



Network of Regional Governments  
for **Sustainable Development**

## Working Group on the Rio +20 Process

### Work Programme

#### Objectives and Expected Outcomes of the Working Group

The nrg4SD Working Group on the Rio +20 Process (Rio +20 WG) is a technical and advocacy initiative part of a comprehensive strategy put forward by nrg4SD's Secretariat and adopted by the Steering Committee (08.12.2010 Cancun and 15.02.2011 Brussels) aiming to establish several working groups within the Network in order to:

- Create dynamism and enhance the "network approach" for the activities and interests of member regions, within the framework of the topics identified for work programme 2008-2011;
- Work on specific and concrete areas, aiming to position the Network in international initiatives/events and identifying project proposals for interregional cooperation, which could fall under the calls for proposals of international funding sources, as appropriate;
- Enhance the strategic vision and long-term work of the Network.

The specific **objectives of the Rio +20 WG** are:

- To **analyse the complex institutional and political aspects** of the Rio +20 process and their relevance to the role of subnational governments/regions in achieving sustainable development and the recognition of these in the future international environmental governance and sustainable development framework.
- To provide **scientific and academic evidence for nrg4SD policy and advocacy positions** on the matter.
- To conduct **relevant initiatives to position nrg4SD** in Rio +20 and to **establish relevant partnerships with key actors** of the process such as the national delegations and regional working groups, the Rio +20 Bureau, the UN Preparatory Committee for Rio +20, the UN Global Sustainability Panel GSP, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs DESA, the UN Commission for Sustainable Development, the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Office NGLS, UN Habitat, the UN University UNU, the Major Groups and other key organisations representing stakeholders, etc.

- To organise the **participation of nrg4SD in the Rio +20 Summit in June 2012** and contribute to the organisation of relevant side events of the Network, also identifying relevant partnerships.
- To contribute to the elaboration of **nrg4SD post 2011 work programme on Rio +20**.
- To **follow up** on the main **outcomes of the Rio +20 Summit** of relevance to the network.

The **expected outcomes of the Rio +20 WG** are:

- **Communication and dissemination tools for** facilitating the **follow up of** the key milestones and outcomes along the process towards Rio +20, e.g. blog, Facebook group, etc.
- **Technical notes and policy briefings** for supporting the officers from nrg4SD member regions working in this area.
- An **initial reflection paper** with a solid academic approach **on the prospects for enhancing the recognition and the role of subnational governments/regions** in the future international environmental governance and sustainable development framework.
- **Concise policy and political guidance notes for** the consideration of the **political and high-technical level representatives** from member regions in order to inform their decisions and to create, if appropriate and possible, a common approach on how to conduct the specific nrg4SD advocacy strategy adopted by the General Assembly meeting.
- An **Advocacy Paper developing in detail the specific nrg4SD advocacy strategy** adopted by the General Assembly **and illustrating it with case studies** from nrg4SD subnational governments.

This paper should be prepared with a view to be the basis of the **central advocacy and communication publication/brochure** of nrg4SD for use immediately before and during the Rio +20 Summit in June 2012.

- Any **further reflection and advocacy papers or consultation responses as required by the milestones** and the other discussion topics of Process, such as the transition to a Green Economy in the context of Poverty Eradication of the emerging challenges.

This can be done **building upon the previous advocacy papers and consultation responses** recently elaborated by the nrg4SD ('Subnational Governments: Key Actors in the Transition to a Green Economy'; 'Subnational Governments: Key Actors in Sustainable Consumption and Production'; nrg4SD responses to the consultations by the UN GSP or UNEP, etc).

- An **enhanced network of high-level international contacts** relevant to the objectives of this working group, particularly in terms of advocacy work.

This can be done *building upon the contacts already established by the nrg4SD Secretariat* (Chair of the Rio +20 Bureau via the Major Groups, the Rio +20 Executive Coordinators, UN GSP, UNEP's Executive Secretary and Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch, President of UNEP's Governing Council via the Major Groups, UN DESA Division for Sustainable Development, UN NGLS, UN Habitat), *by the nrg4SD subnational governments* who take

part in the international talks within their respective *national delegations* and *by the delegations* that some nrg4SD subnational governments have *in New York*.

- A **prominent discussion forum and summit of subnational governments immediately before the Rio +20 Summit** in June 2012 in order to position subnational governments and nrg4SD as allies in the process and contribute directly to the works of the national delegations and regional groups and the Rio +20 Bureau and Summit.

It needs to be taken into consideration that nrg4SD was created at the Rio +10 Summit in Johannesburg in 2002 and will therefore celebrate its **10th anniversary in June 2012**. Initial discussions are underway with the Organisation des Régions Unies/Forum Global d'Associations des Régions ORU/FOGAR on the possibility of co-organising at least a part of this event. A member of ORU/FOGAR, nrg4SD is the voice of this Organisation in the field of sustainable development. Several nrg4SD members enjoy common membership to ORU/FOGAR.

- **Relevant participation of nrg4SD representatives at the Rio +20 Summit and side events**, in order to support with grass-roots levels experiences and strategic reflections the discussions between national delegations and regional groups.

## Structure of the Working Group

nrg4SD working groups are intended to share a common structure: each led by a coordinating region, which is assisted by two supporting regions (one of them if possible from the South). In addition, member regions participate actively in the working group. Participant regions shall be in a position to exchange their ongoing works on the matter or demonstrate significant interest in the issue. This is also in the interest of establishing working groups with a reasonable number of members in order to allow for actual exchange and concrete outcomes.

- With no nrg4SD member openly volunteering for coordinating this WG since its approval, the **nrg4SD Secretariat has stepped in to fill in the coordinator role** and ensure the participation of nrg4SD in relevant milestones of the process so far (by means of side events, advocacy papers or consultation responses), start establishing a network of high-level contacts as above mentioned, and elaborate this zero draft work programme.
- The regions of **Quebec** (CA) and **Wales** (UK) have kindly volunteered to be supporting regions to this WG.
- Following from an initial response for interest in joining the group, the following regions have showed a particularly interest in the Rio +20 Process:  
**Brittany** (France), **North Burkina Faso** (Burkina Faso), **Catalonia** (Spain), **Basque Country** (Spain), **Flanders** (Belgium), **PACA** (France), **Rhône-Alpes** (France), and **São Paulo** (Brazil).

As soon as this draft zero is commented and approved by the two supporting regions, a **formal call for interest** in joining the group **will be launched** to the Network with a **particular emphasis in widening the membership from the South**. The Rio +20 Process,

and the negotiations on the different topics of the Process, require in depth North-South dialogue and collaborations. Being a platform for North - South dialogue and collaboration (in all possible combinations) is at the core mission of nrg4SD and constitutes a key asset for its members, as well as for positioning the Network at international level.

## Tools and Methods of the Working Group

- **External and independent technical support** from relevant academics and practitioners. A collaboration has been established between nrg4SD and the Polytechnic University of Catalonia, in the person of Professor Josep Xercavins. The nrg4SD Secretariat believes that **Professor Xercavins'** intellectual contribution and solid experience on these matters on similar international process will be instrumental to kicking off – and also to maintaining in the medium and long-term - the works of the WG. His knowledge of sustainable development and environmental governance matters bring into the works of the WG and the Advocacy Strategy of nrg4SD the grass-roots experience, academic background and analytical approach required for this ambitious initiative. It is to be noted that Catalonia is one of the founding members of nrg4SD and currently holds the co-chairmanship for the North of the Network.
- It is important for the political sensitivities of the process to ensure that the works, visibility and leverage of nrg4SD in this area of activity are the results of an **inclusive process** within the network which can be then communicated as **representative of the South and North membership of the nrg4SD**.
- **Technical and political notes, papers and publications.**
- **Communication and dissemination tools.**
- **Evidence-based lobby tools** - Compendia of subnational practices.
- **High-level meetings** with key contacts and stakeholders of the Process.
- **Discussion sessions, blogs, webinars.** The nrg4SD Secretariat is committed to explore IT solutions to facilitate the participation in this type of initiatives.
- **Ad hoc collaborations** with key international institutions, organisations, national delegations and regional groups part of the Process

**Some activities and relevant milestones for the WG:** to be completed in future draft versions in:

### 2011

- **February, Nairobi (Kenya):** nrg4SD is sponsored to participate in UNEP's Major Groups and Stakeholders' Forum and Governing Council/Global Environmental Ministerial Forum. The Network delivers statements on the Green Economy and International Environmental Governance/Sustainable Development Framework.

- **6 March, New York (USA):** nrg4SD conducts one of the workshops under The Stakeholder Forum's consultation event 'Agenda for International Environmental Governance, Sustainable Development Governance and Rio+20'.
- **7-8 March, New York (USA):** nrg4SD participates in Rio +20 II PrepComm and co-organises a side event on the city-region approach to the Green Economy with UN Habitat and ICLEI.
- **March:**
  - nrg4SD Advocacy Paper 'Subnational Governments: Key Actors in the Transition to a Green Economy' directly submitted to NGLS, DESA and Mr. Brice Lalonde, Executive Coordinator of Rio +20, appointed by UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-Moon.
  - nrg4SD response to UN NGLS consultation on the works of the Global Sustainability Panel. It is to be noted that [NGLS' Summary](#) on the consultation for Panel experts and sherpas reflects the role of local authorities and subnational governments as a key outcome of the consultation, referring to both the responses of nrg4SD and ICLEI.
- **April:** nrg4SD response to the consultation on UNEP's report on the Green Economy.
- **May:** nrg4SD Advocacy Paper for 19 UN CSD on 'Subnational Governments: Key Actors in Sustainable Consumption and Production' directly submitted to NGLS, DESA and Mr. Brice Lalonde, Executive Coordinator of Rio +20 appointed by UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-Moon.
- **June:** initial agreement with the organisation The Stakeholder Forum to have an nrg4SD advocacy paper/think piece published.
- **6-17 June, Bonn (Germany):** intersessional talks in climate change UNFCCC
- **29-31 August, Quebec (Canada):** statutory meetings of the Steering Committee and General Assembly of nrg4SD, as well as meeting of the Rio +20 WG. Decision on the specific advocacy strategy for Rio +20 of the Network.
- **3-5 September, Bonn (Germany):** 64th Annual UN DPI/NGO Conference "Sustainable Societies; Responsive Citizens".
- **1 November:** Deadline for the written contribution to the Rio +20 zero draft of the outcome document.
- **November, New York (USA) – dates to be announced:** UN 2nd Committee discusses the Rio +20 process, focus on structure of the document and process.
- **1-2 December, Geneva (Switzerland):** Regional Preparatory Meeting for the UN ECE region.
- **15-16 December, New York (USA):** Second Intersessional for the Rio +20 conference, discussions on the compiled inputs so far, including the structure of the outcome document.
- **28 November – 9 December, Durban (South Africa):** international climate change talks UNFCCC COP 17/CMP7

## 2012

- **Early January:** The Zero Draft of the outcome document made available.
- **16-18 January, New York (USA):** First informal informals.

- **13-17 February, New York (USA):** Second informal informals to negotiate the Zero Draft of the document.
- **27-28 February: UNEP GC/GMEF,** possibly in Stockholm or Mexico or Brazil (not yet decided).
- **26-29 March, London (UK):** ‘Planet Under Pressure’ - A science conference that will provide a comprehensive update of the pressure planet Earth is now under and discuss solutions and provide scientific leadership towards the 2012 UN Conference.
- **March, New York (USA):** Third Intersessional for the Rio 2012 conference. Originally scheduled in for 5-7 March but may be merged into the second informal negotiating week to be held **19 – 23 March on** the Zero Draft of the document, to be held also in NYC.
- **Spring:** Possibility for collaboration with the UN University conference on Rio +20 via Quebec.
- **30 April – 4 May, New York (USA):** Third informal informals on the Zero Draft of the outcome document.
- **28-30 May, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil):** Third Rio +20 PrepComm.
- **Early June:** Days of informals between the Third PrepComm and the UN CSD.
- **nrg4SD World Summit of Regions – 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Network!**
- **4-6 June Rio de Janeiro (Brazil): UN CSD - Rio+20 Summit.**

#### **Evolving with WG members’ needs and staying tuned in:**

- Within reasonable and feasible limits, the nrg4SD Secretariat, any external supporting experts and the supporting regions will strive to adapt this work programme to the evolving needs of its members and the ongoing international initiatives of relevance to nrg4SD’s mandate as regards the Rio +20 Process.
- The suggested work programme is open to any suggestion from WG members. Their active participation is vital to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of the objectives, outcomes, tools and methods of the Working Group.

For more information on the working group please contact directly nrg4SD Secretary General Mrs. Maruxa Cardama (+32 (0)475844339 – [mcardama@nrg4sd.org](mailto:mcardama@nrg4sd.org))



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