



WWF-UK

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PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING

Preparations for the Rio +20 Summit - debate Tuesday 28 February

22 February 2012

Recommendations

- **WWF-UK calls for strong political leadership from the UK Government to meet the challenges of the interconnected environmental, social and economic crises.**
- **We urge the UK Government to commit to actions in the run up to the Rio +20 conference which move towards a global transformation in social justice, sustainable development and environmental protection. This would include steps towards achieving a fair, ambitious and binding climate deal in 2015, and establishing a set of international Sustainable Development Goals post 2015 which build on the Millennium Development Goals, but explicitly recognise environmental limits.**
- **At the Rio+20 conference, the UK Government needs to be able to show how effective cross departmental actions can help move towards a green and fair economy which underpins the health, wealth and wellbeing of the UK and the global population.**
- **In particular WWF-UK recommends action from the UK Government to:**
 - **Broaden the assessment of “growth” and “development” to encompass both the value of natural resources and of social wellbeing;**
 - **Consider the effect of consumption patterns and production efficiency, on food and other production. This should include ensuring there is sustainable, equitable and economically efficient water allocation;**
 - **Support rapid progress towards access to sustainable energy for all;**
 - **Support a new agreement under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea so as to conserve marine biodiversity and deliver sustainable management of the oceans in areas outside national jurisdiction;**
 - **Commit to reducing deforestation so as to achieve a global goal of zero net deforestation by 2020;**



President: His Royal Highness,
The Prince of Wales KG, KT, GCB, OM
Chair: Ed Smith
Chief Executive: David Nussbaum

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- **Support the use of incentives, regulations, and corporate reporting to promote a business environment which encourages responsible use and management of natural resources.**

The scientific imperative

Urgent action is needed to resolve the interconnected environmental, social and economic crises. Scientists are agreed that the Earth's systems are under siege from human impact and that the loss of biodiversity, changes to climate deforestation and chemical overload to oceans and freshwater need to be reversed. These changes threaten health, wealth and wellbeing across the globe and the consequences of inaction will impact generations to come. Rio +20 must be a call to action for governments, for the private sector and for civil society.

Planetary boundaries

Our planet provides us with the essentials for life: air, water and natural resources. To ensure a world in which both people and nature thrive, we must stay within the safe boundaries of these resources and systems. Urgent action is needed to reduce the impact of human activity to ensure we keep within the carrying capacity of the planet.

Equity

Although we are all dependent on the natural environment, it is the poorest communities which rely most directly on natural resources and services. Without access to clean water, fertile land and adequate food, fuel and energy, vulnerable communities cannot break out of poverty.

Environmental damage in low income countries is often driven by resource demand from the developed world. We have a responsibility to maintain consumption patterns which stay within the carrying capacity of the planet, while ensuring the poorest communities are supported through, and benefit from, the transition to a green economy.

WWF-UK calls for political commitment in the following three areas:

Food, Water and Energy for all

- The challenge is to ensure access to **food, water and energy for all**, alongside meeting the long-term challenges of climate change and ecosystem management.
- **Food security** depends on both changed consumption patterns and improvements to production efficiency including waste reduction. We need therefore to promote a change from resource intensive diets, such as those high in meat protein.
- There must be **sustainable, equitable and economically efficient water allocation**, ensuring freshwater systems remain viable and there is adequate available water both for basic human needs and for livelihoods. Strong local institutions will be key to managing river basins, and will require adequate funding and effective local representation.
- Financial commitment from governments and the private sector to major investment in **renewable energy, energy efficiency, and low-carbon industry** is necessary to ensure that combating climate change is not a barrier to economic and social development.

Green Economy

- A **green economy** needs to deliver **three main outcomes**: improving human wellbeing and social equity; reducing the impact of human activity to keep within the carrying capacity of the planet; and managing and enhancing natural capital, biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- The **fair governance and management of natural assets are essential to ensuring a green economy delivers for the poor**. Governments need to look for mobilisation of new finance sources, such as Market Based Instruments for international shipping and aviation, and the reallocation of current finance streams for investment in natural capital.
- The corporate sector has a crucial role to play, and **strengthened corporate reporting standards on sustainability** are a key tool in ensuring this.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- The global community needs to agree the **principles and process** for SDGs which measure progress towards sustainable patterns of living.
- SDGs should **fully integrate** existing Millennium Development Goals and include indicators that incorporate the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development.
- **Global governance arrangements** which monitor the SDGs should include the establishment of a UN Sustainable Development Council to effectively track progress on all indicators.

For further information on any aspect of the above please contact:

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1961-2011: 50 years of conservation. WWF works in over a hundred countries to protect the natural world, tackle climate change and promote sustainable consumption.

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