

Annex I

High Level Panel on Sustainability: List of recommendations

Recommendations for empowering people to make sustainable choices

1. Governments and international donors should scale up their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals to eradicate poverty and to reduce inequalities as top priorities for attaining sustainable development.
2. Governments should respect, protect and provide for human rights, including the right to take part in government directly or through freely chosen representatives, as recognized in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
3. Governments should accelerate the implementation of commitments to advance gender equality and women's rights, including through the repeal of discriminatory laws and removal of formal barriers, the reform of institutions and the development and adoption of innovative measures to address informal and cultural practices that act as barriers. Particular emphasis should be given to:
 - (a) Ensuring that women have full and equal access to and control over productive resources through the equal right to own property and the right to inherit, and equal access to credit, financial and extension services along the entire value chain;
 - (b) Ensuring women's equal rights and opportunities in political decision making processes that are participatory, responsive, equitable and inclusive;
 - (c) Ensuring universal access to quality and affordable family-planning and other sexual and reproductive rights and health services.
4. Governments should consider establishing a global fund for education. This fund should be designed to attract support from Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, evolve out of the current World Bank Global Partnership for Education, and be tasked with closing the primary school education gap by 2015 so that there can be real hope for realizing Millennium Development Goal 2.
5. Governments should scale up their efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goal 2 on universal primary education by 2015, and establish a goal of providing universal access to quality post-primary and secondary education no later than 2030, emphasizing the skills and knowledge needed for sustainable growth and jobs.
6. Governments, the private sector, civil society and relevant international development partners should work together to provide vocational training, retraining and professional development within the context of lifelong learning geared to filling skills shortages in sectors essential to sustainable development. They should prioritize women, young people and vulnerable groups in these efforts.
7. Governments should adopt and advance "green jobs" and decent work policies as a priority in their budgets and sustainable development strategies while creating conditions for new jobs in the private sector.
8. Governments and business should build partnerships and provide start-up services for young entrepreneurs.

9. Employers, Governments and trade unions should take a comprehensive approach to advancing equality in the workplace, including by adopting principles of non-discrimination; measures to advance women into leadership roles; gender sensitive work-life and health policies; education, training and professional development targeting women and minorities; and commitments to measure and publicly report on progress.

10. Governments and business should recognize the economic benefits of enabling the full participation of women in the economy by putting in place economic policies that explicitly address the unique challenges that limit women, in particular:

(a) Allowing access for women farmers to land and resources;

(b) Improving women's access to capital and financial services;

(c) Improving access to markets through trade and technical assistance programmes and microfinance;

(d) Supporting the rise of women leaders in the public and private sectors.

11. Governments and other public authorities should promote open, transparent, balanced and science-based processes for developing labelling schemes and other mechanisms that fully reflect the impact of production and consumption, and work with the private sector to ensure that labelling, corporate reporting and advocacy are accurate, cost-effective and trustworthy so as to enable consumers to make informed choices, particularly in areas of high impact on human and natural systems, without creating barriers to trade.

12. Governments should make sustainable choices more easily available, affordable and attractive to consumers by setting, together with the private sector, sustainable product standards, in accordance with the best available technology and without creating trade barriers, and by applying price incentives and disincentives.

13. Government and non-governmental entities should promote the concept of sustainable development and sustainable consumption, and these should be integrated into curricula of primary and secondary education.

14. The Panel welcomes discourse on the ethical dimensions of sustainable development at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012 among all stakeholders, based on relevant experience and instruments, including the Earth Charter, to inform Governments in their efforts to shift to sustainable development.

15. Governments and international organizations should work to create a new green revolution — an “ever-green revolution” — for the twenty-first century that aims to at least double productivity while drastically reducing resource use and avoiding further loss of biodiversity, topsoil loss and water depletion and contamination, including through the scaling-up of investment in agricultural research and development, to ensure that cutting-edge research is rapidly moved from laboratory to field. Governments should task FAO with working with key partners and stakeholders to initiate and coordinate this task, as that organization has a unique mandate to reduce the world food deficit.

16. Governments should work towards agreement on global principles for sustainable and responsible land and water investment deals, including ongoing efforts to promote responsible agricultural investment (RAI), with particular emphasis on protecting the rights and livelihoods of

poor people who depend on these basic resources, while ensuring environmental sustainability.

17. Governments should establish and scale up integrated water resource management schemes, bearing fully in mind that water plays multifaceted roles, including for drinking, sanitation, agriculture, industry and energy.

18. Governments should commit to the establishment of regional oceans and coastal management frameworks in major marine ecosystems, including through:

(a) Enhanced cooperation in oceans and coastal management involving relevant stakeholders;

(b) Marine and coastal planning by countries in regional areas, taking into account the specific needs, ecosystems and users in their area and supported by solid funding mechanisms to develop and implement these plans;

(c) Building the capacity of marine managers, policymakers and scientists in developing countries, especially small island developing countries and other coastal States;

(d) Enhanced monitoring and surveillance systems.

19. Where regional fisheries management organizations are operating they should seek to make their policies and practices consistent with and support coordinated regional oceans management. Regional fisheries management organizations, Governments and marine managers should focus on an ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management in order to deliver improved economic and environmental benefits.

20. Governments should work in concert with appropriate stakeholders to ensure universal access to affordable sustainable energy by 2030, as well as seek to double the rate of improvement in energy efficiency and the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix. Governments and international organizations should promote energy-saving technologies and renewable energy through the incentivization of research and development and investment in them.

21. Governments should work with appropriate stakeholders to provide citizens, especially those in remote areas, with access to technologies, including universal telecommunications and broadband networks, by 2025.

22. Governments, international financial institutions and major companies should be encouraged to engage in international cooperation on innovation- and technology-oriented sustainable development on an enlarged scale, enhancing the technological capability of developing countries and taking full advantage of the potential roles played by climate-friendly technologies in dealing with global climate change and in developing a green economy. The agreements reached under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Cancun and Durban are a good step in this direction.

23. Countries should work to ensure that all citizens are provided with access to basic safety nets through appropriate national efforts and the provision of appropriate capacity, finance and technology.

24. Governments should develop and implement policies to manage the economic and social impacts of transition and enhance resilience — in particular through targeted social protection

programmes and policies and by scaling up humanitarian capacities to deal with increasing environmental stress and potential shocks, where appropriate.

25. Governments and international organizations should accelerate efforts to produce regional exposure and vulnerability assessments and appropriate precautionary strategies to prevent adverse impacts on social and natural systems that are fully focused on people's needs, with priority accorded to the special needs of Africa, small island developing States, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries.

26. Governments and international organizations should increase the resources allocated to adaptation and disaster risk reduction and integrate resilience planning into their development budgets and strategies.

Recommendations for a sustainable economy

27. Governments should establish price signals that value sustainability to guide the consumption and investment decisions of households, businesses and the public sector. In particular, Governments could:

(a) Establish natural resource and externality pricing instruments, including carbon pricing, through mechanisms such as taxation, regulation or emissions trading systems, by 2020;

(b) Ensure that policy development reflects the positive benefits of the inclusion of women, youth and the poor through their full participation in and contribution to the economy, and also account for the economic, environmental and social costs;

(c) Reform national fiscal and credit systems to provide long-term incentives for sustainable practices, as well as disincentives for unsustainable behaviour;

(d) Develop and expand national and international schemes for payments for ecosystem services in such areas as water use, farming, fisheries and forestry systems;

(e) Address price signals that distort the consumption and investment decisions of households, businesses and the public sector and undermine sustainability values. Governments should move towards the transparent disclosure of all subsidies, and should identify and remove those subsidies which cause the greatest detriment to natural, environmental and social resources;

(f) Phase out fossil fuel subsidies and reduce other perverse or trade distorting subsidies by 2020. The reduction of subsidies must be accomplished in a manner that protects the poor and eases the transition for affected groups when the products or services concerned are essential.

28. Governments, other public institutions such as universities, and international organizations should develop sustainable development criteria for their procurement, with the aim of achieving a shift towards cost-effective sustainable procurement over the next 10 years, and should issue annual public reports on their progress as from 2015.

29. Governments should develop standards for production and resource extraction to support the transition to a sustainable global economy. They should further encourage widespread adoption and uptake by business of voluntary sustainability principles derived from international agreements and conventions

30. Governments should promote and incentivize the inclusion of long-term sustainable development criteria in investment and transactions conducted by companies, including financial transactions. Business groups should work with Governments and international agencies to develop a framework for sustainable development reporting, and should consider mandatory reporting by corporations with market capitalizations larger than \$100 million.

31. Businesses should seek to align their business practices with universally accepted principles concerning human rights, labour, environmental sustainability and the fight against corruption, such as those set forth in the Global Compact.

32. Given the importance of large pools of private and sovereign capital to enable the transition to sustainable development, we call on the following entities to explore a range of measures to apply sustainable development criteria, including:

(a) The boards of sovereign wealth funds and of national and international public pension funds, as well as other major financial institutions, in their investment decisions;

(b) Governments or stock market regulators, to adopt or revise regulations in order to encourage their use;

(c) Stock exchanges, to facilitate their application in the analysis of companies and their reports on compliance;

(d) Governments, to develop incentives and create an enabling environment by making boards of directors attentive to them (fiduciary duty);

(e) Governments and credit rating agencies, to integrate them into their respective risk assessments.

33. Governments, international institutions and international development banks should step up their efforts to promote sustainable development and to assess and monitor adequately the consequences of their policies in the social and environmental spheres. Multilateral and regional development banks and export credit agencies should apply sustainable development criteria, while considering country risks.

34. Governments and business should build strategic partnerships between themselves and local communities for the implementation of sustainable development investments.

35. Governments, international financial institutions and major companies should work together to create incentives for increased investments in sustainable technologies, innovations and infrastructures, including through the adoption of policies and targets that reduce investor uncertainty; the promotion of public-private networks to support research and development; the development of risk guarantee schemes and the provision of risk capital; and seed financing.

36. Governments should use public investment to create enabling frameworks that catalyse very substantial additional financing from the private sector, for example, through the provision of infrastructure, risk-sharing, viability gap funding or advance purchase commitments.

37. Governments should seek to incentivize investment in sustainable development by shaping investor calculations about the future through, in particular, the greater use of risk-sharing mechanisms and the enhancement of certainty about the long-term regulatory and policy environment. Measures could include targets for renewable energy or conservation, waste reduction,

water conservation, access to carbon markets through the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol or sustained prospects for public financing.

38. Governments and the financial sector should develop innovative partnerships to provide capacity-building and increased access to capital, as a means of incentivizing small and medium-sized enterprises and enabling them to take part in the new sustainable economy.

39. To measure progress on sustainable development, a Sustainable Development Index or set of indicators should be developed by 2014. To this end, the Secretary-general should appoint a technical task force, including relevant stakeholders.

Recommendations for strengthening institutional governance

40. As a basis for sustainable development, Governments should ensure the rule of law, good governance and citizens' rights of access to official information, public participation in decision-making and equal access to justice.

41. Governments should enable young people's participation in and influence on decision-making processes at the local, national and international levels. In addition, consultation processes and dialogue should be encouraged to incorporate voices from non-conventional networks and youth communities, such as Internet forums and opinion-making blogs.⁴² Governments should adopt whole-of-Government approaches to sustainable development issues, under the leadership of the Head of State or Government and involving all relevant ministries for addressing such issues across sectors.

43. Governments and parliaments should incorporate the sustainable development perspective into their strategies, their legislation and, in particular, their budget processes. To this end, they should take into account the economic, social and environmental dimensions of such issues as poverty eradication, job creation, inequality reduction, unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, energy, climate change, biodiversity and green growth. They should explore ways to incorporate specific sustainability considerations into budget oversight, report publicly on relevant activities and make budgets accessible to their citizens.

44. Measures should be taken to strengthen the interface between policymaking and science in order to facilitate informed political decision-making on sustainable development issues. Representatives of the scientific community could be included as members or advisers in relevant national or local bodies dealing with sustainable development issues.

45. The Panel recognizes the universal aspiration to sustainable development. It also recognizes the diversity of national circumstances and of social, economic and environmental challenges. The Panel calls for a process to explore the concept and application of the critical issue of equity in relation to sustainable development, with a view to feeding the outcome into the Rio+20 process and its follow-up.

46. Bilateral donors, international institutions and development banks should step up their efforts to promote sustainable development in a comprehensive way and should monitor and report on the impact of their sustainable development policies on a regular basis.

47. As international sustainable development policy is fragmented and, in particular, the environmental pillar is weak, UNEP should be strengthened.

48. Governments should agree to develop a set of key universal sustainable development goals, covering all three dimensions of sustainable development as well as their interconnections. Such goals should galvanize individual and collective action and complement the Millennium Development Goals, while allowing for a post-2015 framework. An expert mechanism should be established by the Secretary-general to elaborate and refine the goals before their adoption by United Nations Member States.

49. The Panel endorses the Secretary-General's "Sustainable Energy for All" initiative, which should be implemented without delay.

50. The Secretary-General should lead a joint effort with the heads of relevant international organizations, including relevant United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, to prepare a regular global sustainable development outlook report that brings together information and assessments currently dispersed across institutions, and analyses them in an integrated way.

51. Governments and the scientific community should take practical steps, including through the launching of a major global scientific initiative, to strengthen the interface between policy and science. This should include the preparation of regular assessments and digests of the science around such concepts as "planetary boundaries", "tipping points" and "environmental thresholds" in the context of sustainable development. This would complement other scientific work on the sustainable development agenda, including its economic and social aspects, to improve data and knowledge concerning socio-economic factors such as inequality. In addition, the Secretary-General should consider naming a chief scientific adviser or establishing a scientific advisory board with diverse knowledge and experience to advise him or her and other organs of the United Nations.

52. Governments should consider creating a global sustainable development council to improve the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, address emerging issues and review sustainability progress, with meetings held on a regular basis throughout the year. This body could be a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and would replace the Commission on Sustainable Development. It would need to have a broad geographical and political membership and to fully engage relevant international institutions — including United Nations agencies and the international financial institutions — and non-State actors from civil society, the private sector and science.

53. Such a council would develop a peer review mechanism that would encourage States, in a constructive spirit, to explain their policies, to share experiences and lessons learned, and to fulfil their commitments.

54. Governments should also use existing institutions in a much more dynamic way, including by using the period between the holding in 2012 of Rio+20 and 2015 for deliberate review and experimentation, in order to incorporate tested solutions into any post-2015 development framework and institutional reform.

55. The Secretary-General should expedite the development of a sustainable development strategy for the United Nations system in order to contribute to coherence, better define responsibilities among United Nations bodies, reduce overlap and duplication and improve accountability for implementation. The strategy should be reviewed by all relevant United Nations bodies and governing boards, with a special effort being made to forge a unified view among countries common to all boards and processes.

56. The Secretary-General should make full use of the United Nations as the world's meeting place,

convening periodic high-level exchanges on sustainable development when leaders meet at the opening of the new session of the General Assembly. Such gatherings should be used to set the agenda and address emerging issues by bringing together Heads of State or Government, heads of international institutions and representatives of civil society and the private sector