

RESOURCE PANEL, MARRAKECH PROCESS AND GREEN ECONOMY INITIATIVE

*Working together towards sustainable consumption and
production for a Green Economy*



International Panel
for Sustainable
Resource Management

(DRAFT)

Working together towards sustainable consumption and production for a Green Economy

This note is a background paper for the Steering Committee of the Resource Panel (November 2009, Beijing, China). During the 4th Steering Committee meeting (5 June, Paris), the Steering Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare a note on the linkages between the work of the Panel and the Marrakech Process and the CSD. The Secretariat has taken the opportunity to also outline in this note the synergies between the Resource Panel and UNEP's Green Economy Initiative. For an overview of the three initiatives, please see Section 3.

1. INTRODUCTION - TOWARDS RESOURCE EFFICIENT ECONOMIES

The Resource Panel (RP), Marrakech Process (MP) and the Green Economy Initiative (GEI) are complementary UNEP initiatives within the Resource Efficiency priority area (one of six priorities) in UNEP. Within this work area, the RP's primary role is conducting scientific assessment. The GEI and MP on the other hand, have stronger roles in developing and implementing policies and tools. However, there are also clear cross-linkages, given that a key principle of the RP is policy relevance, and the GEI also includes macroeconomic assessments.

The Resource Panel focuses on scientific assessment from an environmental point of view. It assesses the drivers and pressures associated with resource consumption and environmental impacts, and assesses responses to aiming to reduce the environmental impacts of resource consumption (for the ultimate goal of decoupling environmental impacts and resource consumption from economic growth). In particular, the Resource Panel's strength is its holistic view of resources over the life cycle to identify possible burden shifting between resource consumption and environmental impact categories (climate change, biodiversity, resource scarcity, toxicity etc). The Resource Panel strategy is based on recommendations of a fully engaged Civil Society Organisation and Government Steering Committee. This is because the scientific assessments are intended to provide a scientific basis for policy development. Emphasis is placed on policy-relevance throughout, and each assessment report includes policy implications. In most cases the goal will not be to push the boundaries of science (unless there are major gaps that significantly impede science-based policy making), rather it is to crystallise the best of existing knowledge and science in a digestible and relevant way for policy and decision makers. However, in order to retain neutrality, the assessment reports are not policy prescriptive and therefore the Resource Panel is not said to explicitly focus on policy development.

The Marrakech Process (launched in 2003) is a global multi-stakeholder process to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns and to support the elaboration of a 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP). The proposal of the 10YFP will be reviewed by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) during the 2010/11 two-year cycle. The Process responds to the call of the WSSD Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in support of the regional and national initiatives to accelerate the shift towards SCP patterns, thus decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation. UNEP and UN DESA are serving as the Secretariat to coordinate this global process, with an active participation of national governments, and major groups – business and industry, NGOs, workers and trade unions and other stakeholders. The name comes from the first meeting, which took place in Marrakech, Morocco.

The Green Economy Initiative (GEI) includes research, advisory services, and partnerships with UN agencies, civil society groups, researchers, and businesses at global, regional, and country levels. They seek to prove that investing in green sectors such as renewable energy, and improving resource/energy efficiency can make a significant contribution to economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction while improving the environment. They also seek to identify and assess reforms in public policies and institutions that are required to scale up these green investments. The aim is to encourage and enable governments to increase investments in green sectors, by illustrating their commercial and economic potential.

2. COMMON ACTIVITIES AND SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE INITIATIVES

Resource Panel and Marrakech Process

Common Activities

1. Scientific inputs to 10YFP

A summary paper putting the findings of Panel reports (in particular Decoupling and Environmental Impacts) into the context of the 10YFP for input into CSD-18 and CSD-19, including recommendations on thematic priorities.

2. Expert Review Group for SCP policy options and Reports

Formation of an expert review group amongst the Resource Panel members and their networks to scientifically review (1) relevant reports under the Marrakech Process and (2) national SCP policy options as requested by the Marrakech Process Secretariat and Advisory Committee.

3. Collaboration on Regional roundtables

Cooperation on the regional round tables (Africa, Arab Region, Asia-Pacific) to enhance the Resource Panel's regional networks and outreach.

4. Joint work on Africa Regional Seminar on Sustainable Resource Management

Collaboration on Regional Seminars on Sustainable Resource Management, such as the Africa Regional Seminar (Nov 2010, Stellenbosch). The Resource Panel could very much benefit from the work already done and networks already in place through the MP. For the Resource Panel the focus would be towards capacity building.

5. Scientific advice on potential new activities

Collaboration on the identification of potential new activities for the implementation of the 10YFP, based on findings of the Resource Panel Working Groups, aiming overall at assessing the differences in environmental impacts and resources use due to changing consumption and production patterns.

6. Regular updating to partners of common activities.

Regular update to project partners providing updates on linkage between the Marrakech Process and the Resource Panel.

Synergies

The Marrakech Process and the Resource Panel rely on a common vision: modifying unsustainable consumption and production patterns to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation by increasing resource efficiency. With distinctive approaches, assets and networks, the two initiatives have important potential for achieving synergies and for strengthening each other's added value. The Marrakech Process is more oriented towards promoting the implementation of SCP and leading to the development of a 10 year Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP) meant for implementation during 2012 - 2022). The 10 YFP is meant to be a global framework for action elaborated by effective policies and programs to accelerate the shift towards SCP at the regional and national levels and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders. Since the Resource Panel's objective is to provide a scientific basis for responses such as the 10YFP and the SCP projects, the Marrakech Process is an important initiative with which to synergise.

Geographic Scope. The Marrakech Process has supported the development of regional SCP programmes or action plans at the regional level in Africa, Europe, Latin America and West Asia with the institutional support of the regional intergovernmental organizations. These programmes or action plans address issues that are highly relevant to the energy, food, water, climate, and global economic crises. Asia-Pacific and North American regions also engaged in similar processes in 2008. Activities have also taken place at the national level supporting the development of National SCP Programmes through capacity building and implementation of demonstration projects in various countries, including Mauritius, Senegal, Indonesia, Tanzania, Egypt, Mozambique, Colombia, Brazil and Ecuador. Progress has been made in engaging countries with emerging economies, including the convening of national roundtables on SCP in

China, India, Brazil and South Africa. 3 The Resource Panel currently operates at the international level with scientific experts acting on an independent basis. The assessment reports also take an international view, for example in looking at the impacts of trade. The

Resource Panel Assessment Reports therefore provide a global context for the development of regional and national SCP policies. From 2010 onwards, UNEP will support the Resource Panel with a capacity building programme at the regional level to zoom in on the issues that are most important and to strengthen scientific assessment capacity within regional networks. In the way the Resource Panel will link with the Marrakech Process's regional networks and build on the regional consultation from a scientific assessment perspective.

Thematic focus. Seven Marrakech Task Forces have been created that support the development of SCP tools, capacity building and the implementation of SCP projects on the following specific SCP-related issues: cooperation with Africa, sustainable products, sustainable lifestyles, sustainable public procurement, sustainable tourism, sustainable buildings and construction, and education for sustainable development. The Resource Panel's scientific assessment focus on two cross-cutting themes - decoupling and environmental impacts – and three resources – Biofuels (or biomass), Metals and Water.

Policy. In terms of policy, the Marrakech process and its 10YFP are focused on policy design and recommendations, capacity building as well as on implementation of concrete projects and activities. The purpose of the Resource Panel is to provide scientific assessments for science based policy making. Therefore the two initiatives have complementary supply and demand roles. The Resource Panel can contribute to the Marrakech Process with scientific advice to the elaboration of the 10YFP, by feeding the decision making process with the independent scientific assessment on priority areas needed to increase resource efficiency and achieve decoupling.

Resource Panel and Green Economy Initiative

Common Activities

7. 1. Shared technical networks for development of technical reports

Both initiatives benefit from each other's networks. The Green Economy Report is currently under development with members of the Resource Panel.

8. 2. Shared technical networks for global fora activities

Resource Panel open session (June 2009), Green Economy Forum (Nov 2009).

9. 3. Technical assessment of investment and policy advice

The Resource Panel reports can analyse possible responses the GEI would like to recommend from a sustainable resource management point of view to check for burden shifting.

Synergies

UNEP activities on Resource Efficiency and Sustainable Consumption and Production policies, sustainable product standards and the Green Economy are all promoting a response to change the current drivers leading to environmental impacts. While the Resource Panel emphasises assessment of the drivers, pressures and possible responses to environmental impacts and shows decoupling is both necessary and possible, the Green Economy Initiative assesses and illustrates the commercial and economic potential of investing in green sectors for 'moving towards green and low carbon economies', with an emphasis on low carbon technologies. An important number of these technologies such as wind mills seem to be clearly advantageous from a holistic environmental point of view but others, such as biofuels, require further assessment. Open questions exist with regard to the global availability and recyclability as well as geographical spread and prices of metals that would be needed at a huge scale in the future for greener technologies such as electric cars and solar panels. That means the Panel can assess the sustainability of critical technologies as a response for moving towards green and low carbon economies.

Geographic scope. The Green Economy Initiative takes a global, sectoral approach in its assessments, but also works at the national level in supporting the design and implementation of policies and investments that would be needed to move toward a green economy. The economic assessments, which take a global view, can be complemented by the Resource Panel's scientific assessments, which also have a global scope.

Thematic focus. The GEI takes a sectoral approach in the analytical reports and studies, which seek to make a commercial and macroeconomic case for green investment, including investment in resource efficiency. The current focus sectors include Agriculture, Buildings, Cities, Fisheries, Forests, Industry, Renewable energy, Tourism, Transport, Waste management, and Water. These studies will take into account findings of the Resource Panel's scientific assessments. In addition, the Resource Panel experts have been approached to collaborate on the Green Economy Report.

Policy. The GEI develops policy relevant economic assessment and supports governments in the design and implementation of policy. The GEI focuses on investment and finance ministries. The Resource Panel focuses on scientific assessments to support policy making, and its strongest partners have been Ministries dealing with the Environment and Natural Resources. In this way, the Resource Panel and Green Economy approach resource efficiency from two different but complementary perspectives. By combining the findings of the economic and scientific assessment reports, the Green Economy Initiative can provide strengthened advice to the national governments and businesses it works with.

Marrakech Process and Green Economy Initiative

The Green Economy Report is still in the phase of being drafted whereas the Marrakech Process has existed since 2003. Therefore linkages between the Marrakech Process and efforts to construct a Green Economy are in the process of being developed.

Both initiatives aim to assist regions and countries in developing policies towards a 'green' or 'eco-efficient' economy. While the Marrakech Process and the CSD discussions will build the 10 YFP from the bottom up, through stakeholder consultation, the macroeconomic analysis in the Green Economy Initiative can help identify additional key policies required for the shift to the Green Economy. This Green Economy analysis can help inform the discussions on the 10 YFP that will take place during CSD 18 and 19.

The Marrakech Process and the future 10 Year framework of Programmes on SCP will provide support to key actors (mainly governments), operating at national and regional levels, to make the shift to SCP. The Marrakech Process has already designed and in some cases is piloting a range of policies, tools (such as life cycle assessment) and management practices for business, that are enabling the shift to SCP. The intention is that the 10 YFP will provide a comprehensive global framework of programmes, delivering this support from 2011 onwards.

Over the next year and a half it will be necessary to determine how and where existing Marrakech Process outputs and the future 10 YFP can support the shift to a Green Economy. This will require more joint analysis by the respective UNEP teams, starting with the initial drafting of a paper and an expert workshop in Geneva during this month. The Resource Panel will be informed of the outcomes of this preliminary workshop, and be invited to help with the completion of this paper, including through a further workshop to take place in January 2010.

3. SNAPSHOT OF THREE INITIATIVES

	Resource Panel¹	Green Economy²	Marrakech Process³
Objective	1) Provide independent, coherent and authoritative scientific assessments of policy relevance on the sustainable use of natural resources and in particular their environmental impacts over the full life cycle. 2) Contribute to a better understanding of how to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation .	To conduct integrated policy assessment and macro-economic analysis to develop the economic case for resource efficiency. To motivate and enable government and businesses to scale up green investment and actions in improving resource efficiency and achieving sustainable consumption and production.	1) the design and implementation of policies and strategies on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) 2) the elaboration of a “10 Year Framework of Programmes on SCP” – which will be discussed at the UN Commission for Sustainable Development during the 2010/11 cycle, and implemented thereafter
Target Groups	National Governments in particular Environment and Natural Resource Ministries, CSOs, IOs, academia and other stakeholders.	National Governments in particular Environment and Finance Ministries , Investors, and other stakeholders	National governments in particular Environment and Development Ministries, regional organizations, development agencies, business and industry, NGOs, researchers and other stakeholders.
Current thematic focus areas	Sustainable Resource Management, Decoupling, Environmental Impacts of products and materials, Biofuels, Metals, Water	Green Economy, Agriculture, Buildings, Cities Fisheries, Forests, Industry, Renewable energy, Tourism, Transport, Waste management, Water	Decoupling, Sustainable consumption and production, Sustainable Products, Sustainable Lifestyles, Sustainable Public Procurement, Sustainable Tourism, Sustainable Buildings and Construction, Education for Sustainable Consumption
Outputs	Assessment reports, awareness raising events, input to capacity building for scientific assessment (2010 onwards).	Analytical economic reports and studies, economic policy guidance, pilot demonstrations	Regional strategies, national SCP programmes, SCP roundtables, trainings, SCP tools and capacity building on SCP, guidelines and implementation of concrete SCP programmes (Eco-labelling for Africa, SPP, etc).
Stakeholders/ Networks	Scientific community, government representatives, Civil Society Organisations.	Research Institutes, government representatives, businesses	Task Forces, Partnerships, regional networks and councils, national governments, business and NGOs

¹ <http://www.unep.fr/scp/rpanel/>

² <http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/>

³ <http://www.unep.fr/scp/marrakech/>