

Ministerial Plenary on SDGs including SCP

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One of the main challenges we have in the process that will lead to the establishment of Sustainable Development Goals, is to achieve effective inclusion of the environmental pillar in each of the areas that make up the final outcome. This is not only because of the intrinsic importance of providing adequate attention to the environmental aspects of development, but because it is proven the close interrelationship between the three pillars in many areas.

To assimilate and project the idea that the rational and responsible use of the environmental capital contributes to the achievement of economic and social development and promotes sustainable economic growth with equity and social inclusion, is a task for everyone and without the full commitment of all this task is impossible.

In the beginning of this week we discussed some national experiences that go in this direction. In the case of Uruguay, we appointed how the programs for the sound management of chemicals and wastes, for instance mercury waste treatment and non-returnable containers, not only removed hundreds of tons of toxic or potentially toxic waste that would otherwise remain in inhabited sites - generally where the most vulnerable sectors of the population live-, but also generates a significant number of jobs in different areas. This is nothing but working "towards a life of dignity for All".

This interplay of the three pillars is also clearly stated in the chapter on sustainable consumption and production, as was eloquently expressed by the President of the Republic of Uruguay, José Mujica during the Rio +20 Conference. First, because it is a cross cutting issue by definition. Second, because consumption and production are absolutely interdependent and because we are in one place or another of this equation depending on the activity we are talking about.

Therefore, we can not think of a static and divisive approach to address this issue. We are all both producers and consumers. The way we produce and consume has effects that go far beyond our national borders.

And it is good that we worry about how the way we produce and consume affects emissions of greenhouse gases that create climate change and the protection of ecosystems which are vital for the future of life on the planet. But we also need to worry very much to continue promoting food security, poverty reduction, generation of decent jobs and in particular the increase in productivity and reduction of waste of our precious resources.

Ladies and gentlemen, I did not come here to share concrete solutions regarding the content of the language that is and will continue to be discussed in the relevant bodies, but intended to provide our vision, our perspective on how we should approach our work and invite you to think hard about the interconnections of this topic, to express solidarity, have a proactive approach and to recall as José Gervasio Artigas our National Hero and Protector of the Free Peoples said, that "nothing can be expected, except from themselves."

thank you very much