



Marrakech Task Forces

Frequently Asked Questions



May 2008

What is a Marrakech Task force?

It is a group of countries and organisations that come together to partner in working on a specific issue of sustainable consumption and production (SCP) (e.g. education and sustainable lifestyles, sustainable products, solid waste management, energy consumption, etc). They commit themselves to carrying out a specific set of activities which support the implementation of concrete SCP projects and/or to develop and test tools and methodologies to promote SCP. There are no specific rules or obligations -- a task force is a purely voluntary initiative. All task forces are encouraged to include both developed and developing countries and to keep regional balance in their groups. A Marrakech Task Force (MTF) can be seen as well as a group of experts that provides technical advice on SCP and supports the Marrakech Process by building cooperation among different stakeholders and countries, and by bringing more political support to the Process.

What are the main characteristics of a Marrakech Task Force?

A Marrakech Task Force ideally is output-oriented and targeted at showing the added value of an approach on the ground for very specific product categories. Meetings and publications should not be the core outputs. Ideally the task force should have around 5 - 10 interested governments with some geographical balance. In particular, partnerships achieving linkages between SCP and the Millennium Development Goals are very much appreciated. All participating countries, but at least the lead country, should establish strong linkages between the national work on the issue and the work on the international level.

How do the Task Forces link to the Marrakech process?

Activities carried out within the Marrakech process include:

- a) Organizing **regional consultations** in all regions to promote awareness and identify priorities and needs for sustainable consumption and production;
- b) Building **regional strategies** and implementation mechanisms with regional and national ownership;
- c) **Implementing concrete projects** and programmes on the regional, national and local levels;
- d) Monitoring and evaluating **progress** and exchanging information and experience at the international level;
- e) Developing a proposal for the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP) that will be reviewed and negotiated at the CSD-18/19 during the biennium 2010/11. The 10YFP will take into consideration all the outcomes of the 4 activities listed above.

The Task Force aim to support item c), but can also help to achieve the other items. For that reason, it is encouraged that the various Task Forces regularly report to and make use of the international and regional Marrakech meetings. As mentioned before, MTFs can also support the Marrakech Process by helping to build cooperation among different stakeholders and countries, and by obtaining more political support to the Process



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How many Marrakech Task Forces already exist?

Currently (Spring 2008), there are seven confirmed task forces on:

- Co-operation with Africa (Germany)
- Education for Sustainable Consumption (Italy)
- Sustainable Buildings and Construction (Finland)
- Sustainable Lifestyles (Sweden)
- Sustainable Products (United Kingdom)
- Sustainable Public Procurement (Switzerland)
- Sustainable Tourism (France)

Can a Marrakech Task Force contribute to the elaboration of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) on SCP?

Yes, the Task Forces are invited to contribute to the elaboration of the 10YFP by providing technical advice, as well as SCP tools and methodologies that could support the future implementation of the 10YFP. In fact, all MTFs are being consulted and involved in the elaboration of the 10YFP, and be represented in the Marrakech Process Advisory Committee.

How are the Task Forces connected to the CSD?

The Marrakech Process is developing a proposal for a 10YFP on SPC which will be up for policy review and recommendations in the 2010/2011 cycle of the CSD, and is a cross-cutting issue for all CSD cycles. Task Forces linked to the respective substantive themes of each CSD can therefore enrich the respective discussions with the progress achieved and lessons learnt. Sustainable consumption and production aspects of energy and industrial development (2006/2007), agriculture and Africa (2008/2009), transport, chemicals and waste management (2010/2011), forest, biodiversity and tourism (2012/2013) are among the most obvious linkages in that respect.

Can an existing initiative, such as UNEP's Life Cycle Initiative, be considered as a Marrakech Task Force?

No, the Marrakech Task Forces are meant to generate extra activity, led by national initiatives. If a given country however would like to build on existing programmes, and propose and carry out additional activities, with a group of other countries involved, then that might well become a Marrakech Task Force.

Who can create a Marrakech Task Force?

Any country interested in leading a certain issue on SCP and willing to provide funding to support activities and take the lead in involving other countries in the development and implementation of the projects and policies on SCP can initiate a task force. The task force becomes a Marrakech Task Force once it is established in co-operation with UNEP and/or UN DESA. The determining factor for becoming a lead country is the ability to foster the implementation of a working programme with concrete activities and outputs, with a pro-active approach in its preparation and management. Any country able to gather the necessary funds to carry out such a programme can be considered to be a lead country.



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How can a Marrakech Task Force be started?

A country willing to lead a Task Force expresses its interest to UNEP and UN-DESA and develops its work programme in consultation with them. The country itself should take the lead. The lead country can ask UNEP or UN-DESA or another UN organisation to provide assistance and support for the development of the work plan. The lead country will then invite partners to become part of the Task Force, convene planning meetings and start the work.

How are developing countries participating in the Marrakech Task Forces?

Developing countries are active participants in all task forces. To date, no developing country has come forward to sponsor a task force, but some developing countries have been invited to be co-chairs of task forces. A number of SCP field projects and training programmes are being implemented by MTFs in developing countries.

How much does it cost to launch and run a Marrakech Task Force?

This aspect has no fixed rules. It depends very much on the level of ambition of the lead country, on what has already been achieved, in what regions the country wants to be active, etc. The ToR's of the established Task Forces will be published as soon as they are confirmed, and can then serve as informal benchmarks.

How can a government, business and/or organisation become a member of an existing Task Force?

The government, business and/or organisation interested in joining a Task Force should be doing work related to the topic of the Task Force. To join a Task Force they should contact the Task Force coordinator and explore synergies and possibilities to work together. Some Task Forces are open to new active members, some are closed. There are possibilities with some Task Forces to become a consultative member, to share information, and/or participate in their meetings.

What is the period of existence of a Task Force, are they working beyond 2011?

The period of work of each task force is also voluntary and depends on the TF members themselves. Some MTFs might be able to institutionalise their work programmes by building solid partnerships and networks with other organisations and institutions, so that the work of the MTFs can continue without the financial support of the lead country post 2011. In principle, all MTFs could continue their work beyond 2011. The decisions made at the CSD will be vital in shaping the future work of the MTFs.