



Eurostep is a network of autonomous European non-governmental development organisations working towards peace, justice and equality in a world free of poverty. Its membership, rooted in their own societies, works together to influence Europe's role in the world, particularly in pursuing the eradication of injustice and poverty. It advocates changes in Europe's policies and practice based on the perspectives drawn from direct experiences of an active involvement of its members and their partners in development in over 100 countries across the world. The members of Eurostep include: 11.11.11 (Belgium), ACSUR Las Segovias (Spain), Alliance Sud (Switzerland), Concern Worldwide (Ireland), Deutsche Welthungerhilfe (Germany), FDSC (Romania), Hivos (Netherlands), Kepa (Finland), Marie-Stopes International (UK), NEWW (Poland), Oxfam Novib (Netherlands), People in Need (Czech Republic), Sloga Platform (Slovenia), SNV (Netherlands).

Rio+20: Analysis of the Outcome Document based on Eurostep key Advocacy Points

Following are some key elements comprised in the outcome document. This analysis/summary takes into account Eurostep's key advocacy points:

1/ Re affirming Rio principles: Rio principles have been re affirmed in several parts of the text. Noteworthy is the specific re affirmation of the principle of Common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) at the beginning of the text in **paragraph 15** which reads "We reaffirm all the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including, inter alia, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as set out in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration."

CBDR is also recalled in paragraph 191 relating to climate change and UNFCCC - excerpt: "We recall that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change provides that parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities". The mention of CBDR and equity in this paragraph is of great significance and importance as those two principles were not part of one of the key outcomes of the Durban Conference (December 2011), the "Durban Platform for Enhanced Action".

This, of course, is very positive but the CBDR principle has not been specifically re affirmed in particular sections of the text, including the SDGs and those relating to the green economy. It is, nonetheless, clearly specified in the green economy section that "policies for green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication should be **guided by and in accordance with all the Rio principles**, Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and contribute towards achieving relevant internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs", para 57.

CBDR is in the text, which is (again) positive, but this principle is still highly debated as developed and developing countries have different interpretations of and approaches to it. Developed countries including the EU argue that this principle only applies to environmental issues and that it can only be used in particular contexts (Kyoto, UNFCCC).

In the SDGs section G77 and China wanted the principle of CBDR to be re affirmed. They explained that, for example, if the international community decides to have a goal on sustainable patterns of consumption and production there's a need for developed countries to take the lead. They specified that CBDR will not apply to all goals but only to specific ones (in response to concerns raised by developed countries). Finally, the following wording has been introduced in the SDGs section, replacing the principle of CBDR which was still there two days before the 19th June plenary: "We further recognize the importance and utility of a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs), which are based on Agenda 21 and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, fully respect all Rio Principles, **taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and priorities**, are consistent with international law, build upon commitments already made, and contribute to the full implementation of the outcomes of all major Summits in the economic, social and environmental fields, including this outcome document" (para 246).

This means that even if CBDR has been introduced at the beginning of the outcome doc there will be

further contention on the definition and application of this principle, not least for the SDGs to be defined.

2/ Re affirmation of rights: the rights to development, adequate food (+right of everyone to have access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food), water and sanitation, health and education as well as the right of self determination of people have been re affirmed. And paragraph 9 reads: “We emphasize the responsibilities of all States, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind to race, colour, sex, language or religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status”. In the paragraph on civil society participation the re affirmation of the right to freedom of association and assembly (introduced by the EU) has however been deleted. References to reproductive rights have been deleted too (Holy See’s and G77 and China’s positions) but there is language on reproductive health and rather¹ good language on women’s empowerment.

3/ The role of the private sector in sustainable development: Compared to what the EU wanted for the role/ importance of the private sector for green economy policies or SD this has been watered down (thanks to G77 and China that emphasized the profit driven logic of the private sector that is not necessarily in line with SD objectives). It is still there (a lot) but a little bit more balanced. There’s, however, no commitment for strong or legal frameworks for regulating corporate sector activities (+ only reference to voluntary initiatives such as UN global compact, which has been criticized by CSOs in a recent [statement](#)).

Para 46 reads: “We support national regulatory and policy frameworks that enable business and industry to advance sustainable development initiatives taking into account the importance of corporate social responsibility. We call on the private sector to engage in responsible business practices, such as those promoted by the UN Global Compact” and paragraph 47: “We acknowledge the importance of corporate sustainability reporting and encourage companies, where appropriate, especially publicly listed and large companies, to consider integrating sustainability information into their reporting cycle. We encourage industry, interested governments as well as relevant stakeholders with the support of the UN system, as appropriate, to develop models for best practice and facilitate action for the integration of sustainability reporting, taking into account the experiences of already existing frameworks, and paying particular attention to the needs of developing countries, including for capacity building”.

As you see the language is very weak “encourage (...) to consider integrating”.

4/ Green economy: The green economy section as compared to what was proposed in the zero draft and what the EU wanted has really been watered down. The outcome reads: “We affirm that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions which is our overarching goal. In this regard, we consider **green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication as one of the important tools available for achieving sustainable development and that it could provide options for policy making but should not be a rigid set of rules;**”

The text refers to green economy policies instead of **the** green economy which shows flexibility in the understanding/application of the concept.

The word “services” attached to ecosystem has been deleted (the EU wanted it to be retained) – therefore avoiding the capitalised vision of ecosystem and natural resources.

In the green economy section there are also references to the need to “address the concern about inequalities and promote social inclusion, including social protection floors” (para 58, n). The EU has been a strong advocate of social protection floors (3 references to social protection floors have been retained in the outcome doc). The leading role of governments for implementing green economy policies is also stressed (para 58, c). And developing

¹ The women’s major group has, however, been very critical “Two years of negotiations have culminated in a Rio+20 outcome that makes almost no progress for women’s rights and rights of future generations in sustainable development”. Read their full statement here: http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/Womens-Major-Group-RIO+20_FINAL-STATEMENT_24-June-2012.pdf

countries' concerns as regard to trade restrictions and aid conditionalities are specifically addressed in paragraph 58 g and h. The role of public private partnership for sustainable development is emphasized in paragraph 71 and it is specified that public financing should be "complemented by the private sector". The protection of indigenous peoples' culture, practices etc is also stressed in this section (58, c + 71) but noteworthy is the absence of any reference to the right to Free, Prior and Informed consent.

Para 63, in the green economy section, refers to "the importance of the evaluation of the range of social, environmental and economic factors and encourage, where national circumstances and conditions allow, their integration into decision-making." This paragraph was the subject of heated debates between developing and the EU as the latter wanted the recognition of the importance of the valuation of social, environmental and economic "costs" instead of "factors". Some countries within the G77 and China were afraid that this would mean the financialisation and commodification of natural resources. Nick Clegg speaking on behalf of the UK at the summit plenary highlighted the importance of valuing natural capital in national accounting and regretted that the outcome document did not go further in this regard. He also congratulated "African representatives on the Gabarone Declaration – a real step forward in natural capital accounting"².

5/ Institutional framework for SD: The EU did not get the upgrading of UNEP into a specialized agency in Nairobi. UNEP is strengthened: universal membership in the governing Council of UNEP, increased financial resources, strong policy science interface etc (see para 88).

There will also be the creation of a High Level Political Forum: "84. We decide to establish a universal intergovernmental high level political forum, building on the strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development, **and subsequently replacing the Commission**. The high level political forum shall follow up on the implementation of sustainable development and should avoid overlap with existing structures, bodies and entities in a cost-effective manner". In the meantime the Commission on SD remains, there were fears that nothing would be there during the transition period (from CSD to high level political forum). Chapter 85 explains what could be the main functions of such a forum (read Martin Khor's article³ about the opportunity such a structure could represent, taking into account that some crucial conditions are fulfilled).

No reference is made to the establishment of a Special Representative or Ombudsperson for future generations in the outcome document (the EU was a strong advocate of the establishment of such a position).

On **CS participation**, Para 76 (general paragraph on the institutional framework at all levels) recognises that: "effective governance at local, sub-national, national, regional and global levels representing the voices and interests of all is critical for advancing sustainable development". It therefore resolves to strengthen the institutional framework for sustainable development, which will "enhance the participation and effective engagement of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the relevant international fora and in this regard promote transparency and broad public participation and partnerships to implement sustainable development." (para 76, h)

Regarding the High level political forum, paragraph 85, h reads that the forum could: "Promote transparency and implementation through further enhancing the consultative role and participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders at the international level in order to better make use of their expertise, while retaining the intergovernmental nature of discussions".

² <http://www.guardian.co.uk/sustainable-business/rio-20-earth-summit-diary-20-june>. Ten African nations have pledged, ahead of Rio+20, to include the economic value of natural resources in their national accounts. Africa has taken the lead in the quest to persuade nations to include the full economic value of their natural resources in their national accounts, with the promise last month by ten of its nations to do so. The heads of state or government of Botswana, Liberia, Mozambique and Namibia, along with ministers from Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa and Tanzania, signed the 'Gaborone Declaration' at the Summit for Sustainability in Africa (24-25 May), co-hosted by the government of Botswana and the nongovernmental organisation Conservation International. <http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/environment/82835>

³ http://www.twinside.org.sg/title2/rio+20/news_updates/TWN_update23.pdf

Also, good wording on CSOs participation in the UNEP section – GA resolution to be adopted at the 67th session will focus on strengthening UNEP through, among other things, ensuring “the active participation of all relevant stakeholders drawing on best practices and models from relevant multilateral institutions and exploring new mechanisms to promote transparency and the effective engagement of civil society” (para 88, h). “

+ Para 99 (in section E “Regional, national, sub-national and local levels”) reads “We encourage action at regional, national, sub-national, and local levels to promote access to information, public participation, and access to justice in environmental matters, as appropriate”. Nothing exceptional in my view. Rather vague and weak. But some NGO representatives are more positive! Read article by Lalanath de Silva (Director of The Access Initiative) for a more detailed and encouraging analysis⁴.

6/ Thematic areas (Energy and Food security) I haven’t had the time and obviously not the expertise to make a thorough analysis of the thematic areas but I received comments⁵. Some of these express disappointment with the section on energy. The language is weak on energy access (“commit to facilitate support” para 125) and concrete targets for achieving universal access to energy are missing. Regarding sustainable energy, there is no proposal to reduce reliance on fossil fuels: “appropriate energy mix” and “including cleaner fossil fuel technologies” (par 127) and with regard to fossil fuel subsidies the text is very vague in the energy section: “also recognize the importance of promoting incentives in favour of, and removing disincentives to, energy efficiency and the diversification of the energy mix shift to renewable energy, including promoting research and development in all countries, including developing countries” (para 128). However, there is a paragraph specifically talking about phasing out fossil fuel subsidies in the part on Sustainable consumption and production⁶ (para 225).

On the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (criticized by some, on one hand, as not being ambitious enough and too much captured by private sector’s interest but on the other hand as a good tool/initiative to focus political leaders’ attention and actions), it is only specified “**We note** the launching of the initiative by the Secretary-General on Sustainable Energy for All, which focuses on access to energy, energy efficiency and renewable energies.” (no reference to the specific goals of SEFA).

Regarding agriculture, I heard some positive feedbacks. It should be recognised that people can be positive when observing the **evolution** of the text...but it does not necessarily means it is a good text!

Positive feedback as there is some recognition of the role of smallholder farmers, the importance of empowering rural women is stressed, re affirmation of “commitments regarding the right of everyone to have access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger. And “We acknowledge that food security and nutrition has become a pressing global challenge and, in this regard, we further reaffirm our commitment to enhancing food security and access to adequate, safe and nutritious food for present and future generations in line with the Rome Principles adopted in 2009, including children under two, and through, as appropriate, national, regional and global food security and nutrition strategies” (para 108). + sustainable agriculture (even if to me “sustainable agriculture” remains vague and can be interpreted in a lot of ways) + re affirmation of “the important work and inclusive nature of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)” + “we encourage countries to give due consideration to implementing the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security” (para. 115)

Also more negative feedback (Attac⁷, IBON⁸, Oxfam – based on previous comments from Sabina Voogd, Oxfam Novib– and Olive Towey and Tilaye Nigussie from Concern): food security is approached/addressed in terms of

⁴ <http://insights.wri.org/news/2012/06/rio20-text-offers-hope-improving-governance>

⁵ Comments via email from Eco Matser (Hivos), Sabina Voogt (Oxfam), Olive Towey and Tilaye Nigussie (Concern) + corridor discussions with TWN and Friends of the Earth representatives.

⁶ This specific paragraph was criticized by Bolivia, Venezuela and Ecuador at the summit plenary session because of its implications on countries’ sovereignty. See Meena Raman’s (TWN) article: http://www.twinside.org.sg/title2/rio+20/news_updates/TWN_update21.pdf

⁷ <http://blogs.mediapart.fr/edition/en-direct-du-sommet-des-peuples-de-rio/article/200612/rio20-decryptage-un-accord-inacce>

market access, market based mechanisms, public-private partnerships (without strong regulations of the corporate sector). There's no specific mentioning of the problem of land grab and biofuels cultivation (land grab + price volatility) with regard to the right to food.

7/ SDGs: SDGs was of course one of the main deliverables and I followed with attention some of the negotiations on this part of the text. Developed and developing countries had different visions as to the process, listing or no listing of the goals and the principles for the SDGs.

The EU was a strong advocate of a process led by the secretary general (experts driven process) with a view to avoiding highly political debates and also to ensure coherence with the review of the MDGs and post 2015 agenda. Developing countries wanted a process led by governments from the beginning to the end (decision of the GA at the beginning and approval of the GA at the end, with smaller group of states taking the lead in between). G77 and China stressed the necessity to have a legitimate process and goals (governments taking the lead) and that because of the scope and importance of the goals political debates between governments were necessary.

All developed countries wanted a list of thematic areas for the future SDGs, even though at the end the US seemed more hesitant about the possibility of having such a list (possible goal on consumption and production patterns did not seem to please them!). The proposed list of thematic areas was criticized by developing countries as not reflecting properly the three dimensions of sustainable development (proposed areas for goals too focused on the environment pillar of SD)

Finally there's no listing of the goals (this was one of the EU redlines, they were clearly unhappy with the Brazilian choice to delete the list). The principle of CBDR is not included (as already specified) and the process will be a mix between the two visions (even though it is clearly balanced towards G77's preference).

"248. We resolve to establish an **inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on SDGs** that is open to all stakeholders with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the United Nations General Assembly. **An open working group shall be constituted no later than the opening of the 67th session of the UNGA and shall comprise of thirty representatives, nominated by Member States through the five UN regional groups with the aim of achieving fair, equitable and balanced geographic representation.** At the outset, this open working group will decide on its method of work, including developing modalities, to ensure **the full involvement of relevant stakeholders and expertise from civil society**, the scientific community and the UN system in its work in order to provide a diversity of perspectives and experience. It will submit a report to the 68th session of the UNGA containing a proposal for sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action.

249. The process needs to be coordinated and coherent with the processes considering the post-2015 development agenda. **The initial input to the work of the working group will be provided by the United Nations Secretary General in consultations with national governments. In order to provide technical support to this process and to the work of the working group, we request the UN Secretary-General to ensure all necessary input and support to this work from the UN system including through establishing an inter-agency technical support team and expert panels as needed,** drawing on all relevant expert advice. Reports on the progress of work will be made regularly to the General Assembly."

The coherence/ articulation with the review of the MDGs and post 2015 agenda is still unclear. G77 and China reiterated several times that they did not want the SDGs to take over the development agenda (the focus on poverty eradication). G77 and China reaffirmed the importance of the MDGs for developing countries; they have been putting effort and money for their achievement. Developed countries, in particular Switzerland, Norway and the EU reaffirmed the necessity to have an integrated overarching framework post 2015.

⁸ rio20.iboninternational.org/archives/299

8/ Means of implementation (Finance, Technology and Trade): The means of implementation section has been a really difficult one. The argument of developing countries was the following: in this outcome document there are many initiatives (implementation of green economy policies, SD policies), these actions require financing, we therefore need new and additional financing (the fraction of ODA for Sustainable development is insufficient, they stressed). In this regard, after proposing concrete figures and timelines for delivering new and additional funds - US 30 billion per year from 2013-17 and US 100 billion per year from 2018 onwards + “work towards setting up a financial mechanism, including a possible sustainable development fund” - (two paragraphs that were unanimously rejected by developed countries), G77 and China finally put forward as a new (and “softer”) proposal the establishment of an **“intergovernmental process under the GA to define the SD financing framework/mechanism for the provision of new, additional and predictable resources including technology transfer”**.

The transfer of technology - TT (+ assessing role of intellectual property rights in this regard) on favourable terms, including on preferential and concessional terms, as mutually agreed (JPOI) was also a key ask of developing countries. They wanted the **establishment of an international mechanism under the GA for technology transfer**.

Developed countries repeated that they would not commit to providing new and additional finances. The EU kept on stressing that they were already the first donor (50% of ODA) and that they would give money if they could but the current situation did not allow them to make such pledges. A representative of G77 from Nigeria made the following comment: “The economy of the world is in bad situation but if it is bad for developed countries imagine what it is for developing countries”.

Developed countries, the US and EU in particular, wanted clear acknowledgement of the importance of South-South cooperation, foreign direct investment, resource mobilization or aid effectiveness for development and the US kept on stressing that ODA was only a small portion of the financing for development. They also stressed that it is not technology transfer that will lead to development (US) but research and innovation.

Finally regarding financing for SD the text reads:

“252: We reaffirm that developing countries need **additional resources for sustainable development**. We recognize the need for significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources and effective use of financing, in order to promote sustainable development. We acknowledge that good governance and the rule of law at the national and international levels are essential for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger.”

253. We call on all countries to prioritize sustainable development in the allocation of resources in accordance with national priorities and needs, and we recognize **the crucial importance of enhancing financial support from all sources for sustainable development for all countries, in particular developing countries**. We recognize the importance of international, regional and national financial mechanisms, including those accessible to sub-national and local authorities, to the implementation of sustainable development programmes, and call for their strengthening and implementation. **New partnerships and innovative sources of financing** can play a role in complementing sources of financing for sustainable development. We encourage their further exploration and use, alongside the traditional means of implementation.

Process for determining financing for SD:

“255. We agree to establish an **intergovernmental process under the United Nations General Assembly, with technical support from the UN System, and in open and broad consultation with relevant international and regional financial institutions and other relevant stakeholders**. The process will assess financing needs, consider the effectiveness, consistency and synergies of existing instruments and frameworks, and evaluate additional initiatives, with a view to prepare a report proposing options on an effective Sustainable Development Financing Strategy to facilitate the mobilization of resources and their effective use in achieving sustainable development objectives.

256. An intergovernmental committee, comprising thirty experts nominated by regional groups, with equitable geographical representation, will implement this process, concluding its work by 2014.

257. We request the General Assembly to consider this report and take appropriate actions.”

However as compared to G77 and China’s proposal this has been considered as rather weak (just another UN report without concrete deliverables? + No mention of new and additional financial resources)

Regarding developed countries’ positions the key paragraph in this section is para 260 which reads:

“We note that the aid architecture has significantly changed in the current decade. New aid providers and novel partnership approaches, which utilize new modalities of cooperation, have contributed to increasing the flow of resources. Further, **the interplay of development assistance with private investment, trade and new development actors provides new opportunities for aid to leverage private resource flows. We reiterate our support for South-South cooperation, as well as triangular cooperation, which provides much needed additional resources to the implementation of development programmes.** We recognize the importance and different history and particularities of South-South cooperation and stress that South-South cooperation should be seen as an expression of solidarity and cooperation between countries, based on their shared experiences and objectives. Both forms of cooperation support a development agenda that addresses the particular needs and expectations of developing countries. We also recognize that South-South cooperation complements rather than substitutes for North-South cooperation. We acknowledge the role played by middle-income developing countries as providers and recipients of development cooperation.

On debt: “We further recognize the need to assist developing countries in ensuring long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate” (paragraph 263).

Para 266 stresses the importance of fighting corruption and illicit capital flows (Norway kept pushing for the incorporation of illicit capital flows in this paragraph on corruption).

Para 268 on the role of the private sector is again very weak in terms of regulation: excerpts: “We recognize that a dynamic, inclusive, well-functioning, socially and environmentally responsible private sector is a valuable instrument that can offer a crucial contribution to economic growth and reducing poverty and promoting sustainable development (...) We will work to improve income growth and distribution, inter alia through raising productivity, empowering women and protecting labour rights, and taxation. We recognize that the appropriate role of Government in relation to the promotion and regulation of the private sector will vary from country to country depending on national circumstances.”

Regarding a mechanism for technology transfer, again the language is weaker than the G77’s proposal:

“273. We request relevant UN agencies to identify options for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies by, inter alia, assessing technology needs of developing countries, options to address them and capacity building. We request the UN Secretary General, on the basis of the options identified and taking into account existing models, to make recommendations regarding the facilitation mechanism to the 67th Session of the UN General Assembly.”

The JPOI language on TT has been reaffirmed in the text:

“ 269. We emphasize the importance of technology transfer to developing countries and recall the provisions on technology transfer, finance, access to information, and intellectual property rights as agreed in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, in particular its call to promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, access to and the development, transfer and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, in particular to developing countries, on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed. **We also take note of the further evolution of discussions and agreements on these issues since the JPOI.**”

However, the last sentence of this paragraph waters down the JPOI language. Update 10 by TWN⁹ reads: “this is understood to refer to the TRIPS agreement and developments in other fora such as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), with the implicit goal of detracting from the JPOI language and qualifying it further”

It will be important to follow up and monitor all these UN process (mechanisms for TT and financing for SD).

Regarding technology assessment and the precautionary principle, while there’s no call for the establishment of regulatory mechanisms there is however some good wording in paragraph 275 on the possible negative impacts of new technologies and the need for assessment: “275. We recognize the importance of strengthening international, regional and national capacities in research and technology assessment, especially in view of the rapid development and possible deployment of new technologies that may also have unintended negative impacts, in particular on biodiversity and health, or other unforeseen consequences.”¹⁰

Briefly, regarding **trade**, they decided to delete a number of trade paragraphs during the last days of negotiations. They have kept only two paragraphs (whereas there were 9 trade paragraphs in the co chair’s text as of 2 June 2012). Disagreements were too strong or no novelties (because of contention on a number of issues discussed in WTO) so they agreed to drop a number of paragraphs. Therefore the two paragraphs kept in the trade section are the following ones:

“281. We reaffirm that international trade is an engine for development and sustained economic growth, and also reaffirm the critical role that a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, as well as meaningful trade liberalization, can play in stimulating economic growth and development worldwide, thereby benefiting all countries at all stages of development, as they advance towards sustainable development. In this context, we remain focused on achieving progress in addressing a set of important issues, such as, inter alia, trade-distorting subsidies and trade in environmental goods and services.

282. We urge the members of WTO to redouble their efforts to achieve an ambitious, balanced and development-oriented conclusion to the Doha Development Agenda, while respecting the principles of transparency, inclusiveness and consensual decision-making, with a view to strengthening the multilateral trading system. In order to effectively participate in the work programme of WTO and fully realize trade opportunities, developing countries need the assistance and enhanced cooperation of all relevant stakeholders.”

About subsidies, the EU wanted to stress the need to “gradually eliminate environmentally harmful subsidies that are incompatible with sustainable development” but G77 and China opposed this insertion. They underlined the need to talk about **all** subsidies that are harmful to SD (i.e agricultural subsidies) not only environmentally harmful subsidies. Therefore, para 281 refers to “trade distorting subsidies” (language in co chair’s text as of 2 June 2012).

Also contention about “trade in environmental goods and services”, very important issue for the EU + wanted to re affirm the need to make progress on this issue. G77 and China did not deny the importance of this issue, but stressed its contentious character (discussions in WTO, “the issues we cannot solve in other fora we should not try to solve them here” said G77 and China) + if we talk about that we should also be talking about intellectual property rights, MOI in general. Reference has nonetheless been kept in the text but weaker language.

9/ Measuring sustainable development: G77 and China did not want to engage in these discussions in Rio+20 negotiations (“this is a very important issue which requires much deeper reflection”, said the representative of G77 and China). All delegations questioned the placement of the paragraph (in the SDGs section in the co chair’s text). The EU and Switzerland wanted a UN Secretary General led process, other delegations preferred the UN Statistical

⁹ http://www.twinside.org.sg/title2/rio+20/news_updates/TWN_update20.pdf

¹⁰ “With the private sector in the ascendancy, few thought that Rio+20 would take on technology assessment at every level of governance and even ETC didn’t expect governments to admit – let alone express concern – that some new technologies could damage health, biodiversity and the environment” said ETC group, <http://www.etcgroup.org/content/rio20-or-silent-spring-50>.

Commission to take the lead. Finally the paragraph on measuring progress in SD was moved to the second part of the text (II/ Renewing Political Commitments, B/ Advancing integration, implementation and coherence: assessing the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges) and reads:

“38. We recognize the need for broader measures of progress to complement gross domestic product in order to better inform policy decisions, and in this regard **we request the United Nations Statistical Commission, in consultation with relevant United Nations system entities and other relevant organizations, to launch a programme of work in this area building on existing initiatives**”.

The substance of the paragraph as compared to what was proposed in the zero draft + amended text has been watered down. G77 and China was against a too detailed paragraph.

Conclusion:

In my view, these negotiations have been very difficult because of three main factors:

- Increasingly changing balance of power and development cooperation architecture.
- Repercussions of the crises
- Fight over natural resources - more acute and pressing in certain countries such as the EU (great importer of natural resources + need way out of the crisis, need economic growth so want to open up new markets – in terms of products and countries).

The EU was really unhappy with the first version of the outcome document presented by Brazil on 16 June and finally managed to get “some” concessions. Basically in the Brazilian text as of 16 June many of the EU’s redlines had been crossed: institutional framework for SD (no upgrading of UNEP), CBDR (mentioned in three parts or so of the text, while the EU kept repeating they did not want any mentioning of specific Rio principle), green economy section (really watered down), SDG section (no listing + intergovernmental process instead of a secretary general led process, no mentioning of SG), reference to the need to enhance financing for SD...

I had a chat with Timo Makela (DG environment, head of EU delegation) and asked him about the EU’s views on the outcome document approved in plenary (19th June) and he told me that finally they do have some of their main ideas included in the text (recognition of the green economy as a UN concept, of the new realities in development cooperation and at the international level more generally, role of the private sector, CBDR only at the beginning of the text and their concrete targets/goals are more or less still in the text in the thematic areas section).

Regarding the EU, they again (and will continue to do so) presented themselves as an ambitious partner but, as two representatives of the G77 and China stressed, you cannot ask for more ambition without putting the means of implementation on the table, without re affirming certain principles that would ensure that developed countries take the lead etc. To be ambitious you need a balance in negotiations (you need to give in order to receive...) unfortunately this is not how the EU played its cards. + the EU’s position relies on “business as usual” practices, greener economy but still reliance on consumption growth + emphasis on the role of the private sector without tackling corporate sector power and lack of regulation.

The assessment of the outcome document is different according to NGOs (many are very critical, some still critical but see positive aspects though, more accurately they see a positive evolution as compared to what was proposed in January).

Basically compared to what was in the zero draft and what the EU or the US wanted to be included in terms of green economy, ecosystem services, the role of the private sector or the deletion of CBDR we note some progress. G77 and China have had “many” of their key asks included in the doc. From this point of view it is quite a success for G77 and China, and this shows the increasing influence of the group and the shift in power relations.

More generally, objectively (without taking the progression/evolution in negotiations into account) the outcome is rather bad in my view. The “achievements” are only re affirmation of past commitments (Rio principles, human rights, technology transfer). The language is very vague in many places, very weak or absence of commitments. The institutional framework is also disappointing as a council for SD has not been established but the setting up of a high level forum could possibly, according to some observers, represent an opportunity¹¹. Even if the importance of the private sector for SD has been watered down, it is still present and regulatory frameworks are not part of the deal (in order to get a balance at least)¹². There’s no rethinking of the current model of development (overemphasis on growth and market based approaches), the word “crises” appears twice in the document, in the same paragraph, which shows you the importance given to tackle their root causes!! Regarding the SDGs everybody’s eyes are now focused on the process for defining them, but here again it is going to be difficult (fight over the principles guiding the definition of such goals is going to be intense I presume). It is also still unclear how these goals will be integrated in a post 2015 agenda (different sets of goals or integrated and overarching post 2015 framework?). We’ll have to position ourselves and be careful with regard to a legitimate fear expressed by G77, that the poverty eradication, developmental dimension get lost in the process. The US also opposes goals on sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

A positive aspect is for me the growing influence of developing countries at the international level (at least it is more balanced) but as the G77 and China as a group do not propose anything to change the current model of consumption and production, there’s no alternative put forward. The situation seems therefore at the moment quite blocked. Future negotiations will be intense and difficult. There is need for continued pressure towards change and new visions and to convince the EU to be at the forefront of the radical changes needed. It will also be crucial to monitor different UN processes - financing for SD and mechanism for technology transfer as well as the definition of SDGs and indicators for SD - in order to achieve the best possible outcomes.

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¹¹ See again Martin Khor’s analysis http://www.twinside.org.sg/title2/rio+20/news_updates/TWN_update23.pdf

¹² The big winner in Rio is the industrial private sector, getting the green light to advance a ‘green economy’ with the promise of ‘enabling environments’ and public resources. After months of opposition, and under pressure from Brazil trying to cobble something out of the rubble of New York negotiations, the global South accepted an umbrella concept of ‘green economy’ with several ‘conditions,’ but the concept is still vaguely defined and open to interpretation by industry, governments and international financial institutions. For industry, the green economy clearly means the financialization of nature – the notion that every watershed and waterlily will be priced and pigeonholed (and traded and sold) as part of nature’s ‘environmental services.’ <http://www.etcgroup.org/content/rio20-or-silent-spring-50>