

ARSCP-7 ends in Accra Ghana

The three days seventh African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production [ARSCP-7] ended up in Accra Ghana on the 23rd May 2012 attended by over 250 SCP experts from Africa and beyond. The meeting called on Africa to fully implement the regional 10Year framework Programmes on SCP which links sustainable consumption and production with the challenges of meeting basic needs. The priority areas of the regional 10-YFP on SCP are water, energy, habitat and urban development and industrial development. The meeting further said that the ARSCP considers that adoption of the global 10 YFP is a vital outcome required from Rio+20 and the wording for this formal adoption must ensure that the 10 YFP as negotiated at CSD 19 is the framework adopted.

Opening the meeting the Ghana Minister for Environment Sherry Hanny Ayittey, pointed out that Africa imports \$30 billion worth of goods and services and exports only \$3billion. " this is the time for Africa to talk about trade-offs through which the continent will no longer beg for food to feed its people". She assured the participants that Ghana was keen on the outcome of the meeting which targeted Rio+20 and that her government delegation would be ready to take the meeting recommendations to Rio +20 conference to be held in June 2012.

The African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (ARSCP) is a regional international nongovernmental organization which promotes promote the development of national and regional capacities for the effective promotion and implementation of sustainable consumption and production principles and serve as the regional clearinghouse for sustainable consumption and production activities in the Africa region. More info at <http://www.arscp.org/>, or from the Secretariat Since inception in 2000, the ARSCP has organized seven bi annual regional roundtable meetings on SCP in Africa. The organization took the lead in preparation of the African 10YFP on SCP which was endorsed by AMCEN in 2006. The region has over 100 members scattered all over Africa and beyond. Major aim of the meetings is knowledge management on SCP for its members.

The meeting key messages and recommendations are as follows:

Overall African Key Messages to Rio+20

- a. African countries consider the African 10-YFP on SCP as the foundation for policies and other efforts to promote a green economy.
- b. Resource efficiency and decoupling are critical to sustainable economic growth, human development and environmental sustainability in Africa.
- c. Opportunities for SCP education should be offered to decision makers and stakeholders at all levels, including through formal education curricula, for responsible consumption and sustainable lifestyles.
- d. The Eco Mark Africa label represents a home-grown approach to identifying and expanding markets for sustainable products within and beyond Africa and is a central element of the African 10-YFP on SCP.
- e. National SCP action plans and mainstreaming SCP objectives in development policies make a substantial contribution to poverty alleviation. The ARSCP which has played a key role in supporting the implementation of these policies should be strengthened, also with the aim of sharing African experience with other regions.
- f. There is need for an enabling policy for sustainable buildings and construction to address design, construction, operation and decommissioning.
- g. Resource efficiency and decoupling are key tools to enhancing economic growth, profits, cost effectiveness, poverty reduction and human well-being & environmental sustainability in developing countries. The 3 pillar of SD are mutually re-enforcing & important to overall global sustainability
- h. RECP enhance relative decoupling in developing countries and absolute decoupling in developed countries. These goals are key to achieving global sustainability
- i. Protecting the environment without alleviating poverty is not sustainable development, encourage environmental justice.

Recommendations for Rio+20

On the 10 YFP ON SCP

- The ARSCP considers that adoption of the global 10 YFP is a vital outcome required from Rio+20
- The wording for this formal adoption must ensure that the 10 YFP as negotiated at CSD 19 is the framework adopted. Any minor technical adjustments required can be made after adoption.

On SDGs

- While a set of SDGs with goals, targets & objectives could provide valuable guidance for achieving sustainable development, there remains a need to intensify efforts to attain the MDGs first.
- SDGs should be differentiated to reflect African priorities and needs.
- The objective of achieving SCP patterns should be mainstreamed into the SDGs, given that this is an overarching objective of and prerequisite for sustainable development (JPOI, 2002).

On Green Economy

- Many existing SCP policies and initiatives could support the transition to a Green Economy.
- Many African countries have initiated a transition to a green economy, but further international cooperation is required to accelerate this transition
- The Green Economy should be socially inclusive, and serve as a tool for poverty eradication
- A Green Economy must generate decent employment and new green jobs, for Youth, Women and disadvantaged groups
- A Green Economy should be inclusive of private sector and other major groups
- A Green Economy should contribute to mitigation of and adaptation to Climate Change

A Green Economy

- Should be based on a differentiated approach.
- Should promote trade and market access for products
- Should promote environmentally sound technology transfer and help close technology gaps
- Should support the refinement and deployment of indigenous technology and provide mechanisms for patenting
- Should embrace SCP priorities as identified in the African 10 YFP, which contribute to equitable development
- Should have a well resourced means of implementation, including funding.

On Institutional Framework

- Need for accessible, strong and responsive institutions at all levels to coordinate and implement SCP and promote transition to a Green Economy
- Transformation of UNEP, based in Kenya, requires establishment of universal membership to facilitate decision-making and implementation.
- The institutional framework should promote environmentally sound technology transfer and cooperation.
- Reform of CSD is required to make it a forum for discussions by all Ministries influencing sustainable development, including Ministers of Finance, Science & Technology, Trade and Industry and Environment and those with a Social Mandate.
- Strengthen research institutions to respond to new and emerging issues and develop environmentally sound technologies and policies to address them
- A follow-up mechanism should be established to track all agreements made at Rio and provide and monitor means of implementation.

Press Release

The Press release for the meeting is given below.

PRESS RELEASE ARSCP-7

ARSCP-7 feeds into Rio+20

The Seventh ARSCP biannual roundtable meeting on SCP (ARSCP-7) with the theme: **‘African Ten Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production in the context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Alleviation and its Framework for Implementation’** took place from the 21 to 23rd May 2012 in Accra, Ghana. The meeting was attended by over 234 SCP experts from all over Africa and beyond as well as potential delegates of the Rio+20 meeting from different countries. UN permanent missions, UNEP and UNIDO representatives were also present. The meeting was organized by the African Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (ARSCP) in collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana (EPA) and hosted by the Government of Ghana, through the EPA. The opening ceremony was officiated by the Minister of Environment Ghana Her Excellency Madame Sherry Ayithey. In her speech among others, she welcomed the delegates and said that Ghana was keen on the outcome of the meeting which targeted Rio+20. She asserted that her government delegation would be ready to take the meeting recommendations to Rio +20 conference to be held in June 2012.

Opening the meeting the ARSCP President Prof Cleophas Migiro of Tanzania said that the key ARSCP-7 aim was to feed into the Rio+20 – “the future we want” and take stock of sustainable consumption and production (SCP) progress in Africa today. To Africa, this theme was timely because the African 10 Year Framework Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (African 10YFP on SCP) was rolled out eight years ago with full political support and backing of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) and is under implementation. No other region has been able to come up with its ten

year framework programmes on SCP (10YFP on SCP) as stipulated in the JPOI. Over the years, the region has tested and implemented programmes and activities on SCP and appreciated its ability to meet the millennium development goals (MDGs). The region possesses a wealth of experience and voices that need to be sent out to the world for advocating SCP so as to reduce poverty and mitigate climate change.

The ARSCP-7 also reviewed progress which Africa has reached in the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), through the African 10 Year Framework Programme on SCP by governments, businesses and NGOs. It was found out that slowly, the programmes are getting mainstreamed into regional, sub-regional, national and sub-national policies and development plans. It also noted that SCP generally appears to be low in being mainstreamed in the business agenda except for the existence of some innovative entrepreneurs putting sustainability as core of the business model. The civil society organizations in cooperation with business, academia and international organizations have been successful in establishing sustainable income generating ventures in Africa which could be replicated. Thus, this recognition of SCP is an important step in the sustainable development process of the Africa region. However more still needs, to be done, especially in SCP policy monitoring, regulation formulation and corporate social responsibility.

On recommendations for the Rio meeting, the ARSCP-7 participants said that African countries consider the African 10-YFP on SCP as the foundation for policies and other efforts to promote a green economy. They consider that the adoption of the global 10 YFP on SCP is a vital outcome required from Rio+20 and that it must ensure that the 10 YFP as negotiated at the UN Commission on Sustainable Development 19 (CSD19) is adopted. The objective of achieving SCP patterns should be mainstreamed into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), given that this is an overarching objective of and prerequisite for

sustainable development (JPOI, 2002) and the SDGs should be differentiated to reflect African priorities and needs. They further recommended that Green economy should be based on a differentiated approach, should promote trade and market access for products, embrace SCP priorities as identified in the African 10 YFP, which contribute to equitable development and should have a well resourced means of implementation, including funding.

The meeting stressed that protecting the environment without alleviating poverty is not sustainable development. Thus we must encourage mindset change, environmental justice, resource efficiency and decoupling as necessary tools for sustainable development. The meeting emphasized the need for accessible, strong and responsive institutions at all levels to coordinate and implement SCP and promote transition to a Green Economy. The institutional framework should promote environmentally sound technology transfer and cooperation, strengthen research institutions which respond to new and emerging issues and develop environmentally sound technologies and policies to address them. The meeting further recommended to put in place a follow-up mechanism which should track all agreements made at Rio+20 and provide monitoring and means of implementation. It also recommended to reform the CSD to make it a forum for discussions by all Ministries influencing sustainable development, including Ministers of Finance, Science & Technology, Trade and Industry and Environment and those with a Social Mandate.

The ARSCP-7 meeting urged Rio+20 delegates from Africa to ensure Africa voice on mitigating climate change and poverty alleviation through SCP is heard and acted upon at Rio.

Issued by:

ARSCP Secretariat, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania <secretariat@arscp.org>

Signed: Eng. Andrew J. Kitenge. Date 31/05/2012