

Collective Submission of Chinese CSOs on the Rio+20 Zero Draft

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Part 1 Introduction: Context, Objective and Principles

We are a group of Chinese Civil Society Organizations and individuals working day to day on the ground in supporting and implementing sustainable development goals and measures in China, including in the areas of water, forestry, climate change mitigation and adaptation, agriculture, biodiversity, pollution control, energy, public access and participation, consumption and life style, education, etc.

As the fast-growing civil society from a developing country who benefits from the fast growing economy while facing numerous challenges across the three pillars of sustainable development at home and internationally and as part of global citizenry, we have gathered together to join national, regional and global communities on active, meaningful and effective engagement with the Rio+20, contributing to its success and the delivery processes of its promises from and beyond 2012.

This document is the result of an intensive and collective thinking and writing process, based on learning, discussion and research activities among the Chinese CSOs, with exchange with other CSOs as well as key stakeholders among our society and international community, including CSOs' Bangkok Statement, the 64th UN DPI/NGO Conference (Bonn) Asia Pacific Regional Group Position, Joint Statement of Major Group and Stakeholders Asia Pacific Meeting in Seoul.

Rio+20 provides a critical and timely platform for governments at the highest level, in the eyes of all stakeholders, especially youth whose future is in our hand, to review the past 20 years and pave the way for the coming 20 years and beyond regarding the crucial sustainable development for all countries and peoples.

Since 1992, when the recognition of sustainable development was historically adopted by the world's leaders, and policy and action plans as well as international partnership were brought into national and international agenda, some sustainable development strategies, institutions, measures and programs have taken place in countries (including China), and the world. However, the commitment to a paradigm shift towards sustainable development remains elusive and unsatisfying to a large extent, with the ecological crisis worsened, income and social inequalities escalated and multiple crises hitting us more often and severely including food, finance, energy and climate crises among others.

Thus, we strongly recall the three fold objectives of the Conference: to secure renewed political

commitment for sustainable development, assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps, and address new and emerging challenges. The conference should fully honour such objectives by focused discussion and politically binding outcome document that recommits governments to achieve sustainable development supported by strong political will in a fully inclusive manner, to ensure the transformation of the economic, social and ecological/environmental dimensions and their effective integration at local, national, regional and international levels.

The agreed principles of Rio 1992 should accordingly be strongly reaffirmed and implemented at all levels, in particular *common but differentiated responsibilities among countries and within national jurisdiction, the precautionary principle, the polluter pays principle and Principle 10 on Access to Information, Public Participation and Environmental Justice.*

Global goals including alleviating and eventually eradicating poverty, reorienting the world's economic system towards a low-carbon, sustainable, and just approach, and securing environmental integrity shall be emphasized.

Part2. Issues, Challenges and Ways Forward

On Green Economies in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication

We use the term “economies” because there is no one model that fits all countries and all societies. Green economies, the definition and implications of which are still under exploration, shall be understood through the overarching paradigm of sustainable development.

Green economies should:

- Serve as one of the tools to implement sustainable development with emphasis on integration of three pillars and coherence among economic, social and environmental policies
- Ensure all people's wellbeing and enhance sustainable development and prosperity of all nations
- Build on sustainable production and consumption patterns as well as resilient social and economic systems that has the adaptive capacity and robustness to handle shocks while maintaining functionality
- Require social justice and equity between and within countries, intergenerational and gender equality
- Foster citizen and civil society participation and empowerment
- Protects the ecological balance and creates economic sufficiency
- Provides decent work and right livelihoods, and ensure that jobs and social benefits are distributed equitably among all peoples
- Conserve biodiversity and ecosystem for current and future generations
- Recognize the economic and social value of environmental resources while avoid leading to purely look at them from market perspective

Green Economies should not:

- Replace sustainable development, shifting attention of states from fully honoring their

commitments made

- Impose top down one size fits all approach
- Be transformed into extra conditionality and green protectionism towards developing countries and the poor especially
- A way to put nature in corporate hands, with blind commercialization

We call for replacement of the current inefficient, unsustainable and inequitable economic model, which facilitates a grossly inequitable trading system, fails to eradicate poverty and preserve natural resources. We propose that where the current economy aids inequity, destruction and greed, it should be replaced by an economy that cares for the people, and the planet.

We call for governments to develop (further) national sustainable development plans that provide enabling policies and policy tools, based on the above-mentioned principles in part 1, and taking consideration of sufficient policy space especially for developing countries.

We believe that it is possible to implement a just transition to sustainable economies as fast as possible through an unprecedented level of cooperation and policy coherence at the local, state, national and international levels, by the sharing of real green technologies and know-how, by appropriate restructuring of regulatory, subsidy, taxation and expenditure policies and by addressing fundamental issues like access and technology assessment.

We emphasize financing sustainable development requires significant public financing, financial and technology transfer, private sector investment that are productive and non-speculative in nature and fair and innovative modes of taxation, including a financial transaction tax that is dedicated to support sustainable development activities especially for developing countries.

We believe the need to establish a new way to measure the progress towards a sustainable development with gender-specific and other indicators, integrating them with those of sustainable development rather than only relying on a country's GDP.

We call for establishing stronger partnerships among governments, civil society organisations, private businesses and stakeholder groups for promoting green economies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Such partnerships need to be within frameworks of accountability and transparency including regulation.

On Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development

We urge the governments to take more ambitious commitments based on through review and assessment of our progress, to implement Agenda 21 by strengthening or reviving mechanisms from global to local level and ensuring synergy and coherence among various agencies involved in sustainable development.

We call for the global institutional framework for sustainable development that ensure equitable rights and opportunities for all human beings. And countries must recognize the difficulty for developing countries to shift their development trajectory in order to balance the three pillars without a solid economic ground and sufficient support from international community.

We also call upon the Rio+20 process to address sustainable development governance, and involve all the institutions dealing with the 3 pillars of sustainable development in the architecture with support from the entire UN system and relevant mechanisms at each country.

We strongly call for the building of a strong apex body on sustainable development with clear mandate to work at the global level and integrate the work of disparate multilateral bodies working on each of the three pillars of sustainable development. Options that should be explored include transforming the Commission on Sustainable Development into a Council on Sustainable Development under the General Assembly, or establishing a UN Organization on Sustainable Development. The unifying mandate of this body should be the promotion of sustainable development as a fundamental right of all.

We also call upon developed countries to further their leadership to ensure the financial sufficiency for the reform and implementation of international governance. Meanwhile, all countries should take more accountability and moves toward to shared vision of sustainable development.

We call for a strong and systematic monitoring mechanism with technical expertise to ensure the strict enforcement of existing agreements on sustainable development at the global and their enabling laws level. This body should conduct regular assessment at each level and provide specific guidance for countries.

We further stress the significance of civil society organization as a role to bridge governmental institutions and the general public, and ask for more channels to sustainable development governance from decision-making to the monitoring of implementation with sufficient and comprehensive support.

On Other Challenges and Emerging issues:

We are concerned about the challenges and emerging issues across three dimensions and their inter-linkage and mutual reinforcement affect, especially between and among food, water, health, energy, climate change, rural and urban development, financial markets.

Climate Change

We call for international collective actions to achieve the global climate protection goal recommended by the science. Based on the CBDR principle, developed countries have to take the lead in deep domestic cuts of GHGs emissions, and provide long term financial support to developing countries; developing countries should alter their development path based on their national context by international cooperation and creating enabling policies and adequate policy and market incentives for low carbon development. Adaptation and capacity building shall be equally emphasized.

We call for institutions to safeguard biodiversity, human rights, local environment, food security and the development rights that shall not be compromised for the sake of climate protection.

Population

We affirm that the trend of increasing of global population has to be managed.

We call on governments to start a debate that recognizes the choices we have to make about human population as we consider the limits of the carrying capacity of the planet and the need to enable fair and equitable use of available resources and leave space for wildlife and wilderness. We also call for strong actions on consumption patterns and lifestyles because unsustainable consumption by the wealthy of the world's population deprives the poor of their developmental rights.

Education and learning for SD

We are convinced that education is essential to the global transition to a more sustainable world; it should be a centerpiece of international cooperation for Sustainable Development.

We acknowledge the necessity to reaffirm the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014).

We affirm that education should address the material, social and development of the spiritual dimensions of human and in its fullest sense must provide the space for value-based sustainable learning.

We are aware that successful education and learning in all its forms are dependent on the full support of governments at all levels, the private sector, policy makers and the civil society.

Technology development and diffusion

We call for global and regional mechanisms, such Regional Technology Observation Platforms, in evaluating the impacts of new and untested technologies must be adopted. Such mechanisms must involve communities, civil society and other actors, and provide resources towards providing adequate information and building capacity of countries and communities to assess and monitor the health, biodiversity and environmental impacts of new technologies.

On Principle 10 Access to Information, Public Participation and Environmental Justice

We note that streamlining sustainable development (including green economies) governance, draws on the foundations of community participation and we further reaffirm that civic participation have been valuable partners in a broad spectrum of peace and sustainable development activities, with the overriding goal of poverty eradication and the betterment of the human condition, among a number of other causes.

We call for establishing environment management system and citizen participating mechanism at community level, to facilitate community monitoring environment quality and execution of environment laws, participating in policy making process. We encourage promotion of green choice, sustainable consumption at community level and development of urban-rural integrated sustainable development model.

We recognize and reaffirm that the various civil society organizations and members are ready to share responsibility with local and national governments in their communities.

We strongly affirm that meaningful involvement of youth, women and wider civil society in decision-making processes and partnerships, as stressed in Agenda 21, Section 3, are critical to the success of Rio+20 conference and delivery of sustainable development at all levels.

We further call on the Rio + 20 conference to encourage the development of a regional convention on Principle 10, to invite interested states to accede to the Aarhus Convention and to mandate UNEP to develop a robust program to implement the 2010 Bali Guidelines on Principle 10.

Part 3 Signatories/Endorsement

(In Alphabetic Order)

China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO)

China Youth Climate Action Network (CYCAN)

EnviroFriends Institute of Environmental Science and Technology

Friends of Nature

Global Village - Beijing

Green-An Hui Environmental Development Center

Green Earth Volunteers

Green Home Environment - Friendly Center

Greenovation Hub

Greenriver Environmental Protection Association of Sichuan

Green Zhejiang Hangzhou Eco and Culture Association

Institute for Environment and Development (IED)

Shan Shui Conservation Center

Society of Entrepreneurs & Ecology (SEE)

Xiamen Greencross Association

P.S.

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<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/content/documents/488Chinese%20Civil%20Society%20Organizations.pdf>