



## Frequently Asked Questions Business and Industry Role in the Marrakech Process



October 2008

### **What is the Marrakech Process?**

The Marrakech Process is a global multi-stakeholder process to promote Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) leading to the elaboration of a global framework to support the regional and national implementation of SCP called the 10-Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP). The process responds to the call of the WSSD Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to develop a 10YFP to promote the shift towards SCP patterns. The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) will review the theme of SCP and the 10YFP during its 2010/11 two-year cycle.

UNEP and UNDESA are the leading agencies of this process, with the active participation of governments, development agencies, private sector, civil society, academia and other stakeholders.

The Marrakech Process includes various mechanisms for consultation and implementation of projects, initiatives and strategies on SCP, such as international and regional expert meetings, national roundtables, a development cooperation dialogue, a business and industry forum as well as a NGO forum. The process also includes the following seven Task Forces, each led by a government:

- Cooperation with Africa;
- Sustainable Products;
- Sustainable Lifestyles;
- Sustainable Public Procurement;
- Sustainable Tourism;
- Sustainable Buildings and Construction; and
- Education for Sustainable Consumption.

### **Why is SCP important for business and industry?**

Sustainable consumption and production is a concept that focuses on reducing the environmental footprint of manufacturing, products and services. It applies along the life-cycle of products and services, from resource extraction to product design to marketing to disposal to reuse/recycling, and through supply and value chains. It has been recognized by the United Nations and other inter-governmental and national authorities as an over-arching priority and basis for regulation and action. It is particularly influential in the European Union. The Marrakech process provides a platform to focus international policymaking and initiatives on SCP, and is expected to agree a structure to further advance SCP by 2012.



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In this international context, SCP pertains to and offers both risks and opportunities for all industry sectors, in developed and developing countries - its relevance is not limited to consumer products and branded sectors alone.

Business understands the economic rationale for efficient use of energy and resources, and for waste reduction. It understands the importance of continual improvement in these areas, to meet both compliance requirements, and the expectations of consumers and society. Business is seeking new customers and markets, and to compete more successfully by pursuing sustainability in products, operations and services. The right government enabling frameworks will help companies pursue SCP in their operations, products and services.

### **How can business and industry contribute in advancing the SCP agenda?**

Business and industry are key actors in the SCP agenda, as they are at the core of production and important players shaping the market. They are among the most critical stakeholder groups and can play a major role in making SCP a reality.

The essential challenge of SCP is to decouple economic activity from environmental degradation, which requires technological innovation and rethinking of existing business models. For business and industry the challenge is to mainstream SCP and ensure an integrated approach taking into account the three dimensions of sustainability – social, economic and environmental. Innovating in business models that are at the same time sustainable and competitive is key to advance the SCP agenda.

Concretely the private sector can contribute to advance the SCP agenda by, for example:

- Introducing new technologies and strategies, such as eco-design, life-cycle assessment and closed-loop production;
- Shifting to the use of renewable energies;
- Improving resource management;
- Reducing their carbon footprints;
- Managing and reducing their impacts on the environment;
- Managing their activities and their supply chains according to the principles of social and environmental responsibility and accountability;
- Adopting voluntary environmental and social codes and standards;
- Developing 'green' and 'ethical' products and services.

### **What are the regional needs and priorities regarding business and SCP?**

The Marrakech Process comprises rounds of regional consultations, in which governments representatives and other stakeholders, including business representatives, take part to identify the regional needs and priorities on SCP. Among the critical issues on SCP identified by the regions,



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there are some priorities related to business and industry, in which their engagement and support for implementation is needed:

- **Resource Efficiency and Renewable Resources:** The efficient use of resources like energy and water, and the use of renewable resources are priorities for all the regions;
- **Sustainable Products and Services:** Promoting sustainable products and services and promoting life-cycle thinking in production and processes are also priorities for all the regions;
- **Codes of conduct and voluntary initiatives:** Developing and adopting codes of conduct and voluntary initiatives on SCP, as well as promoting accountability and reporting mechanisms are especially important for Europe and Asia and the Pacific, while the adoption of corporate social and environmental responsibility codes is highlighted in the Arab Region, Europe and Latin America;
- **Support to SMEs:** Supporting SMEs to adopt SCP practices is also a priority for all the regions. In the Arab Region and Latin America, for example, the focus is on enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs through SCP. In Europe and Asia and the Pacific, the support to SMEs is linked to the sustainable management of value chains;
- **Adoption of innovative technologies, cleaner production practices, management initiatives, tools and techniques for SCP:** This is a priority for most of the regions. The promotion of Environmental Management tools is especially relevant for the Arab Region and Asia and the Pacific;
- **Use of market and economic incentives:** The promotion of SCP through market and economic incentives is a priority for Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Latin America.

### What is the Business and Industry Forum under the Marrakech Process?

The Business and Industry Forum is a mechanism to engage the private sector in the Marrakech Process. The forum was established at the 3rd International Expert Meeting on the 10YFP held in Stockholm in June 2007. The forum was organised and co-facilitated by the International Chamber Commerce (ICC) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) to serve as a platform to broaden business engagement in the Marrakech Process. Business representatives who took part in the forum in Stockholm expressed their interest to:

- Engage in the regional meetings and implementation of concrete projects;
- Share their business cases for SCP and best practices;
- Identify business experts to participate in Task Forces;
- Participate in a new waste and resource management task force, if established;
- Develop work in support of SMEs to enable them to benefit from SCP measures;
- Include SCP as an agenda item at 2008 UNEP Annual Consultative Meeting with Business and Industry;
- Host a “Business Day” at the 4th International Expert Meeting of the Marrakech Process to be held in 2009.



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As a result of the forum in the Stockholm meeting, business and industry is now represented in the Marrakech Process Advisory Committee through ICC (International Chamber of Commerce).

### **How can business engage in the Marrakech Process?**

Business and industry can engage in the Marrakech Process in a number of ways:

#### Supporting the regions and countries in the implementation of projects:

Business and industry can engage in the implementation of concrete projects, as well as support the development of SCP tools and methodologies at national and regional level. They could, for example, invest in cleaner technologies and eco-design in order to offer the market sustainable and efficient products.

#### Establishing public-private partnerships:

Partnerships are a good way of to implement SCP policies and projects by combining efforts. As an example, governments and the private sector could develop a joint project to support SMEs adopting SCP practices, which is a priority for all the regions and also a priority for business, as identified by the business and industry forum at Stockholm.

#### Participating in the Marrakech Task Forces:

Business and industry can cooperate with the Marrakech Task Forces in the development of projects. They could join one of the existing MTFs. They could also support the creation of new Task Forces in areas such as waste, resource efficiency, mobility and support to SMEs. In Stockholm, business expressed their interest to join a task force on waste and resource management, if established.

#### Providing input and feedback in the elaboration of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes:

Business and industry can contribute in the elaboration of the 10YFP by sharing their perspectives on their priorities to move towards SCP. They can also identify programmes that could be part of the 10YFP addressing the needs of the private sector to accelerate the shifts towards sustainable markets, such as the programmes to promote sustainable products and services and sustainable value chains. Their input can be given in the stakeholder consultations carried along the Marrakech Process and also through the Advisory Committee, in which business and industry have a seat as core members.

#### Sharing best practices on business and SCP:

One of the most important contributions business and industry are already giving to the Marrakech Process is adopting SCP in their strategies, creating sustainable products or services, innovating in cleaner production process and promoting better social standards in their value chain. The best practices in this field could be shared with others, either through the Marrakech Process website or self-organized initiatives.



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### Business and Industry Forum:

Business and Industry can participate in the stakeholder consultations of the Marrakech Process, such as the 2008 UNEP Annual Consultative Meeting to be held in October, in Paris, on the Marrakech Process and SCP. Another opportunity for business to engage in the Marrakech Process and share their experiences on SCP is to join the Business and Industry forum discussions, both in international and regional meetings. In the 4<sup>th</sup> International Expert Meeting, to be held in 2009, Business and industry can take active part in the “Business Day”, planned for this meeting and organized by ICC.

### **Where is there more information on the Marrakech Process?**

All the relevant information and documents of the Marrakech Process are available at <http://www.unep.fr/scp/marrakech> and on the UNEP-UNDESA joint website of the Marrakech Process : <http://esa.un.org/marrakechprocess/>.

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