



European Economic and Social Committee



The
Resource
Efficiency
Alliance

European Sustainability Leaders, Champions and Front Runners

Preparing Rio+20

Sharing Natural, Financial and Knowledge-based Resources

**Towards New Progress for Humankind
and
Innovation Opportunities**

European Conference, 21st December 2011, 09:00 – 17:30

*Venue: European Economic and Social Committee,
Jacques Delors Building, Rue Belliard 99, 1040 Brussels*

Interpretation E-F-

This conference plans to address how leaders¹, front runners² and champions³ of the green economy and sustainability agenda can get organized, thanks to friendly cooperation and networking. Its aim is to enable more 'efficient' collaboration and 'scale up' successful partnership initiatives in Europe and in the world to share natural, financial and knowledge-based resources with a view to move towards greater security, prosperity and well-being.

We will focus on how to reinforce the 'web of solidarity and social innovation' now in place, and will address actions launched by public and private economic actors, from Investors and Companies to Cities, Civil Society groups and households. In particular this conference will aim to look at where there are opportunities to accelerate systemic and technological change through innovative thinking and paradigm shifts. *Today's innovators are showing how to create a different future by learning how to see the larger systems of which they are part and to foster collaboration across every imaginable boundary.*⁴

¹ European leaders: forward-thinking policy or strategy-makers, trust builders.

² European champions: recipients of awards, developers of successful niche markets or best practices.

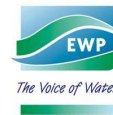
³ European front runners: agents of change, eco-innovators, Covenant of Mayors (CoM) signatories.

⁴ Sence, Smith et al: *The Necessary Revolution – How individuals and organizations are working together to create a sustainable world*. Ed. Doubleday.

Conference Partners (list to be completed and confirmed, order of logos not fixed):



The EU- CHAPTER – CoR-EU
HRH Prince Philip of Belgium
Honorary President
www.clubrome.eu/fr/ce



CARBON DISCLOSURE PROJECT



Co-hosts (list to be confirmed and completed):

**Staffan Nilsson, President of the EESC,
and**

**Fritz Barth,
Sandrine Bélier,
Gilles Berhault,
Marta Bonifert,
Margaret Brusasco,
Hubert David,
Willy De Backer,
Jan De Smedt,
Sandrine Dixson-
Declève,
Mark Dubrulle,
Kjetil Ebbesberg,
Orsten Ekengren,
Jean-Pierre
Hannequart,
Ulrich Hoffman,
Patrick Itschert**

**Ronald A. Kingham,
Simon Landolina,
Bettina Laville,
Sylvie Lemmet,
Elisabeth Louvet,
Constanza Martinez,
Jacqueline McGlade,
Roland Moreau,
Cédric Mulier,
Jeannette Mullaart,
Lucy Neal,
Ingeborg Niestroy,
Derek Osborn,
Anne Panneels,
François Passant,
Lionel Platteuw,
Riccardo Petrella,
Leida Rijnhout,**

**Michael Scoullos,
Walter Stahel,
Magda Stoczkiewicz,
Gertjan Storm,
Marco Torregrossa,
Veerle van de Weerd,
Raymond Van Ermen,
Geneviève Verbrugge,
Tom Vereijken,
Geraldine Walsh,
John Wante,
Jeremy Wates,
Graham Watson,
Ernst Ulrich von
Weizsäcker,
Anders Wijkman.**

Dinner for co-hosts (closed session) on 20th December with

Mr. Brice Lalonde, UN Rio+20 Executive Coordinator (confirmed),

facilitated by Mr. Fritz Barth, UNDP, Club of Rome, EWP (confirmed).

Suddenly, it is like the birth of a new earth. People from across our planet are becoming the caretakers of their own destiny, building an expensive web of solidarity and social invention.
Ya Wanananchi Agenda. Paris. December 1991.
International NGO conference for preparing Rio 1992.

Rio+20 can mark the start of an accelerated and profound, world-wide transition towards a green economy.
European Commission, 2011.

PROGRAMME (DRAFT)

09:00-10:30 Plenary session

Welcome address

Mr. Staffan Nilsson, President of EESC (confirmed)

An exemplary, accelerating and partnering Europe

Mr. Tom Vereijken on behalf of the Resource Efficiency Alliance (confirmed)

What to expect from Rio+20 and the need for leadership and political will

Mr. Brice Lalonde, UN Rio+20 Executive Coordinator (confirmed)

Support to European Front Runners of the Green economy - The role of the European Union

Mr. José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission (agreed in principle)

JOINT PHOTOGRAPH with participants

10:30-11:30 Reception. Coffee Break

Leaders, Champions and Front Runners of the Green Economy and Sustainability Agenda introduced to the EU Institutions Leaders

11:30-13:00 Parallel sessions

Workshop 1: *Sharing Scarce Natural Resources. How Europe's Champions of the Global Sustainable Material Value Chain Management can contribute to the success of Rio+20.*

Chair: Economic and Social Committee

State of play: Mrs. Sylvie Lemmet, UNEP Director (confirmed)

Mr. Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker, Chair of the UNEP Panel Resource (confirmed)

Mr. Kjetil Ebbesberg, Vice-President, Hydro (confirmed)

Prof. Michael Scoullos, Europe and the Oceans and Marine Rio+20 Agenda (confirmed)

Mrs. Leida Rijnhout, Millennium Consumption Goals (confirmed)

-----, Orée, Companies accounting for biodiversity and ecosystem services (confirmed)

Mr. Walter Stahel Geneva Association, taxation in a time of austerity (confirmed)

Debate with participants

Workshop 2: *Sharing Abundant Financial Resources: How Europe's Responsible Investment Champions can contribute to the success of Rio+20 – Towards a Covenant to mobilize all banks, pension funds and insurance companies.*

Chair: Sir Graham Watson, MEP, GLOBE- Bee 3 Financing 2020 (confirmed)
State of Play: Veerle Van de Weerd, UNDP (confirmed)

Mr. Robin Edme, GLOBE Bee 3 proposals (confirmed)
Mr. Chris de Noose, Bank Covenant in support of Europe 2020, European Association of Saving Banks (confirmed)
Mr. François Passant, from niche market to mainstream market, Eurosif (confirmed)
Mr. Daniel Pentzlin, Sustainable Banking, Friends of the Earth Europe (FoEE) (confirmed)

Debate with participants

13:00-14:15 Lunch

14:15-15:45 Parallel sessions

Workshop 3: *Sharing Abundant Knowledge-based and Immaterial Resources: How Europe's Champions of the Knowledge Economy and Societal Innovation can contribute to the success of Rio+20 – Towards Market Actors' New Rights and Responsibilities.*

Chair: Mrs. Jacqueline McGlade, European Environmental Agency Executive Director (confirmed)
State of Play: Mr. Pietro Bertazzi, Corporate Sustainability Reporting Coalition, GRI (confirmed)
Dr. Günther Bachmann, Director, German Council for Sustainable Development, The German Sustainability Code
Mr. Cédric Mullier, Carbon Disclosure Project (confirmed)
Mr Patrick Itschert (ETUC Deputy General Secretary) (confirmed)
Mrs. Marie-Hélène Aubert, NGOs coalition, Citizens Summit Rio 2012 (confirmed)
Mr. Jeremy Wates, EEB (confirmed)

Debate with participants

Workshop 4: *Transition Regions and Towns – The Place for Innovation. How Europe's Sustainable Regions and Cities can contribute to the success of Rio+20.*

Chair: President Mrs. Mercedes Bresso, ENVE Committee of Regions (confirmed)

European Capital on Biodiversity & Future City Leaders Initiative – ICLEI
Mrs. Lucy Neal, Transition Towns Movement (confirmed)
Mr. Panos Coroyannakis, The Pact of Islands on behalf of ISLENET - European Islands Network on Energy and Environment
Mr. Richard Tuffs, ERRIN - European Regions Research and Innovation Network (confirmed)
Mr. Jean-Pierre Hannequart, ACR+, Waste Management (confirmed)

Debate with participants

16:00-17:30 Plenary session
An exemplary, accelerating and partnering Europe

Rio+20 and beyond. How we intend to be more 'efficient':
SHARE and PEP21, by Mr. Gilles Berhault, Comité 21 France (confirmed)

Rapporteurs for the four sessions:

- **Workshop 1:** Mr. Lionel Platteuw, EUCETSA, The Resource and Energy Efficiency Partnership □REP□ (confirmed)
- **Workshop 2:** Mrs. Sandrine Dixson-Declève, the Cambridge Programme for Sustainability Leadership (confirmed)
- **Workshop 3:** Mr. Leonardo Rocha, ANPED, EU Civil Society Rio+20, (confirmed).
- **Workshop 4:** Mr. Richard Tuffs, ERRIN - European Regions Research and Innovation Network (confirmed)

CONCLUSIONS:

- Mr. Raymond Van Ermen, European Partners for the Environment (confirmed)
- Mr. Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment

BACKGROUND

This is a time for more ‘Eco-innovation’ and ‘Sustainability Innovation’ addressing systemic, technological and financial innovation as well as societal innovation.

The Brussels Conference 2011 will focus on how to reinforce the now-established ‘web of solidarity and social innovation’, highlighted by the 1991 Paris Conference⁵. It will also address actions launched by public and private economic actors, from Investors and Companies to Cities, Civil Society groups and households to innovate, accelerate change,

Whether Rio+20 will contribute to restructuring the global economy is still a big question. What is the role of Europe, it’s policy makers, businesses and citizens in ensuring that Rio + 20 is a success?

The actual and potential damage to the global economy as a consequence of ongoing and unabated climate change, continuous loss of biodiversity and diminished functioning of eco-systems, inequalities and inequity constitutes a grave threat to society globally. Scientific evidence about the need to act and the related policy recommendations about how to act effectively are well-established and well-documented. They have come to constitute a formidable political challenge at global level. The scope and nature of the costs resulting from the actual and potential damage affecting society and our ecosystems across a very wide range of issues leave no doubt about the need for action now and the acceleration of radical change.

And yet it appears extremely difficult to move at ‘*wartime speed off the environmental decline path before the clock runs out*’⁶, as suggested by Lester Brown who is reminding us about what was achieved in a few months’ time at the beginning of the Second World War to mobilize the entire US economy. Why can’t we be as ‘efficient’? Why are we in this situation? The answer is that in front of a major crisis, the ‘radical changes’ needed come up against multiple barriers, as the 2008 financial crisis and its management by the G20 have demonstrated time and time again.

Is there a way out? Jean Monnet in his Memoirs on the first year of World War II and Michel Rocard⁷ on the protection of the Antarctic explain that ‘friendship’ and related networks are the indispensable key factors to overcome diplomatic, political, social, military, economic and financial obstacles.

"*Just as the force of decline can reinforce each other, so too can the force of progress*", states Lester Brown. This is why we are proposing to European sustainability leaders, champions and front runners to meet in December 2011 and leverage together their ‘soft power’ to make Rio+20 a stage of progress for humankind and the resources essential for our survival. Leveraging soft power can be done by building on ‘friendship’, networks and skills to engineer ‘transformative partnerships’⁸. With the manifold ongoing local authorities, private

⁵ 1,200 participants from 150 countries adopted the Ya Wanananchi Agenda preparing Rio 1992.

⁶ Lester Brown: *World is on the Edge*.

⁷ Former French Prime Minister, who succeeded with the Australian Prime Minister in launching the process towards the Madrid Treaty, third protocol to the Antarctic Treaty.

⁸ ‘Transformative Partnerships’ is the theme of cooperation for Rio+20 between ICC, WBCSD and Global Compact.

sector and civil society initiatives have demonstrated that Europe is a front runner in new systems approaches to global resilience.

Over the past twenty years, “bottom-up” leadership has made significant progress. As a follow-up to the process initiated at Rio 1992 with “Agenda 21”, thousands of initiatives have flourished all over the world at local level, initiated by citizens, companies and local authorities. But this ‘empowerment’ and this myriad of initiatives have not been able so far to go fast enough to reduce security risks due to continued resource depletion.

Europe’s ‘soft power’ in the 21st century will depend on our ability to demonstrate worldwide that the EU is a ‘web of sustainability poles’, a ‘place for eco-innovators’, a ‘key player’ and an ‘indispensable’ partner in the global value chain to contribute to a green economy.

*Today’s innovators are showing how to create a different future by learning how to see the larger systems of which they are part and to foster collaboration across every imaginable boundary.*⁹ The Brussels Conference of December 2011 will highlight in particular how Europeans could :

- share intelligence (SHARE);
- contribute to the transition towards a green economy in the context of poverty alleviation in Europe and in the world;
- seek to mobilize private capital;
- explore new partnerships in several fields such as resource efficiency, oceans, green procurement , transition towns, millennium consumption goals;
- address the rights and responsibilities of Market Actors, from Companies and Public Authorities to Citizens, in a Global Economy in a Knowledge-sharing, Open Innovation and Networking Age;
- support a Convention on Corporate Sustainability Reporting at Rio+20
- scale up success practices and move from niche market to mainstream market (PEP21).

The Brussels December 21st conference will take place after the New York December 15th-16th Earth Summit 2012 Intersessional and prior the January 16th-18th, 2012 meeting to discuss the content of the zero draft document. The December 21st Conference focused on the leverage role of European political, economical, social leaders, champions and front runners of sustainability will also provide valuable input to the EESC conference Go sustainable! Be responsible! on 7/8 February 2012 on European civil society contributions to Rio+20

⁹ Sence, Smith et al: *The Necessary Revolution – How individuals and organizations are working together to create a sustainable world*. Ed. Doubleday.