

A call to governments of the world and leaders at Rio+20 by People of India

National Consultation on Sustainable Development; National and Global Priorities
for Rio+20, 28th April, IIC, New Delhi

We the members of civil society organizations, academia, judiciary, peoples groups and movements, farming and peasant communities and policy makers, having assembled at Delhi India on 28th April, considered and discussed the Rio+20 Summit (June 2012), its historical perspective, aims and objectives, focus areas, preparatory processes, negotiations on the Zero draft and the amendments proposed by parties, and IGOs and civil society organization.

We express with deep concern that the process does not inspire confidence that Rio+20 is really looking into the fundamental issues that promote unsustainable development.

We regret to observe that environment and nature does not form the central concern, and while the acknowledging the failure of current economic model and development paradigm, the Rio +20 tends to extend it at the cost of nature, environment, earth and rights of people in the developing and poor countries.

We are perturbed to observe that failure of development paradigm promoted by industrial countries and world institutions have resulted in a series of crisis including economic, food, fuel, and climate. The humanity in poor countries, and women and children having least resilience faces the worst affects.

We are also extremely concerned that the two themes of Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication (GESDPE), and Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD), does not highlight the urgency that humanity and the world faces today.

It is a matter of grave concern for us that in the negotiations leading towards the Summit in June, has shown complete disregard to the principles of Rio (primarily equity and CBDR among them), and the right to development.

We call upon the governments of the worlds and leaders at Rio Sustainable Development Summit to make efforts towards a collective, meaningful, equitable, and ambitious outcome, which is based on principles of Rio, integration of three pillars and harmonization of needs of growth with the rights of nature and Mother Earth.

We call upon the developed and industrial countries to affirm to principles laid down in Rio, and fulfill their previous commitments including commitments to provide financial and technological assistance to developing countries, and make genuine efforts towards a meaningful solution to the crisis.

We call upon the leaders of the developing and least developed countries to come together to ensure that the Summits outcomes is not fractured by the differences

among them and they take upon a collective responsibility and leadership in this landmark Summit.

We call upon the national governments to ensure ambitious implementation of the principles laid down by the Rio, agenda 21, JPOI, Nagoya Protocol, and other important policies and legislations, flowing out of the Rio UNCED. We also call upon them to ensure development of mechanisms and structures at national, sub national and local levels, and invest in building capacity at local level to understand and monitor sustainable policies.

We call upon civil societies of the world to broaden the sustainable development debate, and deepen the understanding of sustainable development, alternative paradigms, success stories, in the society, government, and other stakeholders.

We demand and reiterate that:

1. The Summit and its outcome must bring unequivocal commitments to ensure that the environment and nature forms the central concern in a revisit to the development paradigm. Presently, it seems that the focus is economic development and nature is being talked about as erosion of natural regenerative capacity and crisis of climate has forced a slowdown of economic growth. The summit must approach the issues of sustainable development and poverty eradication in a human rights based approach and the outcomes must incorporate highest accountability and transparency standards.
2. The affirmation to the Rio principles must ensure affirmation to all principles that Rio stood for and specifically equity and CBDR. The outcomes must be based on the principles of Rio, and specifically, equity and CBDR, do no harm, polluter pays, inter-generational and intra generational equity.
3. The green economy should respect political sovereignty and sovereignty over their natural resources. It must focus on poverty eradication and green jobs and livelihoods. The green economy must not create additional externalities in aid and trade for poor and developing countries. It must allow increased access to the additional finances and appropriate technology to help south develop green development pathways.
4. The relevance for green economy must acknowledge the failure of current economic system and paradigm. It must also acknowledge the gaps in implementation including failure of world institutions, and global environmental governance as the need for reform in institutions and systems including economic and financial architecture, rules of aid and trade and BWIs.
5. The green economy must consider women and youth as agents of sustainability, and must address impact of unsustainable development on them. It must invest in devising strategies which are women centric and allow them greater access to information, resources, finances and technology.
6. The private sector has the potential of contributing significantly in development of green economy; however, the experience suggests that they have failed to respect that duty. The greed for profit has harmed the environment and the natural capital resulting in huge social and economic costs borne mostly by people in developing and poor countries. The green economy must be cautious of not having over reliance

on private companies and business, which undermines and dilutes developed countries responsibility.

7. The institutional framework for sustainable development must ensure that it integrates three pillars of sustainable development, substantially improves the global environmental governance with increased representation of the concerns from developing and poor but resource rich countries. The mechanism agreed upon must be transparent, representative, effective, and accountable and should have plurality in its composition. It must also ensure increased civil society participation.
8. The IFSD must also ensure appropriate linkages in surveillance at regional, national and sub-national levels, so that the gap between the principles and the practice is reduced and polluters do not go scot free.
9. The IFSD also must ensure that national governments take accountability of creating capacities at local level for monitoring of sustainable development policies and ensure representation of their voices, concerns and solutions in the policy making.
10. The Summit must ensure that the key thematic areas listed are given due consideration and the decisions take are based on the experience and learning.
11. The right to food and nutrition must be pursued as first goal towards sustainable development. The Summit must commit unequivocal support to small holder farmers (who produce more than 70% of the world's food) and sustainable agriculture as solution to the crisis of food and climate. Industrial agriculture with heavy reliance on external inputs pesticides and chemical fertilizers, has created hegemony of agribusiness companies, and has caused immense harm to the soil, earth, water and environment, and has taken away sovereignty and choice from small holders farmers, which is being reflected in food crisis. Any effort to bring increased corporatization of agriculture, alienation of land from agriculture, neglect to concerns of small holder farmers and climate change will have disastrous impact on availability of food for the rising populations. The Summit must reject industrialization and corporatization of agriculture.
12. Water is central to life, food, energy and environment. The Summit must ensure that concerns related to water are prioritized and water is treated as right rather than a tradable commodity. The experience of privatization of water and its management has been extremely disappointing world over and the Summit must discourage a commercial approach to water, and encourage public attention and investment in water. Water is more a local issues and decentralized control and management is extremely critical in improving quality, preservation and recharge, equitable access and distribution, which Summit must encourage.
13. The means of implementation must ensure that developing and poor countries are allowed access to new and additional finance and technology based on the principle of equity and CBDR, and international trade framework under the WTO allows sufficient flexibility to these countries in their national economic and development interest. It also must ensure that IPR regimes are changed which helps poor countries access and produce technology necessary generic drugs, which is extremely essential to fight disease and epidemics in many courtiers.
14. Climate change is one of the biggest developmental challenges today, and any effort towards sustainable development must ensure additional global attention, efforts and cooperation. The Summit must be a step towards resolving the crisis in climate change negotiations and bring improved appreciation of the crisis among the states,

and encourage collective responsibility based on the principles of equity and CBDR. It must expedite the efforts and commitments made by countries at COP.

15. Sustainable cities will be the fulcrum of sustainable development in coming decades. The Summit must ensure that resources in the cities are shared equitably and consumed responsibly with special attention to the vulnerable poor populations in the cities. In addition it must ensure improved access to resources, amenities and employment in the rural areas so that rural urban migration can be managed better.
 16. Energy is extremely critical for sustainable development. In the last five decades, global energy production has improved significantly, however, access to energy especially in poor and developing countries remain highly critical. The energy debates also tend to see energy efficiency as solution to energy crisis, which is highly flawed presumption as efficiency has led to increase in consumption. Besides, efforts to promote renewable energy also remain profit oriented and driven by commercial considerations rather than ecological and environmental concerns. Bio-mass, which is the main source of energy for resource poor people and can be sustainable solution to energy and heat for people in poor communities, remains completely absent in modern energy debates mainly due to low profit perception. The modern energy production forces the poor people to buy costly and at times dirty energy for the profit making power companies. The Summit must ensure that equity is central consideration in making modern energy available and to the energy security efforts.
 17. Ecosystem services approach tends to not only evaluate natural resources from commercial point of view but also tends to encourage commodification of regenerative capacity of earth. We reject this approach and encourage and humanity and the governments to serve the nature and earth rather than try control them and their services.
-