

The GE statement on behalf of the Major Group: NGOs
(22-Feb-2011)

Thank you chair,

As NGOs we endorse most of the statements and discussion done during the sessions and panels. We totally agree that we have to go for the eco-efficiency, applying green technologies, using markets instruments, applying life cycle approach, building markets for sustainable products and services and so on. We support this and NGOs also work on this.

But we think that will not be enough. It will not automatically lead to a sustainable economy, which implies also a fair distribution of global natural resources, which is the base for economic security and prosperity of all people in the world.

In our current situation it is still a fact that the lifestyle of the people in the industrialised countries and the elites in the South are based on the overuse of resources, mostly coming from the South. For a green and fair economy we have to face this reality as well. And try to change it. This is one issue that is lacking in the discussions.

If we want to link environmental degradation and a fair management of resources we cannot deny that the Global North has to reduce the use of natural resources in absolute amounts. So only focussing on efficiency will not be enough, we have to talk on sufficiency as well. For social equity reasons.

Talking on sufficiency means also talking on values, drivers for stimulating consumption (like aggressive marketing of useless products), the “never enough economy”, capping extreme wealth, etc.

In a world where the natural resources are becoming scarcer and scarcer, you cannot accept anymore that countries, or even individuals are taking a huge part of the cake and do not leave resources anymore for the development and livelihood for other countries/people and future generations.

If we want to talk on the development agenda, linked to the environmental agenda, we want to see this issue put on the agenda as well. This has to be part of the “just transition”, mentioned in the Green Economy report. Redistribution of wealth and access to natural resources is fundamental of the human rights approach, also fundamental for the SD agenda.

Putting this issue on the agenda, is also supportive for achieving peace in the world, as we know that most wars are just a battle for the scarce resources, being it minerals, oil, gold, diamonds or water.

Redistribution of wealth means using only the resources within your “fair share”, and leaving natural resources for others. But also an increase in financial support and technological transfers, for initiatives in the poorer countries, small scale farmers, SME’s, let’s say: in general strengthen civil societies so they can decide for themselves which kind of development they want.

And as last point we want to share our concern that it is important to integrate the work, already done by the Marrakech Process, in our discussions here. We have to value the results of the task forces under the Marrakesh Process.

Thank you madam chair

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