

Contributions from Catalonia to the compilation document as basis for the zero draft of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development RIO+20

-- 12 proposals for 2012 --

Barcelona, October 25th, 2011

Taking as a reference the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio (1992), given the relevance of the results achieved.

Affirming the need to promote a new international agreement in line with the Millennium Development Goals and the agreed international development goals.

Recognising that, in order to face the current economic, environmental and social challenges and respond to the effects of unsustainability, new cooperation and governance models are required on an international scale, as well as a comprehensive vision of human activity and the planet.

Taking into account that the Government of Catalonia, local governments and other government bodies have attribution of powers, and as such, responsibility, in areas that are key to sustainable development and green economy.

Considering the progress made by Catalonia in applying pioneering policies in matters of sustainable development and development cooperation, and being aware of the barriers to be faced in order to implement a green economic model.

Taking advantage of the unique opportunity offered by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), and, in particular, the invitation of the organisers to contribute to the compilation document for the zero draft, which will serve as the basis for negotiations.

Having assessed the contributions made by a wide range of economic, social and scientific actors as well as other government bodies, through the process of dialogue and debate surrounding Rio+20,

from Catalonia, we hereby state the following:

Institutional Framework

- 1** We call upon the need to update the international environmental governance system and to fully incorporate a multilevel and multi-stakeholder governance that allows the socio-environmental challenges and problems related to the provision of global public assets to be faced. This new governance must ensure participation from the whole of society (citizens, non-governmental organisations, businesses, trade unions, public institutions, the third sector, scientists) and, consequently, effectiveness and efficiency in the implementation of policies.
- 2** We demand that subnational governments are taken into account in the United Nations system, both in defining the political and technical agenda and in implementing the agreements reached, considering the importance of the role of these governments in attaining sustainable development, in line with this new governance model.
- 3** We affirm the importance of territorialising the agreements reached and, as a result, the need of creating sub-systems of governance on a regional scale, to facilitate their implementation and make available the corresponding regionalised economic funds. Therefore, we demand the recognition of the Mediterranean region as a priority area in terms of the complexity of the environmental, social, political and economic challenges that must be faced.
- 4** We stress the fact that education for development is an essential tool in the new international environmental governance framework, both for social transformation in the north and the eradication of poverty and inequality in the south. In addition, education for development facilitates the understanding of north-south relations and promotes values and changes in habits that favour solidarity, social justice, sustainable human development, sustainable production and consumption models, democracy and transparency.

- 5** We reiterate our support for the Parties of the United Nations so that Rio+20 sets the basis for the shift towards a green economy that a) contributes to the progress towards sustainable development, the eradication of poverty, and human progress, and b):
- ▶ Harmonises economic development with the improvement of the wellbeing and quality of life of citizens, the preservation of the environment and intra- and intergenerational solidarity.
 - ▶ Recognises that the planet's resources are finite and, therefore, uses them in an efficient and sustainable manner; promotes responsible consumption; contributes to the conservation of natural capital; and guarantees equal access to resources.
 - ▶ Internalises the environmental costs and recognises the benefits of ecosystem and biodiversity services.
 - ▶ Increases resilience to social, environmental and economic risks and prevents forced migrations and the displacement of environmental refugees.
 - ▶ Guarantees firm support for research and innovation in sustainability, to be able to face future challenges.
 - ▶ Integrates global environmental objectives into economic competitiveness policies.
- 6** We encourage the Parties of the United Nations to ensure that the outcome document of Rio+20 highlights the importance of green employment and its promotion, as an opportunity to advance toward social cohesion. Green employment should be understood as decent employment where all economic sectors (both emerging and traditional) integrate sustainability. That is why education and training in sustainability at all levels must be considered as key elements in enabling the full development of these essential sectors.
- 7** We demand the valorization of the rural world and its placing in the model for a green economy, in light of its economic, environmental and social function. We underline the importance of producing and distributing quality and sustainable local agricultural products, the value of traditional knowledge, and the concept of the nature stewardship.
- 8** We state that Rio+20 offers an opportunity to improve competitiveness and facilitate the inclusion of sustainability criteria in economic and fiscal instruments: a) by promoting the innovation of efficient products, services and technologies in using resources and preserving biodiversity, and b) by progressively phasing out environmentally harmful subsidies.
- 9** We recognise the need to advance towards the development of new collaborative mechanisms and instruments between the public and private sector (including social and economic actors), especially in the form of multi-stakeholder partnerships, in order to develop and implement policies for a green economy.

Rio+20: Expected Results

- 10** We support the establishment of an ambitious international agreement on green economy in the framework of Rio+20 to be ratified by the Parties of the United Nations, which includes a) a compulsory roadmap that sets quantified objectives to be met within a given timeline, b) the identification of policies, c) the development of lines of action, and d) the establishment of the necessary economic resources.
- 11** We demand, in line with the European Union, the opportunity and need to develop the resulting green economy roadmaps on a regional and local scale, which encompass the success achieved in the deployment of sustainability policies promoted by regions and cities, especially thanks to the Agendas 21.
- 12** We consider essential that subnational governments are included, within the future institutional framework for sustainable development, with complete recognition of their governmental status, and, as such, that they take part in the established participation and accreditation processes within the United Nations.