

ROSA Newsletter



OPERATIONAL FOOD SECURITY NETWORK

Number 38 | July 2012

SUMMARY: The EU's position at the Rio+20 UN Sustainable Development Summit
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VIEWS ON CURRENT ISSUES



The EU's position at the Rio+20 UN Sustainable Development Summit

The UN Conference on Sustainable Development was hosted from 13 to 22 June 2012. It marked the 20th anniversary of the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, and the 10th anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg. The Conference was intended to assess the progress made to date, identify remaining implementation gaps and address new and emerging challenges since the two previous conferences. Two main themes of Rio+20 — i.e. the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication (GESDPE) and the institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD) — were seen as means of achieving the objectives of the Conference.

In this interview, Nadia Lamhandaz¹ presents the EU's position during Rio+20 and shares her views on the outcomes of the Summit. She outlines the main results of the negotiations, in particular regarding sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition. She emphasises that the Rio outcome document is less ambitious than what the EU expected. But it offers a number of opportunities for undertaking further substantive work at the international level.

● What were the expectations for the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference? What were the key negotiation points for the European Union?

As Rio was seen as an unique opportunity for renewed political commitment to sustainable development at all levels. From the outset, the EU underlined its strong will for an ambitious outcome at Rio. It stressed the need for strong participation from the private sector and civil society at the Conference. The EU's key principles to guide its preparation were as follows:

- i) the Conference should advance the global transition towards a green economy, thus promoting environmental protection, contributing to poverty eradication and stimulating low carbon and resource-efficient growth;
- ii) it should work towards clear operational targets and concrete actions at national and international level within agreed time frames in the areas of sustainable energy, water, sustainable land management and ecosystems, oceans, and resource efficiency in particular waste;

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iii) it should contribute to a strengthened global institutional framework for sustainable development which should include the upgrade of UNEP to a specialised agency; and,

iv) it should advance the work on global and coherent post-2015 goals for sustainable development, also having an eye to the Millennium Development Goals review process.

● **What was the EU position on sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition and what are the main results of the negotiations?**

In general, the section on sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition can be considered to be mostly in line with EU expectations. Negotiations, although long and difficult, were useful and brought improvements to this section.



The proposed EU goals and targets were integrated but sometimes with a weaker commitment in the wording. For instance, the EU target on increasing agricultural production and the thrust of the target on the significant reduction of post-harvest and other food losses and waste throughout the food supply chain is also integrated in the text. The reference to the need to invest in land management ensures continuity with the EU's original approach linking land and food security. Along the same lines, the Rio+20 Declaration includes the engagement to strive for a land degradation-neutral world.

Other very positive elements include the emphasis on smallholder farmers, especially on women and people living in vulnerable situations. This makes a strong link between sustainability and poverty eradication.

However we regret that the text does not contain a clear and concrete reference to nutrition, although it contains a strong reference to the right to adequate food, which is put in relation to access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food.

It is worth noting the reference to the Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure and Responsible Investment. Other positive elements are the text on price volatility and market transparency (with the specific reference to the Agricultural Market Information System), the multilateral trading system (WTO), and the emphasis on agricultural research and international cooperation in this field.

● **Two years of negotiations culminated in the Rio+20 Declaration. What are the main concrete results and the remaining gaps to implement the potential of the outcome document?**

At Rio, we reaffirmed that we share the same planet and that we share a common responsibility towards future generations. None of the countries and regions present at Rio fully achieved what was wanted initially. This also applies to the EU. But we have worked together with all the other countries to develop common ground.

Our assessment is that the overall outcome is modest. However, Rio+20 reconfirms the commitment to sustainable development in all its three dimensions and launches a number of important workflows.

One of the significant outcomes of Rio+20 is the recognition of the green economy as a tool for achieving sustainable development. Thus, Rio puts emphasis on the importance of the economy, the role of private sector, relationship between "green" and "growth", and the role of government in putting in place an enabling environment for private sector, green jobs creation and innovation.

Goals and targets in the five areas proposed by the EU were integrated albeit in less ambitious wording and without clear timelines. However, several themes did get a lot of attention, including commitments to do more. This is particularly the case in the areas of water and sanitation, food security and agriculture, energy, oceans, sustainable production and consumption, and social protection.

The Rio+20 Declaration provides for a process to develop what are being called sustainable development goals (SDG). SDGs will be universally applicable and should cover all three dimensions of sustainable development. It was agreed that their development should not distract from the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The EU is already fully engaged in the on-going work on the post-2015 development agenda and will ensure coherence and integration between the two processes.

On the means of implementation, the Rio+20 Declaration recognises the importance of domestic resources, and the need to see ODA in a broader context of finance mobilisation from a variety of sources while confirming the commitment on ODA targets. Further, it agrees to put in place an intergovernmental committee to prepare a report by 2014 proposing options for a sustainable development financing strategy to facilitate mobilisation of resources and their effective use.

A third intergovernmental process will define the specific form and mandate of the new High Level Political Forum on sustainable development, including its links to ECOSOC. More work will be done to define the specific modalities and characteristics of the upgrade of UNEP.

The Rio+20 Declaration is the result of a long series of negotiations that have left some satisfied and a number disappointed. From the perspective of the EU, although a number of our positions were not fully achieved, we can consider this a positive step in the right direction. Even though we would have liked to see more ambition, the Rio outcome document offers a number of opportunities for undertaking further substantive work at the international level. The EU now has to take advantage of these opportunities and map out and prioritise the kinds of actions and implementation measures to undertake.

In addition to the outcomes agreed in the Rio+20 Declaration, a number of voluntary initiatives were agreed at the Summit. They constitute important drivers for the future of sustainable development. Furthermore, the substantial engagement of civil society and the private sector shown in the outcomes of the Dialogue Days with global civil society and, scientific and business leadership brought recommendations that are very close to the positions that the European Union has brought to the negotiating table.

The Rio+20 Declaration has many of the elements necessary to bring change if we really want to build on its strengths, mobilising national and international efforts, including civil society and stakeholders at large. The shared challenge for us all is now to implement the potential of the outcome document in full, and ensure that Rio+20 leads to real action for sustainable development, an inclusive green economy and poverty eradication.

AGENDA



Past events

- **Conference "Aid for nutrition: Where are we?" (Paris, July 2012):** On the occasion of the launch of its new report, the NGO ACF organised a panel discussion on current spending on nutrition and on the adequacy of current aid to tackle undernutrition. This meeting was an opportunity to discuss solutions to improve the financing of nutrition interventions and improve monitoring. Representatives of civil society, the French government, international organisations and nutrition experts participated. Videos of the conference are available to view online (in French). Other similar events are planned this year to discuss main findings and recommendations? In September, this report will be discussed in the Houses of Parliament in London at a panel discussion with the support of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Debt, Aid and Trade. [>>>](#)

Upcoming events

15-17 October: 16th Annual Chatham House Conference "Climate change: security, resilience and diplomacy" - London (UK) [>>>](#)

15-20 October: 38th session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) - Rome (Italy)

16-17 October: European Development Days "Supporting inclusive and sustainable growth" - Brussels (Belgium) [>>>](#)

29 October-1 November: Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD) - Punta del Este (Uruguay) [>>>](#)

December: 28th Annual RPCA (Food Crisis Prevention Network in the Sahel and West Africa) meeting - Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)

More information: [Upcoming events](#)

● **Update on the SUN movement processes (May-September 2012):** Last April, the UN Secretary General appointed a high-level, multi-stakeholder SUN Lead Group made up of 27 leaders committed to advancing progress in nations by scaling up nutrition. One of the first tasks of the Lead Group is to develop a strategy for the SUN Movement, which will revise the SUN Road Map developed in 2010. The new strategy, which will be shared at the Lead Group meeting in September 2012, is being developed in consultation with SUN Country Focal Points, stakeholder networks and the SUN Movement Secretariat. The strategy will outline ways in which the Movement can support countries as they scale up nutrition. [>>>](#)

EC's latest news

● **EDD 2012: Supporting inclusive and sustainable growth:** The European Development Days (EDD) are a yearly event co-organised by the European Commission and the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The 2012 edition will take place in Brussels on 16 and 17 October. The major topic will be "Supporting Inclusive and Sustainable Growth". It will further focus on the three sub-themes of (1) engaging the private sector; (2) empowering people for inclusive growth; and (3) development, agriculture and food security. These themes are based on the priorities identified in the Commission's [Agenda for Change](#) published in October 2011. Live streaming of all sessions taking place will be available. Furthermore, it will be possible to view videos and highlights on the EDD 2012 website after the event. [>>>](#)

● **Public consultation "Towards a post-2015 development framework":** The post-Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) agenda is being discussed in many quarters. The number of workshops and recent publications confirm a growing interest in this issue. The EU is engaging in this debate². The Commission in consultation with the EEAS is currently preparing a basis for the EU's initial contribution to the forthcoming international discussions and setting out principles for an EU position on a post-2015 framework. This public consultation is published on the Commission's website. The consultation will run from 15 June 2012 to 15 September 2012 and is open to any interested stakeholder. [>>>](#)

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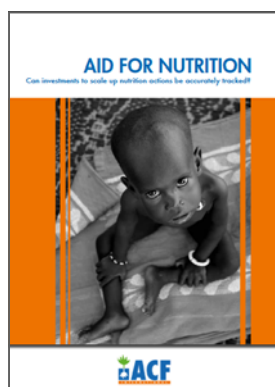


New online resources

Nutrition

● **Aid for nutrition. Can investments to scale up nutrition actions be accurately tracked?, ACF International – July 2012:** This report assesses nutrition funding by major bilateral, multilateral and private donors from 2005 to 2009. Through the OECD's Creditor Reporting System (CRS) database, it analyses the transparency, quantity (adequacy) and quality (effectiveness) of aid for nutrition. It raises key questions on actions needed to address undernutrition: Is enough money being invested in the right interventions to tackle undernutrition? Is the money being invested at the right time? Are the interventions reaching those most affected by undernutrition? The report provides recommendations on what can be done to scale up the response to undernutrition effectively. [>>>](#)

² In parallel, the 2013 European Report on Development (ERD) will consider some of the main challenges for the next 15 years and reflect on how the international community could help address them, including through a potential post-2015 development framework.



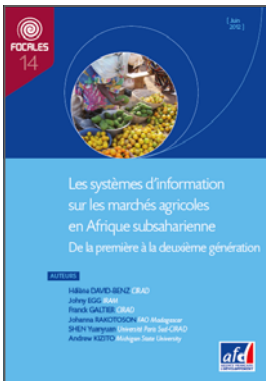
Social transfers and nutrition



- **Ending the everyday emergency: Resilience and children in the Sahel, Save the Children, World Vision – July 2012:** This report aims to assess progress, lessons learned and challenges in promoting resilience in the Sahel, with a particular focus on the effects on child undernutrition. The report is based on direct interviews mainly conducted in Burkina Faso and Niger with international NGO humanitarian and development practitioners, researchers, donor representatives of the European Commission and US Agency for International Development (USAID), government officials, and UN agencies. [>>>](#)

- **A chance to grow: How social protection can tackle child malnutrition and promote economic opportunities, Save the Children – June 2012:** This report highlights the potential of social transfers to improve nutrition. It sets out how programmes to distribute cash, food or assets – sometimes in exchange for participation in employment or other activities – have a key role to play in protecting the poorest families, particularly during economic shocks. They can also help families vulnerable to malnutrition to access a nutritious and diverse diet for their children, and increase their ability to cope with crises. [>>>](#)

Food security information systems



- **Agricultural market information systems in Sub-Saharan Africa. From first to second generation (translated title), French Development Agency (AFD) – June 2012:** In the 2000s, the development of new information and communication technologies – including Internet and cell phones– led to a renovation of market information systems, implemented in the 1980s in a framework of market liberalisation. Is this second generation of information systems able to overcome the weaknesses of the first generation? Have the innovations improved the effectiveness of these tools? Do they take better account of the situation and market dynamics in the development, implementation and monitoring of public policy? The authors address these questions through an inventory of innovations implemented in market information systems. Based on a survey of thirty MISs and a review of some African information systems, this study analyses the advantages and limits of these innovations to overcome the weaknesses of first generation MISs. [>>>](#)

Other themes

- **Price spikes and world food security. The need for change, Benoît Daviron, Perspective n° 15 – April 2012:** This paper is part of a series of policy briefs produced by CIRAD. It discusses food price increases in international markets. The author stresses the need to analyse the recent evolutions of food prices from a broader perspective than that of volatility alone. There is a certain level of volatility inherent in agriculture product prices. But since 2005, a steady upward trend in food prices has been observed resulting in both higher prices and increasing volatility. The author highlights the need for reconsidering the frameworks of analysis and the means of collective action. [>>>](#)

External resources and links

- **New version of the food price analysis tool – June 2012:** The GIEWS released a new improved version of its Food Price Data and Analysis Tool, introducing a more user friendly interface, faster searching and enhanced analysis features. The tool is a web-based mapping application for managing, assessing, analysing and disseminating food price data and their potential impact on food security. The FAO developed this tool in response to the need for better price information in the wake of the 2008 soaring food prices. This website also provides up-to-date information on the food security situation of developing countries, including current agricultural season and harvest prospects. www.fao.org/giews/pricetool



- **Africa Human Development Report 2012. Towards a food secure future – UNDP, May 2012:** The African Union Commission (AUC), jointly with the UN Development Program (UNDP), launched the first African Human Development Report (AFHDR). The report focus on how Africa can move forward in building food security by setting polices across national development agendas to raise agricultural productivity among smaller holder farmers, enhance nutrition among women and children, build resilient communities and households, and empower women and the rural poor.

Read the full report: <http://www.afhdr.org/the-report/>

Read the summary in [French](#) and [English](#).

- **Innovative approaches to gender and food security - Insights, issue 82 – 2012:** This issue of insights shows how development policy and practice can potentially improve food security while supporting women's empowerment. They can focus on women's critical role as food producers, consumers and family careers, while transforming gender norms and inequalities within households and communities. [>>>](#)

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This bulletin was written by the GRET team in charge of animating ROSA.

The network is an initiative of EuropeAid (Unit C1 – Rural development, food security and nutrition in collaboration with Unit R7 – Training, knowledge management, internal communication, documentation).

The points expressed do not reflect the official position of the European Commission.

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