

Statement on behalf of UNEP's Major Groups to the OECPR regarding Post 2015 Development Framework including the Sustainable Development Goals

(The blue parts were not read)

27 March 2014, Open-Ended CPR

Thank you, Chair.

My name is xxxxx, I am presenting this civil society cluster statement on behalf of the Major Groups; Workers and Trade Unions, Women, Indigenous Peoples, Children and Youth, NGOs, Farmers, Local Authorities.

We welcome the transformation of UNEP's Governing Council into the United Nations Environment Assembly **as the highest political forum** for discussing and making strategic decisions on **major global environmental issues**.

We look forward to **bold and innovative decisions by this first UNEA**. We also look forward to the **approval, in particular, of the Major Group and Stakeholder Engagement Policy** that will enhance Major Groups and Stakeholders participation. We commit to contributing all we can to the success of this intergovernmental process.

The establishment of UNEP as “the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda” and as “an authoritative advocate for the global environment” gives the UNEA both unique opportunities and responsibilities.

We would like **UNEP to take a larger role** in setting international environmental standards and regulations as well as in undertaking their implementation. For example, we welcome the current discussions on illegal trade of wildlife and timber and international guidelines on water quality ecosystems.

We would now like to address the topic as to how the **Sustainable Development Goals and Post2015 agenda should be discussed** at the first UNEA.

We would like to echo UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner's note in his opening remarks that **it would be very strange if UNEP were to remain silent** on the SDGs and post2015 agenda.

The discussion on the science-technology gap shows that member states are in need of expertise and data – not outdated science, but the **latest understanding of the rapidly changing global environment and climate**.

The negotiators in the SDG – Post2015 process, and the Secretary General’s team, also **are in need of this expertise**. Negotiators might **benefit** from proposals by UNEP on how environmental targets can be formulated.

By the time UNEA takes place, **the OWG will already have submitted its proposal on the Sustainable Development Goals**. Among the proposed focus areas, a few of them already focus on environmental issues. However, **environment needs to be embedded in all focus areas**, including on the **sustainably-derived basic services** such as employment, health, education and gender – in order to leave no one behind.

From last weeks OWG document, it is very likely that there will also be a **focus area dealing with economic growth, industrialization, infrastructure and energy**. Currently, this focus area reflect business-as-usual and **continues to push us toward a global ecosystem crisis**.

To make **this economic focus** area more **sustainable**, UNEP **should have a role** in helping to formulate **targets for reduced consumption** and **resource extraction**. The SDGs need to recognize the detrimental effects of our current **economic, trade and investment agreements and policies**, and **set targets** for their **transformation** to socially just and environmentally friendly economies. It needs to go **beyond purely monetary valuation** and be based on multi-dimensional valuation systems, including **socio-cultural aspects**. It needs to place **human rights**, in particular **rights of indigenous peoples** to free and prior informed consent, **ahead of any** short-term economic interest.

We must succeed in setting targets for real transformation of current economic systems in the SDG/post2015 framework, or we will not have the “the future we all want.”

In addition to the formulation of the SDG/post2015 agenda, we also believe UNEP’s expertise will be needed at the implementation phase when SDGs will be brought to the national level. *UNEP should have a prominent role in relation to providing information, specific environmental indicators and providing best practices and capacity building among others.*

Very importantly we also believe that the Major Groups and Stakeholders, – with our extensive expertise on the ground in integrating social, environmental and economic dimensions – also need to be involved, and build on our partnerships with UNEP.

Therefore, the OECPR could consider a decision at the UNEA to propose or request the inclusion of UNEP, as the lead authority on one of the three dimension of SD, in the drafting group that will support the Secretary General in writing his Synthesis report on the Sustainable Development Goals and the Post 2015 Agenda, starting

end of June this year. In addition, the OECPR could recommend a prominent role for UNEP in the implementation phase of the Post-2015 agenda.

Thank you, Chair.