

# The Role of Major Groups in the Post-Rio+20 Agenda

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# Major Groups and “The Future We Want”

- \* Pre-Rio+20: almost two-thirds of Submissions for the Zero Draft came from the Major Groups
- \* Rio+20: there were more MGS participants than government delegates
- \* “Major Groups and Stakeholders”: only mentioned seven (7) times in the Rio+20 Outcome Document (53 pp, 283 paras.)
  - \* “Local communities” – mentioned eight (8) times
  - \* “NGOs”: three (3) times
  - \* “Trade unions: - five (5) times
- \* Section on “Engaging Major Groups and Other Stakeholders” (paras. 42-55) under the chapter on Renewing Political Commitments

# Major Groups and “The Future We Want”

- \* Para 43: “... we agree to work more closely with the major groups and other stakeholders and encourage their active participation, **as appropriate**, in processes that contribute to decision-making, planning and implementation of policies and programmes for sustainable development at all levels.”
- \* Para 76 (IFSD): (h) Enhance the participation and effective engagement of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the relevant international forums and in this regard promote transparency and broad public participation and partnerships to implement sustainable development

# Major Groups and “The Future We Want”

- \* Outcomes on the role and participation of MGS, especially civil society, are very weak and do not present any substantive leap for engagement at the intergovernmental level
  - \* Ex.: “Acknowledge” the role of civil society, “Note” the role of NGOs vs. “Stress the importance” of the role/participation of Women, Indigenous Peoples, Youth and Children, Workers and Trade Union; “as appropriate”
- \* Result of increasing civil society political strength and influence since 1992?

# Possible Entry Points for Post-Rio+20 Political Engagement

- 1) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- 2) High-level political forum (HLPF)
- 3) UNEP strengthening and upgrading
- 4) Finance
- 5) Technology
- 6) 10-Year Framework Plan on Sustainable Production and Consumption
- 7) Future Generations
- 8) Oceans
- 9) Beyond GDP
- 10) Other Thematic Areas

# Opportunities for MGS engagement in post-Rio+20 Agenda

- \* There are 12 intergovernmental processes (that will be) established by UNGA-67 to implement Rio+20 outcomes
  - \* No formal mechanism for MGS and civil society to input into and interact with the UNGA in NY
  - \* Egypt is tasked to act as the focal point for the omnibus resolution on the establishment of these processes
- \* None of these intergovernmental processes explicitly include the active participation of MGS/civil society
  - \* some refer to “open and full involvement of” or “broad consultation with” - “relevant stakeholders”, but without any clear mechanism to enable that

# Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- \* Para 248: established an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on SDGs that is ***open to all stakeholders***;
  - \* Major Groups: submitted a proposal to the UNGA Second Committee and key Missions for the establishment of a Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) comprised of reps from 9 MGs, with gender and regional balance
- \* An open working group shall be constituted no later than at the opening of UNGA-67 and shall comprise 30 representatives nominated by Member States from the five UN regional groups
- \* Status: Brazil delegated by UNGA President to coordinate the establishment of the OWG
  - \* Not yet constituted; regional groups have not yet agreed on the number of seats that should be allocated to each region

# Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- \* Open-ended Working Group on SDGs (OWG)
  - \* will decide on its methods of work, **including developing modalities to ensure the full involvement of relevant stakeholders and expertise from civil society**, the scientific community and the UN system in its work, in order to provide a diversity of perspectives and experience.
  - \* It will submit a report, to the UNGA-68, containing a proposal for SDGs for consideration and appropriate action.
  - \* Initial inputs to be provided by the UNSG from the UN system, **including through establishing an inter-agency technical support team and expert panels, as needed, drawing on all relevant expert advice**



# Proposed Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG)

- \* Recommended basic functions of the MAG:
  - \* Access all documents and drafts under negotiation by the OWG in a timely manner;
  - \* Comment on any draft reports of the OWG, and receive an official response on the comments;
  - \* Comment on the draft agenda of the next meeting of the OWG and suggest further agenda items;
  - \* Have dedicated time periods during OWG meetings when MAG representatives can dialogue with the OWG on key issues;
  - \* Have regular meetings with OWG representatives; and
  - \* Have expert advisory seats on any potential sub-working/thematic groups of the OWG to advise and draw on stakeholder views and expertise on specific topics, as well as provide technical inputs to any specific requests the OWG may have.

# High level political forum (HLPF)

- \* Para 84: established a “universal intergovernmental high-level political forum
  - \* building on the strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the CSD,
  - \* subsequently replacing the CSD
  - \* shall follow up on the implementation of sustainable development and should avoid overlap with existing structures, bodies and entities in a cost-effective manner.
- \* Para 85 (h): **Promote transparency and implementation through further enhancing the consultative role and participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders at the international level in order to better make use of their expertise, while retaining the intergovernmental nature of discussions**

# High level political forum (HLPF)

- \* Para 86: launched an ***intergovernmental and open, transparent and inclusive negotiation process*** under the UNGA
  - \* to define the format and organizational aspects of HLPF
  - \* will also consider the need for promoting intergenerational solidarity for the achievement of sustainable development, taking into account the needs of future generations, including by inviting the UNSG to present a report on this issue.
  - \* Aims to convene the first high-level forum at the beginning of the UNGA-68 (September 2013)
  - \* 30-member OWG to present a report early in the UNGA- 68

# High level political forum (HLPF)

## \* Status:

- \* Sweden and Uruguay may be invited to convene an "open, transparent and inclusive" negotiation process to establish the HLPF
- \* **"Non-Paper on options for the HLPF and their potential implications for Major Groups at the request of the Major Groups Organizer Partners"** was circulated by UNDESA to assist MGS in developing their policy positions on the establishment of the HLPF and the enhanced Major Groups/Civil Society modality to be incorporated into this new body
- \* Negotiations will conclude by May 2013 to give enough time to prepare for the first meeting of the HLPF in early September 2013.

# UNEP Strengthening and Upgrading

- \* Para 88: (h) Ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholders ***drawing on best practices and models from relevant multilateral institutions and exploring new mechanisms to promote transparency and the effective engagement of civil society.***
- \* Opportunity to bring in:
  - \* Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Civil Society Mechanism (CSM)
  - \* Principle 10 operationalization
  - \* Will build on the existing MGSB modalities at UNEP

# Finance

- \* Para 255: established an intergovernmental process under the UNGA, with technical support from the UN system and in ***open and broad consultation with relevant international and regional financial institutions and other relevant stakeholders.***
  - \* will assess financing needs, consider the effectiveness, consistency and synergies of existing instruments and frameworks, and evaluate additional initiatives,
  - \* with a view to preparing a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy to facilitate the mobilization of resources and their effective use in achieving sustainable development objectives

# Finance

- \* Para 256: established an intergovernmental committee, comprising 30 experts nominated by regional groups, with equitable geographical representation, will implement this process, concluding its work by 2014
- \* UNGA to consider the report and take appropriate actions
- \* Status:
  - \* 30 member experts working group on sustainable development financing strategy
  - \* Not (yet) clear how the “***open and broad consultation with relevant international and regional financial institutions and other relevant stakeholders***” will be done

# Technology

- \* Para. 273: requested relevant UN agencies to identify options for technology facilitation mechanism and for the UNSG to make recommendations to UNGA-67
- \* UN Secretary General's Report on Options for Technology Facilitation Mechanism: 31 August 2012
- \* Recommended Process Forward (from UNSG Report):
  - \* Place the proposed Global Technology Facilitation Mechanism under the HLPF to be fully operational before the end of 2013
  - \* Creation of an intergovernmental preparatory working group, **supported by a pool of experts**, that will work out the institutional arrangements for the global technology facilitation mechanism



# Technology Facilitation Mechanism

- \* Requested relevant UN agencies *to identify options for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies by, inter alia, assessing the technology needs of developing countries, options to address those needs and capacity-building.*
- \* Requested the UNSG, *on the basis of the options identified and taking into account existing models, to make recommendations regarding the facilitation mechanism to the UNGA-67*
- \* No reference to MGS/civil society involvement, but the UNSG Report's Recommendation includes the creation of "pool of experts"

# Technology Assessment

- \* Para 275: Recognized the **importance of strengthening international, regional and national capacities in research and technology assessment, especially in view of the rapid development and possible deployment of new technologies that may also have unintended negative impacts, in particular on biodiversity and health, or other unforeseen consequences**

# Other Post-Rio+20 Opportunities for MGS/Civil Society Engagement

- 1) Principle 10/Access Principle
- 2) 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Production and Consumption
- 3) Future Generations
- 4) Beyond GDP
- 5) Other Thematic Areas: Oceans, Mountains, Sustainable Agriculture, etc.

# Suggestions on Way Forward

- \* MGS/Civil Society may engage in these intergovernmental processes within the UN
  - \* Push for concrete mechanisms for direct and active MGS/CS participation in these processes, ex.: MGS proposal for a Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG)
- \* Civil Society may undertake campaigns and build movements around these processes to exert pressure from outside
  - \* Ex.: Campaign for People's Goals for Sustainable Development; establishment of Technology Observation Platforms (TOPs) at the national and regional levels

THANK YOU!