

New York, 3 August 2008

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The CSD Secretariat invites your organization to contribute to the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-17), which will take place from 4 to 15 May 2009, and will be preceded by an Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM) scheduled on 23-27 February 2009. Both meetings will take place at UN Headquarters in New York.

The CSD Secretariat has compiled these *Guidelines for Major groups* to facilitate your contributions to the preparatory process and participation in the CSD-17 policy session, including its IPM. We have included chapters that outline the reporting process for the policy year, provide important deadlines for written submissions, and include essential information for your participation in the IPMs and in the CSD-17 meeting itself. The two-year cycle of CSD-16 and CSD-17 focuses on implementation in the areas of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

During the past review session (CSD-16) major groups played an important and dynamic role. It is anticipated that major groups continue to participate in the upcoming policy session, by contributing to the formulation of concrete policy alternatives. The CSD-17 will build on previous practices and continue to enhance the participation of the major groups, and provide you with various opportunities to engage in dialogues with government officials and other participants, including interactive discussions within the High-Level Segment of the session.

Maintaining and enhancing the established participatory tradition of the CSD requires continued commitment by all parties. Your involvement in the work of the Commission enriches the debates and influences outcomes. We therefore invite you to begin preparing for CSD-17, and stand ready to work with you in the preparatory process and to facilitate your organization's active participation in this year's meetings.

For further information and inquiries regarding issues related to major groups, please contact:

Major groups Programme Two UN Plaza - DC-2210 New York NY 10017 Fax: +1 917 367-2341

E-mail: csdmgregister@un.org

GUIDELINES FOR MAJOR GROUPS' PARTICIPATION IN CSD-17

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1. INTRODUCTION TO CSD-17

1.1. Themes and Cross-cutting Issues

The seventeenth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-17) will meet at UN Headquarters in New York from 4-15 May 2009. CSD-17 will be preceded by a one-week Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM) scheduled from 23-27 February 2009, also at the UN Headquarters in New York.

As the second year of the CSD-16/ -17 implementation cycle, CSD-17 will review progress in the following areas:

Cycle	Thematic Cluster	Cross-cutting Issues
Cycle 2008/2009	 Agriculture Rural Development Land Drought Desertification Africa 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and
		Education

1.2. Timeline of Important Milestone Dates and Deadlines

September	October	November	Dec.	January	Feb.	Marc	April	May
						h		
21:		1:		1:	23-27:			4-15:
Deadline for		Deadline for		Finalizatio	Intergovern			CSD-
submission of		submission		n of SG	mental			17
major groups'		of Major		Reports	Preparatory			
inputs to		groups'		_	Meeting			
Secretary-		Priorities for			J			
General's		Action						
Reports		Papers						
•								



1.3. Framework for the Organization of Work

(forthcoming)

1.4 CSD-17 Bureau

Chair: H.E. Ms. Gerda Verburg, Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

(Netherlands)

Vice-chairs: Mr. Javad Amin-Mansour (Iran)

(Vice-chairs representing African States, Eastern European States and Latin America

and Caribbean States will be elected at a later meeting.)

For biographical information on the Bureau, please visit the DSD website at: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd17/bureau.htm

2. THE CSD-17 REPORTING PROCESS AND INPUTS FROM MAJOR GROUPS

The CSD-17 reporting process focuses on policy options and possible actions to overcome the constraints and obstacles and meet the challenges identified by CSD-16 with regard to the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa, in the context of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Mauritius Strategy for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States.

2.1. Tentative List of Reports and Supplementary Materials

Official documents are issued in all six languages. Waivers are required for official documents exceeding the word limit and are granted on an exceptional basis. Background papers are issued in English or in the language of submission only. A list of Reports and Supplementary Materials for CSD-17 will be posted as soon as available.

Please check the CSD-17 main page for updates on the reporting process.

2.2. Written Inputs from Major groups

The CSD Secretariat welcomes written contributions from major group organizations that will contribute to CSD-17. Major groups are encouraged to make substantive contributions to CSD-17 in the form of:

• Brief written inputs to the Secretary-General's state of implementation reports, focusing on possible actions to overcome the obstacles to implementation identified during CSD-16. These reports will be finalized in time for the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting scheduled from 23–27 February 2009, and will be available by December 2008. **Deadline for submissions: 21 September 2008;**



• As per past practice, there will be one document entitled "Major groups' Priorities for Action", to be prepared by the CSD-17 major groups organizing partners in consultation with major group networks worldwide. The Major groups' paper is released unedited as part of the official documentation in all official UN languages.

The Major groups' Priorities for Action paper builds on the review session's Discussion Papers and includes each sector's priorities for policy options and possible actions to overcome constraints and obstacles and meet the challenges identified by CSD-16 in the current thematic areas. The Priorities for Action paper is not only limited to recommendations for governments, but also includes policy options in which initiatives by Major groups are integrated parts of the proposed solutions. It will provide a basis for Major groups' policy inputs and will serve as a starting point for their participation in the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting and in CSD-17.

Deadline for submission: 1 November 2008;

- Case studies and examples of best practices, which can be submitted through the <u>CSD</u> <u>Secretariat's website</u> (**Ongoing**).
- Major groups' organizations can also submit input to the CSD-16/17 Matrix by e-mail to: CSDMatrix@un.org. The Matrix is an information tool developed by the Secretariat. It aims to provide user-friendly information on practical experiences in implementation in the thematic cluster under consideration. It is based on information submitted by Governments, including through national reports; and by UN agencies and Major groups. It takes into account information contained in Secretary-General's reports and Partnerships for Sustainable Development registered with the CSD Secretariat, as well as information emerging from the regional implementation meetings. The Matrix is not an official document of the CSD. As an information tool, it is a work in progress. The latest version reflects CSD-16 discussions. The Secretariat will continue to update the Matrix as more information on implementation is made available.

(The Matrix can be accessed at: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/matrix_cover.htm)

2.3. Major groups participation in inter-sessional meetings

To enhance, consolidate and supplement existing information on the agenda themes, a number of conferences, expert group meetings, workshops and other consultation opportunities are organized throughout the year. These events may be sponsored and hosted by Governments, various UN agencies, IGOs and other Major groups organizations and often include representatives from Major groups organizations.

For a complete calendar of inter-sessional meetings, please check the Internet at. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/calendar/calendar.htm.



2.4. Expected Outcomes

The outcomes of CSD-17 will be recorded and published in the CSD-17 Report, including:

- Policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation
- Summary of the High-level segment, including the interactive discussion with Major groups
- Record of regional discussions
- Record of the Partnership Fair
- Record of the Learning Centre



3. MAJOR GROUPS' PARTICIPATION IN CSD-17

The CSD has traditionally provided a lively forum for interaction among government officials, major groups and international organizations, infusing the CSD inter-governmental process with new ideas. Major groups' representatives in the CSD process have participated in multistakeholder dialogues, interactive discussions, roundtables and panels. They have developed coordinated positions, launched several multi-stakeholder partnerships, organized dozens of side events to share experiences, successfully lobbied for particular initiatives that they felt the CSD should undertake or support, and agreed on joint implementation initiatives.

In recent years, major groups have been increasingly accepted within the official intergovernmental process as respected and essential partners in sustainable development, and their presence is now more integrated into the official sessions than ever before. The unique and innovative participatory traditions of the CSD have been widely acknowledged and are fully supported by the CSD. The CSD Bureau and the Secretariat continue to explore new ways to enhance major groups' participation in the CSD process.

3.1. Accreditation and Pre-Registration

Non-governmental participation in the CSD is subject to the rules of participation of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). These rules require that the non-governmental participants represent an NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC. Major group organizations that are in consultative status with ECOSOC, including those in the CSD Roster, can send representatives to CSD-17. Major group organizations who were accredited to the WSSD will be required to obtain consultative status with ECOSOC in order to participate in CSD meetings. ECOSOC rules do not permit participation of representatives from organizations that are not in consultative status.

If you are unsure of your organization's accreditation status, you can check with the following sources:

ECOSOC Roster: http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/pdf/INF_List.pdf
If your organization is listed in the database, then it is accredited.

CSD Roster: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/mgroups/csd_roster.pdf

If your organization is listed, it is accredited.

You can also:

Contact the NGO Section. The NGO Section maintains up-to-date lists of accredited
organizations, including those that have recently been granted consultative status but have
not yet been added to the lists available on the Internet.



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• Contact the Major groups Programme at the CSD Secretariat.

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Please make sure that your organization has the necessary consultative status BEFORE sending representatives to New York or making travel arrangements for them.

If your organization is not accredited and you want to send representatives to CSD-17, you are welcome to contact an accredited organization within your networks and explore the possibility that they include your representatives in their delegation. The major groups organizing partners may also choose, at their discretion, to include representatives of unaccredited organizations under their umbrella so that they may participate in the meeting.

Alternatively, major groups may also wish to request that they be included in their Government delegation by contacting the appropriate department of State.

Pre-registration

If you are planning to attend CSD-17, you must be pre-registered through an accredited organization in order to register at the meeting and receive a UN grounds pass. This includes any major groups' representatives who participate in the Partnerships Fair, Learning Centre, and Side Events.

Your organization should fax or e-mail a letter to the CSD Secretariat at least three weeks in advance of the meeting. The letter should include a list containing the names of the people identified as representatives and an e-mail address where the confirmation letters can be sent. The letter must be signed and printed on the organization's official letterhead.

Confirmation letters for each representative will be sent to the primary contact person of the organization by e-mail. This letter and a photo ID will need to be shown at the registration desk when your representative arrives at UN Headquarters for the CSD-17 meeting. Details on the location and schedule for the registration desk will be posted on this website when the information becomes available.

Representatives requiring a visa to enter the United States are advised to apply as early as possible in case any time is needed for special clearances by the US authorities, and ensure that the visa is received in time for travel. Past practice shows that when applying for US visa, it is recommended that NGO and other major group sectors representatives bring copies of the UN confirmation letter as well as a letter prepared by their own NGO at the time of their appointment with the US Consulate/Embassy. The NGO letter should include detailed



information on the visa applicant: e.g., position, number of years working for the NGO, and number of applicants that the NGO is sending to CSD-17 if applicable.

NGO representatives who have existing working relations with the US Mission in their respective Country may try and contact their counterpart(s) and obtain a referral letter to be presented at the time of the interview with the Consular Section (Note that the referring officer has no role in the visa decision process).

To learn more about UN rules and regulations for major groups' participation, please visit: http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/help_faq.htm#MG

3.2. Major groups' Involvement in Official Sessions

Structure and Modes of Participation

Participation of major groups in the official CSD-17 session will be integrated throughout the various activities of CSD-17, consistent with the practice of recent CSD sessions. The following "entry points" for major groups will be recommended to the CSD-17 Bureau for its consideration:

Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (23-27 February 2009)

Structure and Modalities of Participation: Currently the CSD Bureau is mandated to consider the various options, using past practices as the baseline. More details will be posted as soon as a decision is made.

CSD-17 (4-15 May 2009)

Structure and Modalities of Participation: Currently the CSD Bureau is mandated to consider the various options, using past practices as the baseline. More details will be posted as soon as a decision is made.

Outcome

Major groups' contributions made during CSD-15 are expected to inform the CSD and potentially influence the session's outcomes, including the final text.

3.3. Meeting with the CSD-17 Bureau and Major groups

It is customary for the CSD Chair and other members of the Bureau to meet with major groups' representatives in the course of the preparatory process and during the CSD Session. Information on the exact time and venue will be disseminated through our list server and posted on our website as it becomes available. As per past practice, a Co-chair will be designated to serve as a contact person for the major groups during the CSD-17 session.



3.4. Major groups' Organizing Partners

The preparation of multi-stakeholder participation within the CSD is itself a multi-stakeholder process. Key major group networks are invited by the CSD Bureau to form a facilitating group called "organising partners", which coordinates the preparations and assists the Secretariat in generating and guiding the engagement of stakeholders for each major group sector. The Secretariat chairs the facilitating group and supports its work throughout the preparatory process and the CSD session.

The major groups organizing partners' main responsibilities include:

- Consulting with networks to prepare written inputs in the form of "Priorities for Action" addressing agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, and Africa—including the cross-sectoral themes—that reflect their group's views on deliverables and on the mobilization of concrete and tangible actions to advance implementation.
- Organizing, managing and disseminating data and information on Major groups and CSD-17.
- Consulting with networks to identify participants to serve on their sector's delegation.
- Coordinating and facilitating the participation of representatives of their respective sector throughout the CSD-17 session, working in collaboration with other major group sectors' representatives present at CSD-17 and the IPM.

Major groups' Organizing Partners for the 2008-2009 Implementation Cycle

Women

Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (WOCAN) African Women Leaders in Agriculture and the Environment (AWLAE) The GRATIS Foundation

Children and Youth

Consultations under way: for information contact the CSD Youth Caucus

Indigenous People

Tebtebba - Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education Indigenous Environmental Network

NGOs

Sustainable Development Issues Network through: Northern Alliance for Sustainable Development (ANPED) Third World Network Environment Liaison Centre International

Local Authorities

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

Workers and Trade Unions

International Trade Unions Confederation (ITUC) & Trade Union Advisory Council to the OECD (TUAC)



Business and Industry

International Chamber of Commerce World Business Council for Sustainable Development

Scientific and Technological Communities

International Council for Science (ICSU)

World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO)

Farmers

International Federation of Agricultural Producers

To view the contact details for the list of CSD Organizing Partners, please click here.



3.5. CSD-17 Partnerships Fair

The CSD Partnerships Fair provides a venue for registered Partnerships for Sustainable Development to showcase progress, launch new partnerships, network with existing and potential partners, create synergies between partnerships and learn from each other's experiences. The Partnerships Fair gives CSD participants an opportunity to gather information on and discuss the valuable contribution of these important initiatives towards supporting the implementation of inter-governmentally agreed sustainable development goals and objectives.

The Partnerships Fair is an official part of the CSD. It will focus on partnerships working in the thematic areas of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, Africa and SIDS. A summary of its activities will be included in the Report of CSD 17.

Please be advised that Partnerships Fair activities will not be organized during the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM) from 23 to 27 February 2009.

General Structure of the CSD-17 Partnerships Fair

"Partnerships in Practice" Interactive Discussions: These sessions are organized by the CSD Partnerships Team to generate open dialogue on practical issues related to partnerships working to implement sustainable development within the CSD-16/17 thematic cluster, namely in the areas of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land, Drought, Desertification and Africa, as well as on issues common to all partnerships. In keeping with the policy-year focus on "practical measures and options to expedite implementation of commitments", these interactive discussions aim to offer the opportunity to highlight "on the ground" experiences from partnership practitioners and are designed to maximise opportunities for CSD participants to raise questions, identify challenges, share information on lessons learned and best practices as well as find innovative solutions.

Partnerships Training Sessions: During CSD-16, two training sessions on partnerships-related issues were offered to CSD participants that attracted a significant amount of interest and participation. These highly interactive and dynamic sessions provided CSD participants with very valuable tools, resources, examples and practical experiences on establishing, developing and maintaining effective partnerships. They also highlighted the challenges, benefits and incentives of using partnerships as collaborative mechanisms or models for more effective delivery of sustainable development goals and objectives, involving a diverse group of stakeholders.

The CSD Secretariat will be offering once again the opportunity for organizations and/or Governments to sponsor similar sessions during CSD-17. Kindly contact the CSD Secretariat in early 2009 to discuss availability of time-slots and potential themes.

<u>Partnerships Fair Information Desks</u>: A limited number of information desks, free of charge, will be available upon request for those participating in CSD registered partnerships. CSD



Partnerships representatives will have the opportunity to display and distribute information about their partnership as well as discuss their work more directly with representatives attending CSD-17.

Partnerships Information Desks will be offered during CSD-17 from 4 to 12 May 2009 from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Please be advised that Partnerships Information Desks will not be available during the CSD-17 High Level Segment.

Who can participate at the Partnerships Fair?

All CSD participants, including representatives of Governments, UN system organizations, other intergovernmental organizations and accredited major groups, are welcome to attend the Partnerships Fair.

In particular, partnerships working in the areas of the CSD 16/17 thematic cluster - Agriculture, Desertification, Drought, Land, Rural Development and Africa -, are encouraged to participate. The launching of new partnerships is also encouraged and welcomed.

Please be advised that registration of a partnership with the CSD Secretariat does not constitute accreditation to the Commission on Sustainable Development. In order to gain access to UN premises during CSD 17, partners must ensure that they are accredited to the Commission on Sustainable Development (through a Government, intergovernmental organization, or Major Group).

CSD Partnerships Database

This interactive database contains information from over 340 partnerships that have voluntarily registered their activities with the Secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The information contained in this database is based on partnerships voluntary self-reports. Thus, the CSD Secretariat is urging all CSD registered Partnerships to keep updating their information in the database in the lead up to the CSD 17 so that CSD participants will be able to access the most current information on partnerships' latest achievements and contributions to implementation.

The database can be accessed by clicking here.

Interested in registering your partnership?

For complete and detailed information on partnerships for sustainable development, including request forms, important dates and key documents, please <u>click here</u>.

3.6. The Learning Center

The Learning Centre is part of the official programme of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and runs parallel to the CSD plenary sessions. Its purpose is to provide teaching and training at a practical level on topics of relevance to the specific themes being



considered by the CSD, as well as selective cross-cutting themes of sustainable development to further implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) and the Mauritius Strategy for the sustainable development of SIDS. If you wish to propose an activity in the Learning Centre, please follow the guidelines which will be posted in the near future on the CSD-17 main page.

3.7. Side Events

Side events, sponsored by major groups, governments and UN agencies, will be organized as a complementary part of the CSD-17 programme of work and the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting in order to generate informal opportunities for exchange of information, experience and non-standard views. If you wish to organize a side event, please follow the guidelines for side events organizers at CSD-17 which will be posted in the near future on the CSD-17 main page.



Annex 1:

Multi-Year Programme of Work for CSD: 2004 to 2017

At its eleventh session, the Commission on Sustainable Development decided that its multiyear programme of work beyond 2003 would be organized on the basis of seven two-year cycles, with each cycle focusing on selected thematic clusters of issues, as set out in the table below.

In each cycle, the thematic clusters of issues will be addressed in an integrated manner, taking into account economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The Commission agreed that the implementation process should cover all these issues equally and noted that the selection of some issues for a given cycle did not diminish the importance of the commitments undertaken with respect to the issues to be considered in future cycles.

The Commission further agreed that means of implementation should be addressed in every cycle and for every relevant issue, action and commitment. Linkages to other cross-cutting issues are also to be addressed in every cycle, as shown below.

MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: *

Cycle	Thematic cluster	Cross-cutting issues
2004/2005	Water	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable
	Sanitation	patterns of consumption and production,
	Human Settlements	Protecting and managing the natural resource
		base of economic and social development,
		Sustainable development in a globalizing
		world, Health and sustainable development,
		Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable
		development for Africa, Other regional
		initiatives, Means of implementation,
		Institutional framework for sustainable
		development, Gender equality, and Education

^{*} E/CN.17/2003/6

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2002/202	E C	
2006/2007	 Energy for Sustainable Development Industrial Development Air Pollution / Atmosphere Climate Change 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2008/2009	 Agriculture Rural Development Land Drought Desertification Africa 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2010/2011*	 Transport Chemicals Waste Management Mining A Ten Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education
2012/2013*	 Forests Biodiversity Biotechnology Tourism Mountains 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable



		development, Gender equality, and Education
2014/2015*	 Oceans and Seas Marine Resources Small Island Developing States Disaster Management and Vulnerability 	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource
2016/2017	Overall appraisal of implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme of Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation	

^{*}These thematic clusters will remain as part of the Multi-Year Programme of Work as scheduled unless otherwise agreed by the Commission.



Annex 2:

Member States of CSD-17 (53 members; three-year term)

African States (13):

Cape Verde, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania

Asian States (11):

Bahrain, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kuwait, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates

Eastern European States (6):

Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation

Latin America and Caribbean States (10):

Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Haiti, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

Western European and other States (13):

Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Israel, Monaco, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America (one vacancy)

Annex 3:

List of Useful Contacts CSD Secretariat

General Inquiries:

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Small Island Developing States:

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Partnerships and Partnership Fair:

Ms. Patricia Chaves, Senior Officer Policy Coordination, Major groups and Partnerships Branch Division for Sustainable Development/UN-DESA

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Learning Centre:

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Side Events:

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NGO Section (for inquiries related to NGO accreditation)

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