also boost the knowledge, experience and abilities of various groups in society, thereby ensuring a better policy. This approach is, in fact, a key element of *good governance*. The Council appreciates that Belgium was one of the first industrialised countries to set up a standing advisory council on sustainable development. The number of requests for advices made to the FRDO-CFDD has greatly increased under the present government. As provided for by the law, the government has taken to informing the Council of any steps taken pursuant to the advices approved by the Council. The Council appreciates this. Strikingly, it is mainly the minister responsible for consumer interests, health and environment, the state secretary for energy and sustainable development, and the state secretary for development cooperation who seek its advice, whereas sustainable development should be a political framework used by all leading politicians.

- [16] However, the Council is calling for greater institutional integration, participation and consultation on the issue of sustainable development. This should be possible at all stages of the political process (i.e. fixing the agenda and then developing, implementing and assessing the resulting policy). However, the ultimate responsibility must lie with the politicians. To this end, information needs to be more widely disseminated and more resources have to be spent on capacity building.

Participation can also be encouraged by underpinning the social foundations of sustainable development. However, the Council believes the present methods of social consultation and participation for sustainable development can be improved, intensified and expanded, and it is therefore planning to organise a symposium on this subject in autumn 2002.

- [17] One of the four parts of the Agenda 21 Action Plan is entirely devoted to the role of stakeholder groups. Consequently, bottom-up actions supported by stakeholders deserve the attention and support of the government. The same applies to any projects and programmes promoting sustainable development in which stakeholders such as companies, trade unions and NGOs are involved, regardless of whether the authorities involved are at the federal, regional or local level.

### **2.4. Priority 4: The vital need to break current trends in mobility and energy policy**

- [18] The FRDO-CFDD feels that the climate changes already taking place and those still to come necessitate urgent decisions designed to achieve short, medium and long-term objectives with respect to energy and mobility. Breaking the current non-sustainable trends in energy and mobility is crucial for the planet's future, but it still has not happened, despite the existence of international commitments and national plans. The FRDO-CFDD feels that Belgium has already lost precious time and wasted opportunities in this regard.

- [19] The FRDO-CFDD feels that a long-term vision must be adopted in these issues. The current system, which was implemented to meet mobility and energy service requirements, is not sustainable. However, it is the result of previous political choices on the basis of which significant investments in infrastructure were made to meet a growing demand.



To take account of environmental and socio-economic demands, in terms of energy and mobility, public authorities have the collective responsibility of determining, in a coordinated manner, the obligations related to public services (e.g. with regard to access to energy and mobility) and making sure that they are respected. These obligations must be both economically and technically feasible for all the actors concerned.

The FRDO-CFDD is therefore recommending that a national plan for 2025 be drawn up which simultaneously takes account of environmental demands, especially those relating to emissions, and socio-economic dimensions, in particular energy security and the right to access energy services (see technical information sheet [4.6]).

[20] The FRDO-CFDD already submitted a series of concrete proposals in its previous advices, but would like to take this opportunity to underline a point it considers to be essential: all infrastructure (roads, buildings, canals, railway lines, etc.) last a very long time and greatly influence patterns of energy consumption over very lengthy periods. The FRDO-CFDD is recommending that we follow two complementary main lines of action so that we can rise to the future challenge of massively reducing greenhouse gas emissions and at the same time continue to meet more long-term requirements:

- more rational, fairer use of existing infrastructure; more solid support for the rational use of energy and rapid implementation of any necessary reconversion measures (by coming up with acceptable alternatives);
- deliberately investing in new infrastructures which are more in line with sustainable development, promoting sustainable energy sources and public transport.

[21] In other words, it is equally necessary to control demand and find new ways of meeting mobility and energy needs (see the technical information sheet).

## **2.5. Priority 5: Taking account of social and economic and ecological factors in an Integrated Product Policy**

[22] The Council has taken notice of the outlines of the federal master plan on "Product policy and the environment", which presents measures aimed at improving the Integrated Product Policy. The Council feels that in the short-term more attention must be paid - in an integrated product policy - to integrating social, economic and ecological aspects of product life-cycles, including health and safety aspects. The Council is preparing an advice on the outlines of the Belgium's federal master plan on "Product policy and the environment" in which it will go into more detail on the three dimensions of the policy on products.

[23] When devising an integrated product policy, account must be taken of the consequences of our methods of consumption for other countries, including those in the South.

[24] The Council also stresses the need for coordination between different political levels in its policy on products. In Belgium, the federal policy concerning the marketing of products, and the regional policy concerning, among other things, the use of products and waste management, must be consistent. Furthermore, the Council feels that this integrated product policy should take account of the European level, where many regulations are drawn up, and of international agreements.

[25] The Council stresses just how important it is to use raw materials efficiently, bearing in mind the longer-term consequences of current models of production and consumption. An integrated product policy can be promoted by the optimal, efficient usage of flows of materials and energy (cf. dematerialisation) (see technical information sheets [5.1] and [5.2]).

[26] The Council feels it is important to waste no time in setting aside resources so that the federal department of the environment can conduct an effective and efficient product policy which takes account of the various ecological, economical and social aspects in a balanced way, throughout the life-cycle of the products in question. Adequate resources



must not only pave the way for a policy that is well prepared, drawn up and implemented, but also one that is sufficiently followed up (see technical information sheets [5.3] and [5.4]).

## **2.6. Priority 6: Promoting sustainable development by means of adequate information, communication and publicity**

[27] The Council is hoping that the specific measures set out in the Federal Plan on Sustainable Development, concerning policy on information, education and public awareness (points 111 to 133), will be efficiently implemented, and calls for these measures to be applied as quickly as possible and in a coordinated manner. In this context, the Council is insisting on the need to define a consistent, well supported and dynamic product policy at European level that also takes account of the needs to inform and raise the awareness of consumers in this respect.

If consumers are to be encouraged to choose more sustainable products, they must be provided with information on the various goods and services (see technical information sheets [6.1]).

The Council wants public administrations, being major customers, to be well informed about the ecological, ethical and social criteria which are to be respected, so that they will make responsible choices when making purchases on behalf of the public as well as on their own account.

[28] The Council feels that labels should be affixed to products which offer an added social, environmental or health value compared with existing standards. The Council backs the idea of a system of labels certified by the public authorities. A 'sustainable development' labelling system which comprises different categories and criteria will have to be devised in the future, provided that it incorporates existing labels which should also preferably be certified (see technical information sheet [6.2]).

[29] The Council feels that these labels should be developed in parallel with legal standards in the ecological, ethical and social domains and in the area of food and product safety, and should by no means substitute for them.

[30] Consumer information is not limited to labelling measures. The Council is therefore encouraging public authorities to back coordinated public awareness and information campaigns calling for sustainable consumption, aimed specifically at the most underprivileged segments of the population.

[31] The FRDO-CFDD feels that attempts to raise the awareness of people of all ages to sustainable development must become more widespread and enable citizens and large groups in society to be consulted and genuinely involved in thinking about and deciding on the issue, even though politicians will remain ultimately responsible. Meanwhile, the FRDO-CFDD recommends to Belgium's Communities in particular that they include some kind of civic dimension based on the principles of sustainable development in their school syllabuses and university curricula as well as in the subject matter covered in vocational and ongoing training.

[32] In its advice of 4 December 1998 on the Consumer Protection Guidelines issued by the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Council already highlighted the fact that efforts made to nudge consumers in the direction of more sustainable consumption clash with advertising which urges people to consume more and more. Therefore the Council recommends that advertising be regulated in some way (see technical information sheet [6.3]).

At the internal seminar organised on 27 March 2002 it emerged that the world of advertising tends to underestimate its 'impact' on patterns of consumption and lifestyles. Of course, advertising can also have a positive influence if sustainable development



criteria are built into its professional code of ethics. Other suggestions may yet follow on the basis of the seminar, and the Council expects shortly to submit an advice on "Advertising and sustainable development" (see technical information sheet [6.4]).

## **2.7 Priority 7: Securing financing for sustainable development and sustainable production in the Third World**

- [33] The FRDO-CFDD hails the Belgian government's promise to attain the objective of awarding public development aid equal to 0.7% of GNP by 2010. The Council calls upon Belgium to continue appealing at international level for an increase in aid and for the establishment of a binding schedule in this connection. The aid that is awarded must go towards sustainable development and be efficient. Aid could primarily be awarded to the poorest countries and be spent on basic services that are prerequisites for development, such as long-term access to drinking water, education, health care, energy services and a decent job (see technical information sheets [7.1] to [7.3]).
- [34] The Council appreciates the various initiatives taken by the Belgian government to alleviate the debt of the least developed countries (LDCs) - see technical information sheet [7.4]. As to the form of debt relief, the Council proposes that the resources that should have been used to pay off the debts be channelled into investments in sustainable development instead, provided that local actors, representing the beneficiaries of these actions, are effectively involved in monitoring this channelling process.
- [35] The Financing for Development Conference in Monterrey did not produce enough concrete breakthroughs to enable the implementation of the development objectives of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (September 2000). The Council insists that the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg should be a decisive event for carrying out these objectives. The Council is calling for the creation of additional and innovative mechanisms to finance the objectives of the United Nations Millennium Declaration (see technical information sheet [7.5]). The FRDO-CFDD is also calling for more significant efforts to be made by the countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), so that the social and environmental costs are taken into account in the price of raw materials and products from developing countries. The limited consideration of these costs today is resulting in non-sustainable models of production and consumption continuing to be upheld in the countries of the OECD, to the detriment of Third-World countries.
- [36] Countries in the South do not always have the means to invest in sustainable technology and consequently drain their natural resources and human capital or have too few resources to combat the degradation of their environment. Where the financing of sustainable development is concerned, the Council feels it is very important that extra efforts be devoted to the (suitable) transfer of technology, which will enable countries in the South to adopt sustainable methods of production and consumption. The need to invest in sustainable technology is accompanied by requirements to invest in knowledge development and capacity building. It is also necessary to provide for ways in which developing countries can face up to administrative constraints. However, it is important to accentuate the mutual exchange of knowledge on sustainable development between the North and the South (see technical information sheet [7.3]).



## **2.8 Priority 8: Setting out clearly defined objectives which can be attained and monitored in the Commission Communication concerning sustainable development (Seville Summit), and establishing a link with the internal component of the EU's policy**

- [37] The Council denounces the fact that the objectives set out in the European Commission's Communication 'Towards a Global Partnership for Sustainable Development' (document COM(2002) 82 final/2) are not clearly defined or quantified and are therefore not measurable. It also regrets the fact that no timeframe has been fixed for most of them. Accordingly, for the Seville Summit (21-22 June 2002), the FRDO-CFDD is expecting the Commission to draw up objectives which are clearly defined, concrete, quantifiable and measurable and on which a timeframe has been added. These objectives must be attainable and must take account of the impact on the three dimensions of sustainable development. The Council is also expecting that, in drawing up these objectives, the Commission will respect the principles of transparency and participation by organising the efficient consultation of the stakeholders and will take the results of that consultation process into account (see technical information sheet [8.1]).
- [38] The FRDO-CFDD is of the opinion that the most recent European Councils retained too few of the proposals and specific goals set out in the Commission Communication 'A Sustainable Europe for a Better World: A European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development' (document COM(2001)264), which contained a whole series of concrete objectives. The Seville European Council should go over the detailed proposals contained in the Communication, especially those which refer to sustainable production and consumption.
- [39] The FRDO-CFDD highlights a lack of consistency between the EU's internal and external policy. There is also a need for an in-depth analysis of the impact of the EU's internal policy (impact of its energy, agricultural, forestry and fisheries policies) on the economic, social and environmental situations in other countries. To apply this impact analysis, there is an urgent need to introduce a *Sustainable Impact Assessment* (SIA). As well as an SIA for the new policy proposals, the current EU policy should also assess its impact on sustainability.
- [40] The follow up of the strategy for sustainable development which covers both the internal and external components of EU policy must be considered at the European Spring Summit. The Council hopes that at the next Spring Summit greater attention will be paid to the strategy on sustainability than was the case at the Barcelona Summit, which focused on the economic component of the Lisbon process.

## **2.9 Priority 9: Measuring is knowing: acknowledging the essential role that indicators play in integrating sustainable development into European policy**

- [41] As the FRDO-CFDD stated in its advice on the indicators of sustainable development dated 16 April 2002, it believes that Belgium's public authorities should pay greater attention to the problem of indicators because they can be used to carry out several essential policy functions, including diagnosis, evaluation and communication. According to the FRDO-CFDD, the indicators must be both scientifically appropriate and chosen and constructed on the basis of political choices which have been determined in a democratic way (see technical information sheet [9.1]). These principles also apply to the EU's structural indicators.
- [42] The FRDO-CFDD feels that the EU's structural indicators must serve the objectives of a political strategy for sustainable development in a more balanced and integrated way (see technical information sheets [9.2] and [9.3], paragraph 30 of the EU Presidency's conclusions from the Barcelona Summit, the section on environment and the second FRDO-CFDD advice on the EU's sustainable development strategy, 18 December 2001).



- [43] Furthermore, the FRDO-CFDD feels that the way the indicators, and therefore also the priorities, were chosen, was not transparent enough. The necessary transparency can be guaranteed by following participative procedures.
- [44] The FRDO-CFDD feels that economic indicators dominate the list and that social and environmental indicators are either insufficiently represented (see section 35 of the second FRDO-CFDD advice on the EU sustainable development strategy) or not suitable in a context of sustainable development. Furthermore, some important aspects are either missing from the list of indicators or are inadequately represented (see technical information sheet [9.5]):
- the EU's external dimension, North-South relations, unequal access to resources;
  - modes of consumption and production;
  - public health and food safety.

The lack of indicators concerned with health or the rate at which natural resources are used up appears to be rather out of step with the strategy for sustainable development laid down in Gothenburg.

- [45] In this respect, the FRDO-CFDD feels it would be useful at international level and within individual European countries to establish such aggregate indicators as the ecological footprint or the environmental utilisation space. These indicators could highlight:
- the current inequality between countries' access to resources;
  - the burden of non-sustainable modes of production and consumption on the environment, public health and natural resources (compared with the concept of 'biological capacity').

## **2.10 Priority 10: Guaranteeing good international governance for sustainable development**

- [46] The FRDO-CFDD suggests that in future the United Nations (UN) set up an authority that is responsible for the consistency and integration of sustainable development within the UN. This authority could make sure that the three aspects of sustainable development (i.e. economical, social and environmental) are completely integrated in a balanced way. It would have to be a universal, specialised and permanent UN organisation (OSD – *Organisation for Sustainable Development*). This organisation should be placed under the aegis of the ECOSOC and should act on the basis of a treaty. It would have a general assembly with universal participation (i.e. in which all UN Member States could participate), a council (see the structure of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)), a secretariat and commissions or committees dealing with the most important Agenda 21 topics (see technical information sheets [10.1] to [10.3]). In first instance the Council is asking the Belgian government to push for the CSD to be strengthened as an integration commission. To increase the CSD's authority and enhance its effectiveness, it is crucial that the various UN institutions and other bodies (such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO)) are represented on a high level within CSD.
- [47] The Council is calling for sustainable development to be increasingly integrated into the current institutions of the UN and Bretton Woods, as well as in the WTO. It is vital, in the short-term, to bring about more coordination between the UN institutions themselves and between these institutions and the World Trade Organisation and Bretton Woods institutions. The Council is invoking the Cardiff and Gothenburg processes at European level and asking the Belgian government to push for a similar integration process at international level. Some kind of balance between the three pillars of sustainable development must be reached in the policies of these institutions and organisations. The FRDO-CFDD is backing Belgium's efforts to boost the environmental pillar of sustainable development within the UN (see point 48). The Council is also asking the Belgian government to investigate whether it would be a good idea to push for the World Trade Organisation to be integrated into the UN system, the aim being to better integrate the



three pillars of sustainable development. Furthermore, the Council is insisting on the need to boost the social pillar of sustainable development by shoring up the International Labour Organisation (ILO) both as a counterbalance to all current international institutions (maintaining its tripartite character) and also as the founder of a veritable international labour code, among other things by strengthening its monitoring and sanction mechanisms.

- [48] The Council feels there is an urgent need to work on clustering, on a framework of common principles and on bolstering compliance with the provisions of environmental treaties. The first line of action is to recommend that the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) be stepped up a gear and that the *Global Ministerial Environmental Forum* (GMEF) be granted a stronger political role. The long-term aim is to set up an international environmental organisation with universal membership. The Council is asking the Belgian authorities to consider the provision of aid to developing countries as one that merits a great deal of attention within the context of intensifying global environmental governance (see technical information sheets [10.4]).
- [49] The Council believes it is necessary to democratise current international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The stakeholders should, for example, be regularly consulted on issues which are the subject of international negotiations on sustainable development. The application of this principle could be guaranteed by effective institutional arrangements and the provision of the necessary resources. Furthermore, the CSD's experience of stakeholder participation and dialogue with political leaders can be deepened and extended. Belgium must make sure that all stakeholders within international organisations are guaranteed transparency and access to information. It must also push for the stakeholders to be involved (in an advisory capacity) in the process of evaluation and implementation of the agreements on sustainable development in various countries. The Council refers to the principles of Agenda 21 on the involvement of major groups within the ECOSOC.



## Annex 1: Technical information sheets

### Priority 1: No technical information sheet

### Priority 2: Using sustainable development as a political framework for the entire government and for public authorities

On 28 November 2000 the Council approved an advice on the amendment of the law of 5 May 1997 (2000A15). After five years of experience with the law, the Council is drawing up a number of additional suggestions concerning the instruments provided for in that law.

#### [2.1] The federal plan for sustainable development:

In the next plan, the powers of the various ministries and government departments must be more clearly delineated. The Council suggests that the human and budgetary resources needed to attain the objectives be more clearly indicated and quantified in the next plan. The FRDO-CFDD also believes that the plan must include a timetable specifying its implementation.

#### [2.2] The federal government's report on sustainable development:

The federal government's report on sustainable development is another important policy instrument. *In the context of sustainable development this report includes a description, an analysis and an evaluation of the current situation in Belgium in connection with developments at international level, a description, an analysis and an evaluation of sustainable development policy and a description of the development planned if the policy remains as it is or if it is changed according to relevant scenarios* (Chapter III, Article 7 of the law on the coordination of the federal policy on sustainable development - 5 May 1977). The report *must* be published every two years. It is recommended that the report be made more accessible, to increase its usefulness in political and social debates. If a national sustainable development plan is drawn up in the future, it would be useful if the federal government's report evaluated not only the federal policy, but also the consistency of its application by and level of cooperation between the different levels of authority.

#### [2.3] The CIDD-ICDO (Inter-Departmental Commission for Sustainable Development):

[a] The annual CIDD-ICDO report must receive more attention as a policy instrument. *It deals with sustainable development policy and with the plan's implementation by the federal public bodies and administrations* (Chapter V, Article 16 of the law on the coordination of the government's policy on sustainable development - 5 May 1977). Furthermore, it should also include an analysis of change in terms of the (human and budgetary) resources that are allocated and used and the (legal, economic, socio-cultural) instruments deployed to implement the policy. The CIDD-ICDO should be able to publish the reporting system that it is compiling on its website so that it can be used internally, and it should also refer to the websites of the relevant ministries or government departments so that any bodies and citizens who are interested can constantly have access to up-to-date information. It would be interesting if the report also contained an analysis of how the FRDO-CFDD's advices had been followed up.

[b] Furthermore the FRDO-CFDD is pondering the uncertainties associated with the administrative reform (Copernicus Plan) and deplores the fact that so much energy has been devoted to this reform, instead of striving to improve the way the CIDD-ICDO is run.

[c] CIDD-ICDO staff are often too isolated within their respective departments. In fact, as provided for in the federal plan, all departments should have a sustainability unit that acts as a driving force for implementing the federal plan in their area.

[d] If a public programming department on sustainable development (SPP) is to be set up, agreements must be reached on how tasks are shared out between the CIDD-ICDO, the Sustainable Development Task Force of the Federal Planning Office and the SPP, and this information must be clearly communicated.



### **Priority 3: No technical information sheet**

### **Priority 4: The vital need to break current trends in mobility and energy policy**

#### **Energy sheet**

##### *Starting to break the trend as regards energy and mobility and looking to the future*

- [4.1] Belgium's political commitments have been clearly defined (achieving the Kyoto Objective and abandoning nuclear power), so it should now focus on ways of implementing them and therefore also on the associated opportunities and constraints. Important decisions in this area can no longer be put off because Belgian actors risk missing opportunities. These decisions must not only be based on a balanced evaluation of their social, environmental and economic implications, but must also be compatible with sustainable development.
- [4.2] Decisions made today must be for the long term. To protect the climate in the long run it is clear that reductions in greenhouse gas emissions which are significantly higher than those provided for in the Kyoto Protocol will have to be implemented from a global point of view. Consequently, ambitious yet realistic objectives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions must be set beyond 2012, for 2025 and 2050. By clearly defining medium- and long-term objectives, all the actors will be encouraged to *really* break the current trend.
- [4.3] Every human being must be guaranteed the same right to access the natural resources required to satisfy essential human needs. The reduction of greenhouse gas emissions must aim to achieve a fair distribution of emission rights per inhabitant at global level.
- [4.4] Clearly defining objectives that are to be achieved within certain periods of time will enable all the respective actors to make provision for and plan the investments needed to guarantee a gradual conversion to more sustainable production and consumption.
- [4.5] Within the context of reducing emissions, controlling consumption and guaranteeing the availability of energy become two particularly crucial issues.
- [4.6] Nevertheless, certain current trends, the decisions made in some areas and their absence in others (e.g. the abandonment of nuclear power, no management of 'just-in-time' deliveries, non-sustainable town and country planning, and so forth) will make it more difficult to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This clearly shows that the decisions taken must be accompanied by means of reducing demand and producing energy in other ways.

##### *Controlling demand: rational use of resources and energy*

- [4.7] The FRDO-CFDD believes that all potential ways of reducing energy demand must be evaluated in the short and long term from an economic, social and environmental perspective. Rational use of energy must be developed at all levels, from that of the individual to that of the planet as a whole.
- [4.8] An integrated, cyclical approach to production processes must be favoured over a traditional linear approach with regard to the flow of matter, energy and heat. This type of approach takes the inherent dynamics of natural ecological systems and applies them to industrial systems with a view to boosting efficiency and sustainability. The fact that natural resources are limited means that we have to make two changes: closed cycles of transformation of matter and energy and greater interdependence between the various entities involved, backed up by exchanges of matter and energy. In industrial terms we can translate this ideally by saying that all 'waste' (whether in the form of matter or energy) is recuperated in another process and that all actors are called upon to cooperate



in exchanging energy and matter in the most efficient manner. There is extensive literature on this, for example the book by Suren Erkman entitled *Vers une écologie industrielle* (Towards an industrial form of ecology), published by Charles Léopold Mayer, 1998, documentation for a debate no. 84, 325 pages, ISBN no. 2-84377-027-0).

This approach could be extended to other areas, such as heating, water purification or the agricultural sector.

- [4.9] At the same time, from a global point of view, the total energy intensity of economies must be drastically reduced, at least until a new source of sustainable (as defined in the Brundtland report) and inexhaustible energy becomes available.
- [4.10] Suppliers of material goods and energy must be encouraged to think more in terms of providing services and satisfying needs than in terms of selling material objects (e.g. selling 'cold' rather than selling a fridge). The service provider will feel more motivated to increase the energy efficiency of his services because this will contribute towards making his service more competitive. We must aim, however, to avoid any bizarre knock-on effects, such as thoughtless consumption on the part of the client or an overly rapid rotation of equipment which supposedly uses up too many natural resources.
- [4.11] The FRDO-CFDD feels that an important priority for Belgium is to provide a large number of buildings with heat insulation that can bring about significant gains at a reasonable cost. Specific efforts in this area must be geared towards households living on modest salaries and tenants. The mechanisms of third party financing must be developed on a large scale in an effort to boost these initiatives.

Measures must also be taken with respect to new buildings. An energy certification system for both new and existing buildings may be an interesting path to follow (like the approach being taken in connection with vehicles and some domestic appliances).

- [4.12] Furthermore, existing standards must be implemented and monitored in the field of product standards, energy efficiency, production processes and heat insulation for new buildings.
- [4.13] The FRDO-CFDD has found that the insufficient resources have been deployed to achieve a rational use of energy (RUE). An efficient RUE system must be set up which is coordinated between Belgium's administrative regions. The obligations of the various actors in the public services sector to promote RUE to consumers must genuinely apply and be technically and economically viable. Measures to foster investments in RUE should be simplified and coordinated.

#### *Developing new ways of satisfying demand: renewable energies*

- [4.14] Renewable energies clearly offer a way of dealing with the issue of satisfying energy needs. Their development must be encouraged, placed within a structured framework and planned, especially in the context of regional development.
- [4.15] The FRDO-CFDD would like to reiterate the fact that Belgium has the lowest percentage of energy consumption from renewable energy sources of all the EU countries. Consequently, it must make a concerted effort in this respect, taking account of any existing potential. This effort should entail evaluating existing authorisation and perhaps adapting them. Furthermore, the public must be made more aware of the need to develop renewable energy sources.



### Cogeneration

[4.16] High-quality cogeneration must be supported. After all, it has substantial potential in the industry, tertiary and residential sectors. Less well-known types of cogeneration, such as integrated cogeneration, and the direct conversion of power must also be promoted.

### Indicators: political and communication tools

[4.17] The FRDO-CFDD believes that improving the quality of indicators for energy consumption and mobility and of evaluations of greenhouse gas emissions must be made a political priority. The methods used must be the same in all Belgium's regions. Furthermore the FRDO-CFDD stresses that the quality of emissions inventory is one of the preconditions for gaining access to the flexibility mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol. This is a highly critical issue for Belgium.

[4.18] Adequately communicating this information (inventories and indicators) is an equally important issue for the actors concerned and for the general public. The information communicated must be both understandable and useful.

### Considering all the tools

[4.19] It is important that due consideration be given to every potential tool capable of improving the current situation regarding greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption and sustainable mobility, wherever they may prove most effective:

- Standards and labels;
- support for technological innovations;
- negotiated agreements;
- transfer of subsidies to renewable sectors;
- tax tools (taxation, subsidies and exemption, designed to change people's behaviour) ;
- market tools (trading in emissions licences, green certificates, etc.);
- paying more attention to the energy dimension in environmental impact studies, and so forth.

[4.20] These measures will have to be carried out in a foreseeable, gradual, balanced and responsible way and must be consistent with the principle of sustainable development. All of society's economic actors must be involved.

## **Mobility sheet**

### Controlling demand: reversing the mobility trend

[4.21] The problem of mobility must be analysed from different, additional perspectives, i.e. the economic and social points of view and in terms of public health and the environment. The current structure implemented to meet mobility needs is not sustainable as far as these four categories are concerned, and is the result of:

- 1) Political decisions which have favoured - and are continuing to favour - private transport and road transport, and increasingly nowadays air transport, over public transport, rail transport and environmentally friendly means of travel (e.g. walking, cycling);
- 2) different ways of adapting infrastructure to changes in mobility needs.



[4.22] What needs to be done is pinpoint the actual potential for reducing the demand for mobility and ascertain any viable alternatives. Whatever happens, the envisaged policies must aim to unhitch economic growth from the spread of transport.

[4.23] The FRDO-CFDD advocates both the provision of massive support for all awareness-raising campaigns and initiatives designed to change the direction of the mobility trend and really take on board the cultural dimension of mobility.

*Controlling demand: reversing the mobility trend*

[4.24] The FRDO-CFDD is calling for the 'polluter pays' principle to be applied to all existing forms of transport to put an end to distortions of intermodal competition. The cost of the present demands for speed and efficiency are paid in part by the community as a whole. Charging for infrastructure use (levying a fee per kilometre travelled) could be a system worth promoting at European level, primarily for freight transport, provided that the practice is fair and efficient, that the system is fiscally neutral, and that the income from such charges is used to reduce the cost of the damage caused.

[4.25] The FRDO-CFDD feels it is high time that external costs generated by various transport modes are internalised, so that the total cost of mobility becomes clearer. In this vein, the Council feels it is important to analyse the ecological, economic and social impact of variable tax and insurance expenses, encouraging the rational and appropriate use of company cars and charging for the use of parking spaces.

*Devising new ways of meeting demand: investing in sustainable infrastructure*

[4.26] The current trend in infrastructure investments must be reviewed to benefit public transport and the use of railways and waterways. Environmentally friendly methods of travelling (such as walking and cycling) must be promoted, encouraged and made to feel secure, and should benefit from positive discrimination. Efforts (in terms of infrastructure, the redeployment of supply and technological innovation) must be made to change the ways of meeting mobility requirements. Where there is no valid alternative, investing in road infrastructure must remain a possibility.

[4.27] In particular, Europe's railway networks must become better interconnected, their interoperability improved and the performance of rail transport enhanced. To achieve this, intermodality between rail, road and inland waterways must be developed on a broad scale, particularly where freight transport is concerned.

[4.28] Regional development is essential because decisions reached today may have irreversible, negative effects on future generations. Priority must therefore be given to infrastructure investments that are in line with the concept of sustainable development, because such infrastructure will have a very long life span and hence almost inevitably determine the direction taken by future generations. This decision to give priority to infrastructure that is in line with the concept of sustainable development is also crucial for developing countries and should be borne in mind within the framework of development cooperation.

[4.29] At the same time it is important to promote alternative ways of meeting mobility needs, such as car sharing, cycling, walking, car pooling and so on.



Controlling demand: optimising the use of current infrastructures

[4.30] At present, the alternatives to road transport are neither capable of meeting nor equipped to satisfy mobility requirements, with respect to the free movement of goods or people. For this reason, at the same time the use of current road transport infrastructure must be optimised via:

- Better allocation of space to different transport modes to enable them to meet mobility needs, while at the same time ensuring that the available land is put to the best possible, most economically viable use;
- better management of freight transport to avoid empty runs or partially loaded vehicles;
- better internalisation of the costs arising from all forms of transport and borne by the community in general (e.g. air quality, noise pollution, deaths and injuries, use of space, etc.);
- a more uniform system of intermodal transport units (e.g. packages, pallets, containers);
- improved vehicle standards (e.g. fuel consumption, noise pollution, etc.);
- telematic tools to control the flow of traffic and vehicles;
- the promotion of teleworking under certain conditions.

The impact of current and future forms of mobility

[4.31] The FRDO-CFDD is advocating a study of the impact of current forms of transport, especially the development of 'just in time' systems, both in economic terms (gradual 'saturation' of major routes), from an environmental viewpoint, and in terms of the number and type of jobs generated.

[4.32] The potentially positive social, economic and environmental impact of developing a balanced network of rail and water transport should be quantified.

Controlling the demand for air transport

[4.33] The FRDO-CFDD believes that the demand for air transport must be reduced. International action is required to address the issue of airport taxes and fuel prices, which would mean that some of the negative effects of air transport on the environment and public health could be internalised.

[4.34] In this context, the FRDO-CFDD emphasises the fact that every passenger on a return flight from Brussels to Johannesburg contributes to emission of greenhouse gases equivalent to approximately six tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, some 30 times the average annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of a person living in a very poor country (in Belgium the average annual CO<sub>2</sub> emission per capita is 12 tonnes). The FRDO-CFDD hopes these figures will help to enhance the sense of responsibility felt by Belgian delegates and boost their willingness to reach agreements that guarantee the promotion of sustainable development in real terms.

**Priority 5: Taking account of social, economic and ecological factors in an Integrated Product Policy.**

[5.1] In previous advices on political documents relating to Product Policy, the Council refers to dematerialisation as a long-term objective. In its advice (2001A09f) the Council states its belief that *the European Commission's Green Paper on Integrated Product Policy* "represents a very major step forward in developing an Integrated Product Policy (IPP). Nonetheless, the Council feels that the implementation of a number of initiatives has to be taken further, in particular with respect to environmental responsibility, i.e. tending to award more public procurement contracts to companies which operate in an environmentally friendly way, and the dematerialisation of the economy. To this end, the Council also highlights the importance of setting specific objectives (see factor 4 – factor 10)."



- [5.2] In its advice on the *First Draft of the Federal Plan for Sustainable Development 2000-2003* (2000A02f) the Council felt that "the wording of the problem ([app 79](#)) must relate to a long-term objective, in particular highly pronounced dematerialisation. Over the next 10 years we must reduce the flow of materials and energy within the economy, within all products and production processes. The FRDO-CFDD invokes concepts such as *factor 4* and *factor 10*. Where factor 4 is concerned, the industrialised countries need to become four times more efficient over the next 20-30 years in terms of raw and other materials. In the longer term still, even achieving factor 4 will supposedly not be sufficient, the necessary being factor 10. These concepts are continuing to gain ground at international level, including in the European union."
- [5.3] In its previous advices concerning royal decrees relating to product standards, on several occasions the Council has condemned the delay in transposing directives (see advices 1999A04f, 1999A14f, 2000A02f, 2000A12f, 2001A04f, 2002A02f). This was one of the reasons invoked by the Council to call for the federal department of the environment to be enhanced so that Belgium can meet its international obligations more effectively. (see advices 2000A02f and 2001A04f).
- [5.4] In its advice on the European Commission's White Paper on "The Strategy for a future Chemicals Policy" (2001A10f), the Council insists on an increase in funding, which it believes will be "vital for bringing the strategy outlined in the White Paper to fruition. All actors, whether in the public or private sector, need to develop their all-round expertise in risk analysis. Particular attention should be focussed on public research institutes that will be responsible for assessing the significance of the information provided by industry. This expertise must be improved both at the level of research capabilities (human resources) and of infrastructure (material resources). Any delay in this regard may jeopardise the credibility of the system".

**Priority 6: Promoting sustainable development by means of adequate information, communication and publicity.**

- [6.1] Consumers must have access to reliable, useful and clear information on products' characteristics and their impact on both public health and on the social and environmental conditions under which they were manufactured. This information must also be communicated clearly to consumers and should be one of the main messages put across to them. At points of sale in particular, products should be labelled giving customers access to this vital information precisely when they are making their choices. Additional sources of information such as Internet sites could also be encouraged.
- [6.2] It would be useful if Belgium played an active role at European level to develop its own initiative on 'social labels' and coordinate this with other labels in Europe so that products from abroad could be covered as well.
- [6.3] Advertising needs to be regulated in some way with the actors concerned, in particular as regards:
- Advertising for products that are harmful to health and the environment;
  - advertising for credit, which could lead to overindebtedness;
  - advertising that targets children (adhering to broadcasting times before school holidays and banning intrusions into schools).
- [6.4] Civil society and the advertising world need to work together more closely and establish a joint body that monitors advertising and deals with customers' complaints.

**Priority 7: Securing financing for sustainable development and sustainable production in the Third World**

- [7.1] Protecting global public goods. More and more problems, e.g. epidemics (like AIDS), environmental issues, efforts to build peace, and conflict prevention are having a global impact. These problems can only be sufficiently resolved if all countries cooperate with each other. The focus here is on common interests and public goods, which are usually



not provided by the market. Global public goods are those which go beyond borders, the most obvious ones being natural elements, like air and water, and biodiversity. Drinking water is a global public good that is becoming increasingly scarce and is already causing conflicts which could eventually escalate into wars. The large-scale destruction of virgin forests via deforestation, plantations and fires, for example, can upset the climate balance. There are indications of a direct link between the destruction of forests and increasing concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. Intensive energy production and consumption in the industrialised countries gives them a disproportionate monopoly on the use of the atmosphere as a public good. As well as these natural public goods there are also intangible goods that are regarded as global public goods, such as peace, justice, security, equality, international law, and so forth. Time and space are also important factors. In terms of international cooperation there is already evidence of a shift away from cooperation at local level towards the world level. In our call for more resources to be allocated to development cooperation, we reiterate the fact that both levels of development cooperation (local and global) are still important. Given the increasing problems in this area, there ought to be a net increase in funding for development aid, with the extra money preferably being spent on protecting global public goods.

- [7.2] Aid must be effective. At present the proportion of Public Development Aid (PDA) channelled to Least Developed Countries (LDC) is only 22% (i.e. 0.05% of GNP) for countries represented on the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC). The health and education sectors receive respectively only 1.5% and 2% of assistance from DAC member countries.

This assistance must be geared towards sustainable development and help to improve the quality of life, bridge the divide in terms of the availability of decent work, create a better environment and promote sustainable economic development. In environmental terms climate change is having - and will continue to have - particularly serious effects on developing countries. For this reason, the Council is calling for development aid to be directed as a priority towards sustainable development projects, e.g. projects supporting renewable energy sources and sustainable technologies. International public development aid must remain a vital component of the sustainable development strategy and it must also be controlled by the public authorities, involving representatives of the major Agenda 21 groups in development-related actions. Furthermore, encouraging private sector 'enterprise' may help to create jobs, develop training schemes, generate funds for sustainable development and reduce poverty.

- [7.3] Meeting the UN commitment of 0.7% of GNP for short-term development aid.

Spending on aid must be in line with the priorities of the citizens and governments in the countries receiving it. All OECD countries should do away with all forms of conditional aid and do so in consultation with the actors concerned (see the EU's commitments, *Looking beyond the Monterrey Consensus: "The EU also agreed the following: to immediately implement the DAC recommendations on lifting the binding nature of assistance to LDCs and to organise talks aimed at removing the binding nature of bilateral assistance"*, 20 March 2002). The OECD countries should also increase the amount of goods, services and sources of expertise in recipient countries or the other developing countries. Donor governments should provide support in terms of developing skills which meet the needs and of recipient countries and are in line with their capacity to absorb such know-how, and step up their level of coordination. To alleviate debt, the Belgian government should pursue its initiatives such as the 'peer plan', which stipulates that the 23 richest countries should pay 0.1111% of their GNP into a fund aimed at financing rapid alleviation of debt in the 49 LDCs, and its scheme to extend the *Highly Indebted Poor Countries* (HIPC) agreements on cancelling debt to new developing countries). The actors concerned should be consulted during the implementation of these initiatives.

- [7.4] Alleviating debt and debt alleviation programmes

The Belgian government must call for a review of the present criteria and an approach to a human development which makes it possible to establish the sustainability of external



debt which must be measured against the estimated government funds required in the short and medium term to fund programmes that would reduce poverty and to meet the development objectives set out in the Millennium Declaration. A transparent arbitration procedure must be guaranteed by a neutral, ad-hoc decision-making body, firstly to deal with the rights of representatives of civil society in the countries concerned to be heard, and secondly to protect the basic needs of debtor countries. As soon as an arbitration procedure has been set in motion, an automatic debt-limitation system should be set in motion. Proceeding in this way would make it easier to prevent crises associated with debt because it would limit the possibility for irresponsible future lending and borrowing in both the public and private sectors. The most effective way of achieving this is by setting up an international framework for debt negotiations.

- [7.5] Stabilising international financial markets, the volume of international flows of capital, and regulatory standards in the financial markets of developing countries and thereby reducing vulnerability in the face of foreign interests are the main preconditions required for planning long-term national development. The United Nations must be given a full mandate to explore the possibilities of imposing an international tax on monetary transactions with a view to stabilising the global financial markets and thereby establishing a basis for sustainable development. The relevant governments should give the United Nations a mandate, together with other major international institutions, to explore the possibilities for setting up an international framework for redistributing taxes on financial transactions collected at national level. This mandate must include details of how this system would be applied and monitored, the possible sanctions and the respective regions' eligibility criteria for transferring and redistributing taxes.

**Priority 8: Setting out clearly defined objectives which can be attained and monitored in the Commission Communication concerning sustainable development (Seville Summit), and establishing a link with the internal component of the EU's policy**

- [8.1] The Council has identified certain elements that are either missing altogether from the European Commission's Communication or require further attention:
- [a] Of the 40 actions proposed by the Commission in this Communication, 30 have no deadline by which they must be effected and another 30 cannot be properly measured. Only seven of these actions both have a deadline and can be measured. Furthermore, many of the actions proposed are merely repetitions of existing EU policies and programmes;
  - [b] In terms of the objectives of reducing greenhouse gas emissions after 2012, the Council recommends that countries should act together at international level and in a way that takes account of the international situation;
  - [c] Economic development, social progress and environmental management must be linked together to ensure that the three pillars of sustainable development are integrated more fully;
  - [d] Although the issue of internalising external costs was tackled by the European Commission's communication for the Gothenburg European Council ("A Sustainable Europe for a better world: a European Union strategy for sustainable development"), it does not appear in the present Communication;
  - [e] The issue of gender must be more prominent;
  - [f] The issue of land access must be addressed;
  - [g] This Communication makes no reference to 'indigenous peoples'. It is vital that the contributions of all major groups are acknowledged in the conclusions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. Indigenous peoples must be able to express their views, particularly on issues associated with the *clean development mechanism* of the Kyoto Protocol, the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of



Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and the application of Article 8J of the Convention on Biodiversity;

- [h] The Communication barely mentions agriculture, fishing or forestry and essentially repeats the contents of the *Green Paper on the Future of the Common Fisheries Policy* of 20 March 2001;
- [i] The Communication only refers to the TRIPS Agreement in the context of public health, but the issues the agreement raises go beyond this limited framework and include, for example, environmental issues. The European Commission must analyse the various difficulties arising from the TRIPS Agreement and in particular must ensure that the precautionary principle is applied when implementing it;
- [j] The European Union should call for the global application of the EEC-UN Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention);
- [k] The Commission should call for developing countries to be given more resources (financial, human, etc.) to enable them to take part in international negotiations and to ensure equal participation by all countries in decision-making within the WTO and the Bretton Woods institutions. There is also a need for greater transparency within these institutions and in decision-making procedures.

**Priority 9: Measuring is knowing: acknowledging the important role that indicators play in integrating sustainable development into European policy**

- [9.1] The European Union's list of structural indicators presented to the Barcelona Summit must support a global and integrated political strategy centred on short, medium and long-term objectives. The European Union's current objective was set out at the Lisbon Summit (to "become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion"). This objective must remain compatible with sustainable development, particularly by integrating the use of natural resources and the protection of the environment as highlighted at the Gothenburg Summit. The EU now needs to develop the concept of sustainable development at European level. The indicators should reflect the objectives of a European sustainable development strategy.
- [9.2] In the current list there is too tenuous a link between the indicators associated with the various pillars of sustainable development. This can only be a first step along the way to better integration of sustainable development in policies.
- [9.3] The FRDO-CFDD notes that the choice of structural indicators was partly dictated by the availability of information. However, the FRDO-CFDD feels the list is unbalanced and this in turn projects an equally unbalanced image. The availability of information cannot be the sole criterion, the main one of course being to achieve the objective of balanced sustainable development.
- [9.4] Indicators should also play an important role in promoting a spirit of competition between European countries, for example in the areas of scientific research and the use of natural resources.
- [9.5] In addition to the reserve list of environmental indicators (see the conclusions of the European Council of the Belgian Presidency on key environmental indicators for sustainable development of 28 November 2001, document 14589/01), new indicators should cover the following general areas (though this list is not exhaustive):
  - Public health;
  - food safety;
  - sustainable management and use of resources, e.g. fishery resources, developing sustainable agriculture, woodland areas, water resources;



- biodiversity;
- levels of pollution from harmful substances affecting the environment and living organisms (e.g. water, soil, air, plants, animals and humans);
- the link between the environment, working conditions and public health;
- sustainable consumption and production, the rate of dematerialisation of the economy, the use of material resources within the economy (e.g. TMR 'total material requirements' index);
- tourism;
- Europe's external dimension: North-South relations, development cooperation;
- the link between participation, information and consultation of workers on the one hand and the quality of work organisation and jobs on the other;
- the link between wage levels and the distribution of income on the one hand, and impoverishment and social exclusion on the other;
- the link between ongoing training for workers and job-seekers on the one hand, and social exclusion on the other;
- cultural aspects (not mentioned at all on the list).

The most suitable indicators for these areas can be determined following appropriate consultation of the actors concerned.

[9.6] In due course the Council intends to elaborate an advice on the European Union's list of structural indicators, particularly those concerning energy.

#### **Priority 10: Guaranteeing good international governance for sustainable development**

[10.1] The OSD would benefit from the expertise acquired by the CSD, should develop effective policies and should coordinate, implement and monitor political agreements.

[10.2] By the establishment of OSD a number of UN Functional Commissions, programmes and funds could be fully integrated within it. Such integration must improve efficiency and cut costs. The bodies in question would include, for example, the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Population and Development, which are at present part of the ECOSOC. A number of programmes which are currently the responsibility of the General Assembly could also be transferred to the OSD. These include the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), the UN/Habitat Programme (United Nations Human Settlements Programme), the UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund), UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women), UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) and UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development). The OSD should be supported by UN training and research programmes such as INSTRAW (United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women), UNITAR (United Nations Institute for Training and Research) and UNRISD (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development).

[10.3] How it would work

- The organisation and its activities should be financed by regular, annual contributions from the Member States according to UN distribution criteria, with a penalty clause being invoked in the event of the non-payment of outstanding sums within a certain period. Furthermore additional sponsorship for facilitator programmes and capacity building should be made possible.

- An implementation committee should monitor national reports by the Member States on sustainable development and in provide for facilitation, e.g. technology transfers and other forms of capacity building.

- A biennial progress report would be submitted to the UN General Assembly on the organisation's activities and a biennial OSD general assembly on ministerial level should be organised.



- Decisions must be taken by consensus. If this is not possible, decisions should be taken by  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority or by a 'tacit acceptance procedure with opting-out' (simple majority with the possibility of opting out within a short period – e.g. 60 days – after the decision);

[10.4] Attempts to bolster international environmental policy should go hand in hand with efforts to help developing countries. It is important to consider such points as strengthening capacity building programmes and technology transfer, and developing links (an enhanced strategic partnership) between UNEP and the GEF (Global Environmental Facility).

## **Annex 2. Number of members present/number of representatives with voting rights at the General Assembly on 16 April 2002**

- 4 Presidents et Vice-Presidents
- 4 out of 6 representatives from NGOs for environmental protection;
- 5 out of 6 representatives from NGOs for development cooperation;
- 2 representatives of NGOs for the protection of consumer interests;
- 6 representatives of workers' organisations;
- 6 representatives of employers' organisations;
- 2 representatives of energy producers;
- 4 out of 6 scientific experts.

Total: 33 out of the 38 members with voting rights.

## **Annex 3. Meetings to draw up this advice**

<b>Working Group</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>
Energy and Climate	24 January, 25 February, 8 and 20 March, 15 April 2002
Product Standards	18 and 25 March, 8 April 2002
Scientific Research	14 March 2002
International Relations	31 January, 14 and 27 February, 12 and 26 March, 9 April 2002
Awareness and Communication	14 and 29 March 2002
Sustainability Strategies	4, 13, 21, 28 March, 10 April 2002

## **Annex 4. People involved in drafting this advice**

### **Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Working Groups**

Prof. Luc HENS (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, VUB - président Recherche scientifique)

Prof. Marie-Paule KESTEMONT (Université Catholique de Louvain - présidente Stratégies de durabilité)

Prof. Luc LAVRYSEN (Université Gent, UG – président Normes de produits)

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