

Statement by the Global Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Consultation on the fourth Global Environment Outlook, held in Nairobi on 19 and 20 February 2005

Comments on the statement in the context of producing a report on environmental valuation in Western Africa

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In **section B on the objective, scope and overall outline of the fourth Global Environment Outlook Report**, notes matters of relevance to environmental valuation including:

“Assessing interlinkages between major environmental challenges and their consequences for policy and technology response options and trade-offs, identifying success stories and lessons learned, and assessing opportunities for technology and policy interventions for both mitigating and adapting to environmental change;

“Assessing challenges and opportunities by focusing on certain key cross-cutting issues inter alia as they relate to those included in the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building relating to how environment can contribute to the sustainable development goals and targets and how environmental degradation can impede progress towards those targets, with a focus on vulnerable groups, species, ecosystems and locations, ...

Assessing environment for human well being and prosperity, focusing on the state of knowledge regarding the effectiveness of various approaches to overarching environmental policies, in particular mainstreaming environmental concerns into the plans and policies of social and economic dimensions of sustainable development including major sectors and enforcement of and compliance with multilateral environmental agreements;”

The Bali Plan includes a commitment to “promote, facilitate and finance access to and support of environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how.” The application of environmental valuation techniques and the application of valuation knowledge is relevant here.

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Regarding **section C on key questions for the fourth Global Environment Outlook report**, the statement asks questions pertinent to the use of environmental valuation:

“Where do we stand in the evolution of ideas and concepts on the environmental dimensions of sustainable development?”

How does the fourth Global Environment Outlook deal with the multidimensional, multiscale, multidisciplinary and temporal nature of the interactions between environment and society?

How does the environment contribute to sustainable development, human well-being, prosperity and alleviation of poverty, and which groups and geographical areas are vulnerable to environmental change?”

In preparation of the valuation report and its inclusion into GEO4 these questions need to be kept in mind.

Regarding challenges and issues, the statement presents a long list:

- *“biodiversity;*
- *freshwater;*
- *coastal and marine areas;*
- *forest;*
- *land;*
- *desertification;*
- *mountain areas,*
- *urban areas;*
- *polar areas;*
- *atmosphere;*
- *disturbed bio-geochemical cycles:*
- *chemicals;*
- *waste; and*
- *natural and human induced hazards and conflicts, including peace and security.”*

Most of these are covered in the comprehensive outline.

Further issues are highlighted in the statement in the context of the MDGs:

“How is the environment contributing to the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in areas such as

- *human health,*
- *food security,*
- *poverty alleviation,*
- *energy, and*
- *disaster-preparedness?”*

The statement also addresses the important topic of interlinkages with questions relevant to valuation such as:

“What are the key interlinkages between the various forms of environmental change and human activities? ...

“How are the human drivers, activities and impacts interlinked and to what extent can they be decoupled in order to change the human-environment interaction if need be?”

Regarding environment for development, the statement asks questions to which environmental valuation can play a significant role:

“What instruments exist to mainstream environmental concerns into social and sectoral plans and policies, including contributing to sustainable-development and poverty-reduction strategies?”

How do we address the need for science, data, indicators, monitoring and assessment to measure progress towards the environment dimension of the Millennium Development Goals?”