



Network of Regional Governments
for Sustainable Development

Zero Draft of the Rio +20 outcome document and initial discussions at the UN

Briefing note

This briefing note aims to inform nrg4SD members of the key proposals outlined in the Zero Draft of the outcome document of the UN Rio +20 Conference - 'The Future We Want' - and of some reactions and proposals for amendments discussed at the UN meetings held on 25–27 January 2012 in New York City. Further discussions and negotiation sessions will take place in the coming months ahead of the Rio +20 Conference in June and will therefore entail changes to the current draft outcome document and to some of the initial reactions. See *next steps below for dates*.

As members may remember, nrg4SD is fully engaged in the Rio +20 process. Actually, its Rio +20 Task Force has contributed to the compilation document in preparation of the Zero Draft outcome document. nrg4SD has also submitted some initial comments and proposals for amendments ahead of the 25-27 January discussions at the UN. All these position papers and other useful documents such as calendars and a memo on nrg4SD's activities towards Rio +20 available are available [here](#).

Background information

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20 takes place from 20 - 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In order to prepare the Zero Draft of the outcome document of the Conference, the Secretariat of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development UN CSD opened up an initial stakeholder consultation at the end of 2011 (nrg4SD contribution available [here](#)). Following this compilation of inputs from stakeholders, UN CSD published the first Zero Draft of the Rio+20 outcome document on 9 January 2012 (please refer to the preliminary analysis on the sub-national dimension of the Zero Draft circulated by the nrg4SD Secretariat via email on 10.01.2012). The Zero Draft consists of the following sections; (I) **Preamble/Stage setting**; (II) **Renewing Political Commitment**, (III) **Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication**, (IV) **Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development** and (V) **Framework for action and follow-up**.

From 25 – 27 January 2012, first initial discussions on the Zero Draft were held in New York City, USA. This meeting discussed the first two parts of the Zero Draft **I. Preamble/Stage setting and II. Renewing Political Commitment**. nrg4SD contributed with views and proposals for amendments focused on the recognition of sub-national governments in sustainable development via the relevant Major Group Local Authorities (nrg4SD contribution available [here](#)). The Governments of Catalonia and Quebec also participated directly in the discussions. As part of the overall approach to the Zero Draft, other key issues of section III, IV and V were occasionally mentioned during the January sessions in New York. However these sections will be the object of specific discussion and negotiation the sessions scheduled over the coming months until June. nrg4SD has obtained a copy of the **composed text that was distributed on Friday 27 January AM at the negotiation sessions** in New York City, following the first reactions and proposals for amendments from national delegations to the UN. This composed text has

not been made available to stakeholders, though some national delegations have clearly positioned themselves in favour of its publication. The composed text is available from nrg4SD's website [here](#).

At this stage of the process, **strategic moves from both the nrg4SD Secretariat and nrg4SD members directly with national delegations are crucial**. Any contributions to the nrg4SD Secretariat work, as well as any links from members to their national governments and/or UN contacts directly will make a difference to our positioning on multilevel governance and the future sustainable development framework. Member states are asked to comment in writing on the last three sections of the Zero Draft by the deadline of **29 February 2012**. As the negotiations for Rio +20 in the coming months will be a **'party driven process'**, any advocacy by Major Groups and stakeholders sitting within them, such as nrg4SD, should be communicated directly to the countries that sit in the UN before this date. For more information on the ongoing strategy carried out by the nrg4SD in connection with ICLEI (coordinator of the Local Authorities Major Group), please contact the [nrg4SD Secretariat](#).

Key proposals of Rio +20 Zero Draft

This section of the briefing note **outlines the key proposals presented in the Zero Draft, organising them in groups for the sake of clarity**: (i) general state of the negotiations; (ii) what is there that is new?; (iii) what is there that is not so new?; (iv) what could be launched already in June in Rio?, and (v) seven priority areas. **Information on the initial reactions and proposals for amendments by national delegations made public** at the initial discussions on 25-27 in New York is indicated by each proposal **in italics**. This presentation of the information is intended to serve as guidance for reading and interpreting the Zero Draft of 9 January and the composed text of 27 January in connection.

i. State of negotiations – Initial Reactions

- **Current structure is fine**

- **Not ambitious enough and not action oriented enough**

- *Comment by New Zealand: the document should be even more concise, focused, and action orientated with scope for streamlining. One strong reference to an issue is better than a multitude. It is necessary to carefully scrutinise "noting" paragraphs to determine whether they really are necessary and add value.*

- *Comment by Switzerland: Important international goals have been agreed upon over the last decades regarding development and many other aspects of sustainable development. The achievements of all these goals need to be accelerated.*

- *Comment by the EU: It does not properly set the stage for future actions and commitments. It should be stronger in terms of highlighting commitments from Heads of State and Government. It should be acknowledged that results are mixed – significant progress has been made, yet a lot still needs to be done.*

- **No balance between the three pillars (Part IV – A. Strengthening/reforming/integrating the three pillars) and need to reaffirm Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

- *Comment by Switzerland, supported by EU in amendments: A better balance between the main dimensions of sustainable development needs to be established. As in paragraph 1, we should use prosperity instead of growth as the latter is not a goal in itself. Instead of the static term "pillars", the term "dimensions" of sustainable development better reflects the nature of the concept. Avoid cherry-picking when referring to the Rio Principles.*

- *Comment by the EU: The document needs to reaffirm the Rio Principles in a coherent manner.*

- Comment by G77: Need for an integrated approach incorporating economic, social and environmental aspects to confront the challenges of sustainable development, recognizing their inter-linkages, so as to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions.
- Amendment by Mexico to paragraph 9 recognising **'sustainable urbanization' as 'a key' to unify forces to integrate the three pillars** of sustainable development: economic, environmental, and social.
- Amendments by G77 to paragraph 9.
- Amendments by G77 to paragraph 13 (MDGs and poverty eradication as an overall priority).
- Amendments on 'middle-income countries' by Mexico and comment by Serbia on 'countries with economies in transition' to paragraph 15.
- Amendments regarding the monitoring of protectionist trade measures to paragraph 15 by G77 and New Zealand.
- Comment by the EU: References to aid effectiveness are needed. Amendments in this line by the EU, New Zealand and Korea to paragraph 15.
- **Weak on governance and rule of law, transparency, accountability, gender, role of youth and education as means to achieve sustainable development**
- Comment by the EU: In paragraph 6 additional references to the importance of ensuring respect for democracy, human rights, gender equality, the rule of law, transparency, accountability and good governance are essential as well as the importance of addressing population issues. The nexus between peace, development and environment need to be highlighted. Also amendment by Liechtenstein to paragraph 4 in this line.
- Amendments by Liechtenstein to paragraph 13; by Norway and Iceland to paragraph 14 on the removal of gender inequality, and by the EU to paragraph 18 on the integration of the gender dimension.
- Amendment by G77 and Canada to paragraph 14 on the removal of obstacles to the realisation of the right of peoples to self-determination, in particular peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation.
- Amendment by the EU and comment by Serbia to paragraph 16 and by G77 to paragraph 18 on education.
- Amendments by G77 to paragraph 16 on patent protection and intellectual property rights, as well as on freedom of trade and investment.
- **Lacks focus on resource efficiency as well as on the issue of equity and resources – ignores that the current ecological footprint would require more than 2 planets by 2050 – does not emphasise enough the limited carrying capacity and it is weak on stating planetary boundaries – needs to reaffirm intergenerational solidarity – needs to be strong on sustainable consumption and production and on change of paradigm – needs to take into account the weight of emerging challenges in the matters above** - amendments to paragraph 2 by Kazakhstan, Switzerland, Norway, G77 and the EU; amendments to paragraph 4 by the EU, Mexico and G77; amendments to paragraph 5 by the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and the EU; amendments to paragraph 11 by Canada, Switzerland, Norway, Japan, Liechtenstein and the EU; amendments to paragraph 11 by G77 on multiple inter-related crises, the gravity of the challenges we face threatening the ability of developing countries to achieve the MDGs and for some threatening the territorial integrity and the existence and viability as countries; amendments to paragraph 13 by G77 on poverty eradication, MDGs, 0.7 of GDP and consumption and production patterns; amendments to paragraph 14 by Japan, the EU, G77, US.
- **Lack of mention to the cost of inaction** – amendment to paragraph 5 by the EU.
- **More realism in the assessment of the past 20 years and need to reaffirm past acquis**
- Comment by Australia: The text should recognise better the progress made in poverty eradication over the past twenty years.

- *Comment by Switzerland: Inspiring progress has been achieved. Information technologies have certainly contributed to development results but there is still a (broadening) digital gap between the north and the south.*
- *Amendment by G77: Review of the implementation in conformity with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.*
- *Amendment by G77 to paragraph 10: (...) the persistently increasing gap between developed and developing countries points to the continued need for a dynamic and enabling international economic environment supportive of international cooperation, particularly in the areas of finance, technology transfer in all areas, including oceans, debt, trade, and full and effective participation of developing countries in global decision making, if the momentum for global progress towards sustainable development is to be maintained and increased.*
- *Amendment by the EU to paragraph 10: To recognise the contribution of research and analysis to developed and developing countries, as well as the solutions to problems provided by technological development and innovations from the private sector and other stakeholders.*
- *Amendment by the EU to paragraph 12: We recognize and applaud the numerous examples of progress and leadership in sustainable development at regional, national and **local** levels.*
- *Amendment by Korea to paragraph 12: We also note that there has been action at regional, subregional, and **sub-national** levels*

ii. What is there that is new?

Enhanced engagement with Major Groups of Civil Society

- **Engagement with Major Groups comes upfront** (paragraphs 17 – 21 Engaging major groups)
 - *There are suggestions to change the very first words of the outcome document from ‘We, the heads of States and Government’ to ‘We, the representatives of the peoples of the world’ (paragraph 1).*
 - *Comment by Switzerland: If we want to have an inclusive development, we have to embrace all leaders for a more sustainable future besides the heads of State and Government.*
 - *Comment by the EU: Guarded by the right to freedom of association and assembly, the participation and influence of the nine Major groups is essential. None of the groups should be overlooked. The participation of civil society is not only a question of access to information – it is also a question of being properly involved in decision-making processes (paragraph 18).*
 - *Comment by Switzerland: There should be one paragraph per Mayor group.*
 - *Comment by New Zealand: would like a reference to all relevant stakeholders in the outcome document –for example there is currently no mention of foundations.*
- **Important references to the Local Authorities Major Group and the urban dimension (see section below on Inclusion of ‘sub-nationals’ in Zero Draft amendments) are made**
 - *Comment by the EU: The challenge of megacities and urban development needs to be highlighted in different sections.*
- **Call to enhance the implementation of Rio Principle 10**, which promotes public participation in environmental decision-making and access to information and justice in environmental matters (paragraph 58. Take steps to give further effect to Rio Principle 10 at the global, regional and national level, as appropriate).
 - *Comment by New Zealand: Paragraph 18 aims at increasing transparency with regard to political and administrative information. In accordance with Rio Principle 10 it needs to be clarified that it is about the right to access information that is held by public authorities. The current text is too unspecific and*

would interfere with the private sphere and also the protection of intellectual property (in particular trade secrets).

Global policy framework for corporate reporting

- **Public-private partnerships** as a key to sustainable development.
 - *Comment by EU: there should be an overall commitment to continuously promote national regulatory and administrative frameworks, which send the right signals to the private sector to invest in and manage their businesses in a way that promote sustainable development.*
- **Creation of a global policy framework for corporate reporting** requiring all listed and large private companies to consider sustainability issues and to integrate sustainability information within the reporting cycle (paragraph 24).
 - *Comments by New Zealand, Australia and Canada questioning the mandatory nature and evoking compliance costs.*

As part of the overall approach to the Zero Draft, other key issues of sections III, IV and V were only occasionally mentioned at the 25-27 January discussions. In this context, the information in italics is significantly reduced for the proposals of the Zero Draft explained below.

Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

- **Framing the Green Economy in the context of its challenges and opportunities, also in national and sectorial strategies and seeing it as a decision-making framework**– (paragraphs 25 – 31, 37 - 43).
- **Capacity development scheme, technology transfer, voluntary national commitments, gradual elimination of subsidies with negative effects on sustainable development**– (paragraphs 37 – 43, 118 - 123) -
 - *General comment: G77 remains cautious on Green Economy (no ‘green trade barriers’ should be introduced, need for technology transfer, etc.)*
- **Creation of an international knowledge sharing platform** (paragraph 32 – 36) to facilitate countries’ green economy policy design and implementation, including a) a menu of policy options; b) a toolbox of good practices in applying green economy policies at regional, national and local levels; c) a set of indicators to measure progress; d) a directory of technical services, technology and financing that could assist developing countries.
- **Roadmap to global progress with indicative goals and timeline** (paragraph 43)

Institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD)

- **Strong governance at local, national, regional and global levels is critical for advancing sustainable development** - (paragraph 44)
- **Upgrade the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)** - (paragraph 49)- Reaffirm the role of the CSD or transform it into a UN Sustainable Development Council with a voluntary review process.
- **Upgrade the UN Environmental Programme (UNEP)** - (paragraph 50 - 51) - Strengthen the capacity of UNEP or establish a UN specialized agency for the environment.
- **Actions at regional, national and local levels** – (paragraphs 59 -62) - reaffirm that sustainable development strategies incorporated into national development plans are key instruments for the implementation of sustainable development commitments at regional, national and subnational levels – recognise the need to integrate sustainable urban policy as a key component of a national

sustainable development policy and, in this regard, to empower local authorities to work more closely with national governments.

Framework for action and follow up - Accelerating and measuring progress

- **Sustainable Development Goals by 2015 to accelerate and measure progress** with a mechanism for periodic follow-up and reporting on progress made toward their achievement. (paragraphs 105 – 110)
- *General comment: UN Secretary General would like to see a first set of Sustainable Development Goals identified by June as a key way of galvanising action post-Rio. Sustainable Developments Goals shall not replace the Millennium Development Goals but instead complement them in the context of the scheduled review of Millennium Development Goals by 201 (paragraph 108).*
- **Recognition of the limitations of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a measure of well-being and call for the development of further indicators** – (paragraph 111)
- **Registry/compendium of commitments framework** - (paragraph 128) – accountability framework of the commitments made at Rio+20.
– *Comment by the EU comment: further discussion on how to make this registry a meaningful tool is still needed.*

iii. What is there that is not so new?

- **Rights-based approach to basic needs: food, water** – various mentions throughout the text.
- **Ensuring access to information technology** (paragraph 10, 18, 118).
- **Need for attention to a number of sectorial and cross-sectorial priority areas as well as to the linkage among different sectors** - food security, water, energy, **cities**, green jobs-social inclusion, oceans and seas, natural disasters, climate change, forest and biodiversity, land degradation and desertification, mountains, chemicals and waste, sustainable consumption and production, education and gender equality (paragraphs 63-104).
- **Need for reforming harmful subsidies with adequate protection of vulnerable groups** (paragraph 126).
- **Sustainable energy for all** (paragraph 70).
- **Social protection as a basis** (paragraph 77).
- **Better coordination of Multilateral Environmental Agreements to address policy fragmentation** (paragraph 55).
- **Establishing an Ombudsperson or High Commissioner for Future Generations** – (paragraph 57).
- **International financial institutions to review their strategies to better support developing countries** (paragraph 54 and 55).
- **Achieving the allocation of 0.7 of GDP to official development assistance** (paragraph 112).
- **Prioritising sustainable development in the allocation of resources** (paragraph 113).
- **Increasing the effectiveness of aid** (paragraph 114).
- **Increasing triangular partnerships North-South** (paragraph 115).
- **Key role of the private sector in multi-stakeholder partnerships** (paragraph 116)
- **Strengthening the Global Environmental Facility (GEF)** (paragraph 117)
- **Achieving a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system and an early balanced, ambitious and development-oriented outcome of the Doha Development Round of multilateral trade negotiations** (paragraphs 124-127)

iv. What initiatives could be launched already in June?

- Negotiations on **governing marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction** (paragraph 80).
- **Global observing network on ocean acidification** (paragraph 82).
- **10 year framework of programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production** (paragraph 97).
- **Periodic report on the state of the Planet's carrying capacity** – (paragraph 52).

v. Seven priority areas across the Zero Draft

- **Green jobs and social inclusion** (paragraphs 73 – 77).
- **Energy access, efficiency and sustainability** (paragraphs 70 – 71).
- **Food security and sustainable agriculture** (paragraphs 64 – 68).
- **Sound water management** (paragraphs 67 – 69).
- **Sustainable cities** (paragraph 72).
- **Sustainable management of the oceans** (paragraphs 78 – 86).
- **Improved resilience and disaster preparedness** (paragraph 72).

Local and 'sub-national' governments in the Zero Draft

The Zero Draft published on 9 January 2012 contains **important mentions to the Major Group 'Local Authorities' and the local dimension**, acknowledging the essential role of local governments and the need to fully integrate them into all levels of decision making on sustainable development (paragraph 20).

The wording of the Zero Draft, however, is not fully satisfactory to intermediate levels of governments – such as Federated States, Regions and Provinces – because **all subnational actors are subsumed under the expression 'local authorities'**. This, on the other hand, was to be expected and is driven by the current structure of the so called 'Major Groups'. Major Groups regroup the sectors of society accredited to engage in UN processes. The UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs UN DESA had confirmed that the Zero Draft would use the exact wording of existing Major Groups, and that is 'local authorities'.

Major Groups are the sectors of society recognised in Agenda 21 as having a substantive contribution to make to the achievement of a sustainable future. Groups identified in Agenda 21 include: Business and industry; Children and Youth; Farmers; Indigenous People; Local Authorities; Non-governmental organisations NGOs; Scientific and Technological Community; Women, and Workers and Trade Unions.

Based on the Agenda 21 nine Major Groups, the organisations of stakeholders are accredited towards the UN system within a relevant group. nrg4SD is accredited towards several UN entities and conventions within the 'Local Authorities' Major Group.

During the initial discussions of the Zero Draft held on 25-27 January 2012 **proposals for the inclusion of 'sub-national' in the text were made, particularly by Canada, the EU, Korea and Switzerland**. nrg4SD contributed to these discussion session with views and amendments focused on the recognition of sub-national governments in sustainable development via the relevant Major Group 'Local Authorities' (nrg4SD contribution available [here](#)).

The G77 proposed a change which could weaken the integration of 'Local Authorities' into all levels of decision-making on sustainable development (paragraph 20) but does not delete it. Others like Brazil, Canada, the EU, Mexico, Switzerland, and Korea emphasised the importance of Local and Su-national authorities. As regards the EU, it is worth noting that, although it did emphasise the importance of 'sub-national' governments, there was not a consistent approach in all mentions/amendments along the text and in occasions only the local dimension was added.

All in all, the composed text that was distributed at the negotiation sessions on Friday 27 January AM following the comments and proposals for amendments from national delegations entails a real opening for the recognition of 'sub-national governments' and their distinctive role from 'local authorities'.

The first mention of 'sub-nationals' is in paragraph 5 **Part I. Preamble/Stage setting**.

Paragraph 5 in the Zero Draft - We urge bold and decisive action on the objective and themes for the conference. We renew our commitment to sustainable development and express our determination to pursue the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. We further affirm our resolve to strengthen the institutional framework for sustainable development. Taken together our actions should fill the implementation gaps and achieve greater integration among the three pillars of sustainable development – the economic, the social and the environmental.

Suggested amendment to Paragraph 5 - Taken together our actions [further specified in this document – Switzerland] [at the international, regional, sub-regional, national and sub-national level – EU] should fill the implementation gaps [, ensure better policy coherence – EU] and achieve greater integration among the three [pillars / dimensions – Switzerland, EU] of sustainable development – the economic, the social and the environmental [, thus setting the ground for new universal and comprehensive ethics of the humanity – Russian Federation].

The next mention of 'sub-nationals' is in paragraph 12 of **Part II. Renewing Political Commitments B**. 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 (Integration, Implementation, Coherence).

Paragraph 12 in the Zero Draft - We note that national commitment to sustainable development has deepened. Many Governments now incorporate environmental and social issues into their economic policies, and have strengthened their commitment to sustainable development and the implementation of Agenda 21 and related agreements through national policies and plans, national legislation and institutions, and the ratification and implementation of international environmental agreements.

Suggested amendment 1 to paragraph 12 – amendment by the EU to include local level ... [Furthermore, we recognize and applaud the numerous examples of progress and leadership in sustainable development at regional, national and local levels. – EU]

Suggested amendment 2 to paragraph 12 - [12 bis We also note that there has been action at regional, subregional, and sub-national levels. Major groups have played important roles in taking action at all levels, while the private sector has demonstrated the potential of stakeholders to make a difference. – RoK]

C. Engaging Major Groups.

Note that there has been an amendment suggested to the title of this section [C. [Engaging – G77 delete]- [M – G77]ajor groups [and other stakeholders – G77]– Japan delete] New Zealand also proposes a reference to all stakeholders as there is currently no mention of foundations.

Paragraph 17 in the Zero Draft - We underscore that a fundamental prerequisite for the achievement of sustainable development is broad public participation in decision-making. Sustainable development requires Major groups – women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organisations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technological community, and farmers – to play a meaningful role at all levels. It is important to enable all members of civil society to be actively engaged in sustainable development by incorporating their specific knowledge and practical know-how into national and local policy making. In this regard, we also acknowledge the role of national parliaments in furthering sustainable development.

Suggested amendment to Paragraph 17 – We underscore that [a fundamental prerequisite for the achievement of sustainable development is – G77 delete] broad public participation [and influence in policy and – EU] [in [all levels of – Liechtenstein] decision-making – G77 delete] [at local, national, regional and international levels – EU] ... All major groups of society should actively engage in sustainable development – Mexico] by incorporating their specific knowledge and practical know-how into national [, sectoral – Switzerland] and [local / sub-national – Switzerland] policy making [, implementation and monitoring – Switzerland] [and encouraging their active participation in decision making, planning and implementation of policies and programmes for sustainable development – Liechtenstein]...

Paragraph 20 of the Draft Zero - We also acknowledge the essential role of local governments and the need to fully integrate them into all levels of decision making on sustainable development.

Suggested amendment to Paragraph 20 - [20. We reaffirm the primary role of national governments, in the process of achieving sustainable development. We acknowledge the role of national legislative bodies in promoting sustainable development. – G77] We also acknowledge the essential role [of / that – G77] local [and sub-national – Canada] governments [can play – G77] [and the need to fully integrate them into all levels of decision making [and implementation – Switzerland] on sustainable development – G77 delete] [in integrated planning and implementation of sustainable development policies.

New Zealand: The second sentence in paragraph 17 contains a reference to the need for major groups, including local authorities, to “play a meaningful role” in sustainable development. We would not therefore see a need for this paragraph. It is the responsibility of states to involve their local governments in national decision-making.

Canada: The addition of “sub-national” better reflects the realities of federal states; Canadian provinces and territories, for example, are not “local” governments.

Paragraph 21 of the Zero Draft - We recognize the importance of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the global, regional and national implementation of sustainable development

strategies. We also recognize the need to reflect the views of children and youth as the issues we are addressing will have a deep impact on the youth of today and the generations that follow.

Suggested amendment to Paragraph 21 - [We stress the importance of the participation of indigenous people to the promotion of sustainable development. In this regard, - G77] We recognize the **[role of indigenous peoples and the – EU]** importance of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the global, regional and national **[and sub-national – EU]** implementation of sustainable development strategies.

G77: We also recognize the importance of local communities in the achievement of sustainable development.

There are also some mentions to ‘local’ in the Zero Draft which did not see any comments or amendments during the initial discussions on 25-27 January in New York City.

Paragraph 17: ...Sustainable development requires major groups – women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organisations, **local authorities**, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific and technological community, and farmers – to play a meaningful role at all levels...

Paragraph 22: We commit to improving governance and capacity at all levels – global, regional, national and **local** – to promote integrated decision making, to fill the implementation gap and promote coherence across institutions.

In this context, **for future discussions different options are open:** a. seeking amendments to **include the word ‘sub-national’ everywhere** where ‘local’ is mentioned or **b. striving for a footnote explaining the fact that the Local Authorities Major Group covers a wide range of subnational governments, including federated states, regions or provinces or c. advocating for the renaming of the Major Group so to encompass both local and regional authorities or d. advocating for renaming the Major Group encompassing local authorities and subnational as ‘governmental stakeholders’.**

Next steps

Deadline for comments on the last three sections of Zero Draft – 29 February 2012

At this stage of the process, **strategic moves from both the nrg4SD Secretariat and nrg4SD members directly with national delegations are crucial.** Any contributions to the nrg4SD Secretariat work, as well as any links from members to their national governments and/or UN contacts directly will make a difference to our positioning on multilevel governance and the future sustainable development framework. Member states are asked to comment in writing on the last three sections of the Zero Draft by the deadline of **29 February 2012.** As the negotiations for Rio +20 in the coming months will be a **‘party driven process’, any advocacy by Major Groups and stakeholders sitting within them, such as nrg4SD, should be communicated directly to the countries** that sit in the UN before this date.

For more information on the **ongoing strategy carried out by the nrg4SD in connection with ICLEI** (coordinator of the Local Authorities Major Group), please contact the [nrg4SD Secretariat](#).

Dates and discussed topics

- **18 – 19 February:** UNEP's Thirteenth Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum, Nairobi, Kenya - **nrg4SD participating** sponsored by UNEP – preparations for Rio+20
- **20 – 22 February:** 12th special session of UNEP's Governing Council/ Global Ministerial, Nairobi, Kenya - **nrg4SD participating** sponsored by UNEP- preparations for Rio+20
- **19-23 March:** First round of 'informal-informal' negotiations on the Zero Draft of the outcome document -- This round of informal-informals will concentrate on Parts III, IV and V - **nrg4SD participating**
- **26-27 March:** Third intersessional meeting of UN CSD - **nrg4SD participating**
- The schedule of informal-informal negotiations for the period after March 2012 will be discussed by the Bureau in its next meeting
- **13 - 15 June:** 3rd Preparatory Committee Meeting UN CSD - **nrg4SD participating**
- **16-19 June:** UN Sustainable Development Days
- **17-18 June:** **nrg4SD Steering Committee and General Assembly**
- **19 June:** **World Summit of States and Regions co-organised by the State of Rio de Janeiro, nrg4SD and The Climate Group**
- **20 - 22 June 2012: UN Rio +20 Conference**

Global Sustainability Panel

The UN Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Panel on Global Sustainability (GSP) released its final report on 30 January 2012 with a launch event in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The report, with specific mention to the subnational level, to regions and to local authorities can be found [here](#). Following two previous nrg4SD papers submitted to the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service NGLS who conducted a consultation on the works of the GSP, nrg4SD is currently preparing a briefing note on the final report. nrg4SD's contribution to the work of the GSP is available [here](#).

More information

nrg4SD webpage on the [network's engagement in the Rio +20 process](#)

[UN's website](#) on Rio +20, including Zero Draft

For any please contact the nrg4SD Secretariat on nrg4sd@rg4sd.org

nrg4SD Secretariat
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