



Rio+20: Towards sustainable development

Wednesday 23 November & Thursday 24 November 2011

Afternoon forum Wednesday (3pm – 5.30pm) Federation Room North

Drinks and dinner Wednesday (6pm – 10pm) Centenary Ballroom

Breakfast session & full day forum Thursday (7.30am – 5pm) Federation Room North

Hyatt Hotel Canberra Commonwealth Avenue, Yarralumla

Rio+20, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012. In the lead up to Rio+20, the Departments of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC) and Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) have invited the HC Coombs Policy Forum to convene two policy forums.

The first forum, to be held in Canberra, will invite academic, non-governmental and other stakeholders to discuss and focus on one of the themes of Rio+20, 'a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication'. The shape and nature of the second forum, planned for 2012, will be determined by the outcomes of international preparatory work and meetings at that time.

Background to Rio+20

The objective of the Rio+20 Conference will be to:

- Secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development
- Assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development
- Address new and emerging challenges

The two themes for the conference are:

1. 'A green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication'; and
2. 'The institutional framework for sustainable development'.

Format

The forum will discuss forward-looking and achievable ideas on the 'green economy' theme and will include:

- a breakfast session with the participation of The Hon Tony Burke MP, Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.
- four plenary sessions with panel presentations and discussion, held across a day and a half.
- attendance of approximately 40 invitees from business, civil society, academia and government from across Australia.

Objective of the forum

To discuss and explore both a strategic framework for, as well as practical initiatives to help give effect to, the theme 'a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.'

Small Island Developing States, in particular our Pacific neighbours, are keen to ensure that the outcomes from Rio+20 adequately address the challenges of a 'green economy in a blue world' – and so recognize that marine resources and ecosystems are a foundation for sustainable development for many countries.

Participants may wish to consider:

- Key issues and emerging challenges in sustainable development affecting your sector and the broader community.
- Conceptual work and practical projects currently being undertaken by other international initiatives such as the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development's 'Green Growth Strategy', the United Nations Environment Programme's 'Green Economy Initiative' and the proposal for a 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns from the 19th Session of the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development.
- How to work towards ensuring a framework that:
 - o achieves the right balance of conceptual focus and practical initiatives;
 - o supports developed and developing countries; and
 - o addresses sustainable development and poverty eradication for 'blue and green economies'.

Prior reading

To facilitate discussion, a short background paper will be circulated to all participants prior to the event, outlining the objectives and themes for Rio+20 and a summary of recent discussions on key issues for the 'green economy' theme in the lead up to Rio+20.

Countries and civil society groups had until 1 November 2011 to submit their initial proposals for Rio+20 outcomes. Australia's submission will be made available to participants to the forum. Submissions will be reviewed at a United Nations meeting on 15-16 December 2011, and a draft outcomes document prepared. The draft outcomes document will be refined at a series of international negotiation meetings in the lead-up to the Rio+20 conference in June 2012.

Outputs

A synthesis of insights and a summary of main points discussed (without attribution) will be collated from rapporteur notes as well as discussant and participant inputs. Within two weeks of the forum this summary will be circulated to participants for their comments and feedback before being distributed via the HC Coombs Policy Forum website.

Contact

Professor Brendan Mackey
Fenner School of Environment and Society
ANU College of Medicine, Biology & the Environment
The Australian National University
E brendan.mackey@anu.edu.au
T +61 2 6125 4960

RSVP

Thursday 10 November, 2011
Lisa O'Farrell, HC Coombs Policy Forum
E lisa.ofarrell@anu.edu.au T 02 6197 0034
Please mention any dietary, access, travel or accommodation requirements when you RSVP.

**Presented by Fenner School of Environment & Society at the ANU
with support from the HC Coombs Policy Forum at the ANU.**