



March 29th - April 1st 2012

The Rio+20 Summit

Background

1. The first UN Conference on Environment and Development - the Earth Summit - was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, where Greens from around the world gathered for the first time.
2. The resulting Rio Declaration recognized each nation's right to pursue social and economic progress and established the concept of sustainable development de-limited through the integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars. It addressed the lifestyle of our current civilization and acknowledged the urgent need for deep change in our consumption and production patterns.
3. In 2000, the UN set out 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for eradicating extreme poverty; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child mortality rates; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development.
4. These objectives are required to be achieved by 2015 but most are a long way short of their targets.
5. The Rio+10 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) was held in Johannesburg in 2002 to renew the global commitment to sustainable development but was widely regarded as a wasted opportunity and the agenda was over-ridden by trade interests.
6. In June 2012 the world community will reconvene in Rio for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), which will focus on two themes: 'a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication' and 'the institutional framework for sustainable development'. The Brazilian government wants to make this event the largest UN conference in history, but that will serve no purpose unless there is also an ambition to produce binding agreements to take us forward on a path of truly sustainable development and of enforceable environmental governance.
7. As many as 1.4 billion people still live in extreme poverty, half in sub-Saharan Africa. One sixth of the world's population is undernourished, while food insecurity is on the rise and unemployment or underemployment remain the reality for a large proportion of the population in the developing countries. 70% of the people living on under \$1 a day are women. Climate change poses a serious threat to poverty reduction, human rights, peace and security and the achievement of the MDGs in many developing countries.

We, the Global Greens, meeting in Congress in Dakar Senegal on 1st April 2012, make the following declaration:

1. We recognise that the three Conventions that emerged from Rio, on Biodiversity (CBD), Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Desertification (UNCCD), were major steps in international multilateral co-operation and have generated supplementary treaties of considerable value, notably the Kyoto, Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols.
2. Rio+20 has to respond to the challenge of a world population, expected to rise to at least 9 billion in 2050, which will put even greater demands on the limited supply of natural resources and lead to an ever-growing demand for water, land and forest. This will cause even further biodiversity loss, overfishing, ecosystem degradation, deforestation and land grabbing of indigenous peoples' lands. World population and overconsumption must be addressed through improving health, education, social welfare and women's empowerment.
3. We will make clear our demands on climate change in a parallel Resolution, but we emphasize that global warming and ever-increasing climatic instability provide the dramatic and urgent context against which all issues of sustainability must be measured. Recent warnings that we now face warming of 4 degrees Celsius under current global greenhouse gas emission trends underline yet again the self-destructive path that we are on.
4. Rio+20 represents a major opportunity to reaffirm the systemic vision of, and an integrated and effective approach to, sustainable development through the three pillars - environmental, economic and social - requiring a radical change from the existing order. We need an ecological and social transformation to enable us to reach the fundamental objectives of social justice, equality - particularly gender equality - and democracy, and preservation of the planet's natural resources. We urgently need to develop indicators that encompass these values and move beyond the outdated and growth-oriented economic measurement of GDP.
5. At this UN Conference, developed countries must respect their commitment to Public Development Aid Funding (at least 0.7% of GDP) and introduce a global tax on financial transactions. This is imperative for addressing the commitments of the 8 UN Millennium Goals as well as the issues of food security, conservation of and access to adequate safe water, unemployment and underemployment, climate change and energy supply, war and human rights abuses.
6. Our Oceans play a central role in global climate processes, are a major source of energy, are home to a wealth of biodiversity and provide sustainable livelihoods as well as the essential elements for life, including food, medicines, and freshwater. All of these attributes are under threat, including from ocean acidification and industrial over-fishing. Previous UN agreements and treaties failed to address this issue, and a new Oceans Treaty is urgently needed to protect and manage this asset.
7. There are new forms of migration such as environmental and climate-induced displacement, and we therefore call for the establishment of a new migration policy to address these challenges, recognising that people have the right to move to survive, and to be accepted in other countries.

Green economy

8. With regard to the Summit theme of 'a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication', the Global Greens reiterate that the global economy must shift rapidly to an **inclusive green economy**, defined by the following:
 - i. Incorporates the true costs of increasingly scarce natural resources and recognises the value of common goods and services of nature;
 - ii. Adopts innovative technology and eco-efficient and low carbon practices;
 - iii. Commits to durable goods and the end of inbuilt obsolescence;
 - iv. Proposes new forms of organisation such as the solidarity economy creating new bottom-up opportunities for all and investing in education;
 - v. Shifts from consumer-based economies to a focus on wellbeing, culture and healthier communities, with the full participation of civil society;
 - vi. Must be inclusive and reduce inequalities and poverty.

9. Therefore the Global Greens:
 - i. Insist that the emphasis on the green economy should reflect the acceptance of limits to economic (GDP) growth in both developed and developing countries and the need to choose genuinely sustainable and low or zero net carbon forms of economic development.

 - ii. Insist that the emphasis on the green economy should reflect true innovative thinking, such as the concept of a Green New Deal which provides employment in jobs that protect, rather than damage, the environment; and in training, education and development of green technologies. The new green economy should not be a cover for corporate green-wash or divert attention away from the need for sustainable practices, but should facilitate a shift in the production and consumption patterns of developed and emerging economies.

 - iii. Underline the need for addressing new and emerging challenges in global commerce, such as the scarcity of resources, the ever-escalating cost of commodities, the need for transfer of green technologies to emerging countries, the long-term consequences for economic and social stability of such matters and the need to redistribute wealth from developed to developing countries, and within countries. Mechanisms and means to meet these challenges include transfer of green technologies between all countries, both developed and developing, and international regulatory policies for the equitable distribution of wealth and revenue.

 - iv. Stress that the transition towards a green economy requires urgent action as regards ecosystems protection, efficient and sustainable resources and natural capital, while promoting sustainable consumption and production.

 - v. Recognise that food sovereignty will require protecting and promoting familial agricultures, including intensive agro-ecological techniques, thus encouraging a modern rurality, allowing the poorest half of humanity, often women, to supply their own food with dignity.

 - vi. Insist on much stronger regulation and control of the world economy by the

people. The needs of people and the planet should be the focus of our economy. Participation of many is the tool to build a more sustainable and socially just economic system. These changes should include more progressive socially and ecologically just taxation systems all over the world and the provision of public services such as health, education and housing by democratically controlled states.

Institutional framework for sustainable development

10. With regard to the Summit theme 'the institutional framework for sustainable development', the Global Greens:
- i. Understand that the challenges which lie ahead are mutually related, interdependent and urgent, and that the UN Sustainable Development process must be given an on-going and coherent structure, including the need for a coordinated approach between the three Rio Conventions (Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification);
 - ii. Call for an upgrade of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) within the institutional framework of the United Nations and consider that the UN Environment Programme and other related UN agencies should be transformed inside the UN system, by the creation of a democratically accountable World Environment Organisation.
 - iii. Call for the establishment of clear goals, targets and indicators for measuring sustainable development which guarantee outcomes by 2020 and 2050.
 - iv. Call for the recognition of the substantial stress imposed on cities due to unsustainable development and rapid urbanisation processes, as well as the significant role cities can and should play in implementing more sustainable modes of development. There needs to be representation of local authorities at the UN level, and they should be given new tools and financial support for planning sustainable cities with green buildings, eco-efficiency and renewable energy, water savings, adaptation and mitigation commitments and a revised green infrastructure for urban mobility and public spaces.
 - v. Believe that environmental accountability should be incorporated into all institutions of global, national and local governance and insist on the immediate adoption of a Green GDP.
 - vi. Call for an international environmental court, so that global environmental legislation becomes more binding and enforceable, and that this higher body can resolve conflicts between social and environmental imperatives, and trade rules (particularly of the World Trade Organisation).