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**RIO +20**  
**CHOOSING THE FUTURE WE WANT**

A Talk for Earth Day  
University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina  
April 12, 2012, Saskatoon

# MESPOM

- ◉ Erasmus Mundus Programme
- ◉ Masters in Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management
- ◉ Consortium of European and Non-European Universities
- ◉ European Universities: CEU, Lund, Manchester, Aegean
- ◉ Non-European Consortium Members: U Saskatchewan, Middlebury/Monterey
- ◉ Current grant through 2015



# Organization of studies

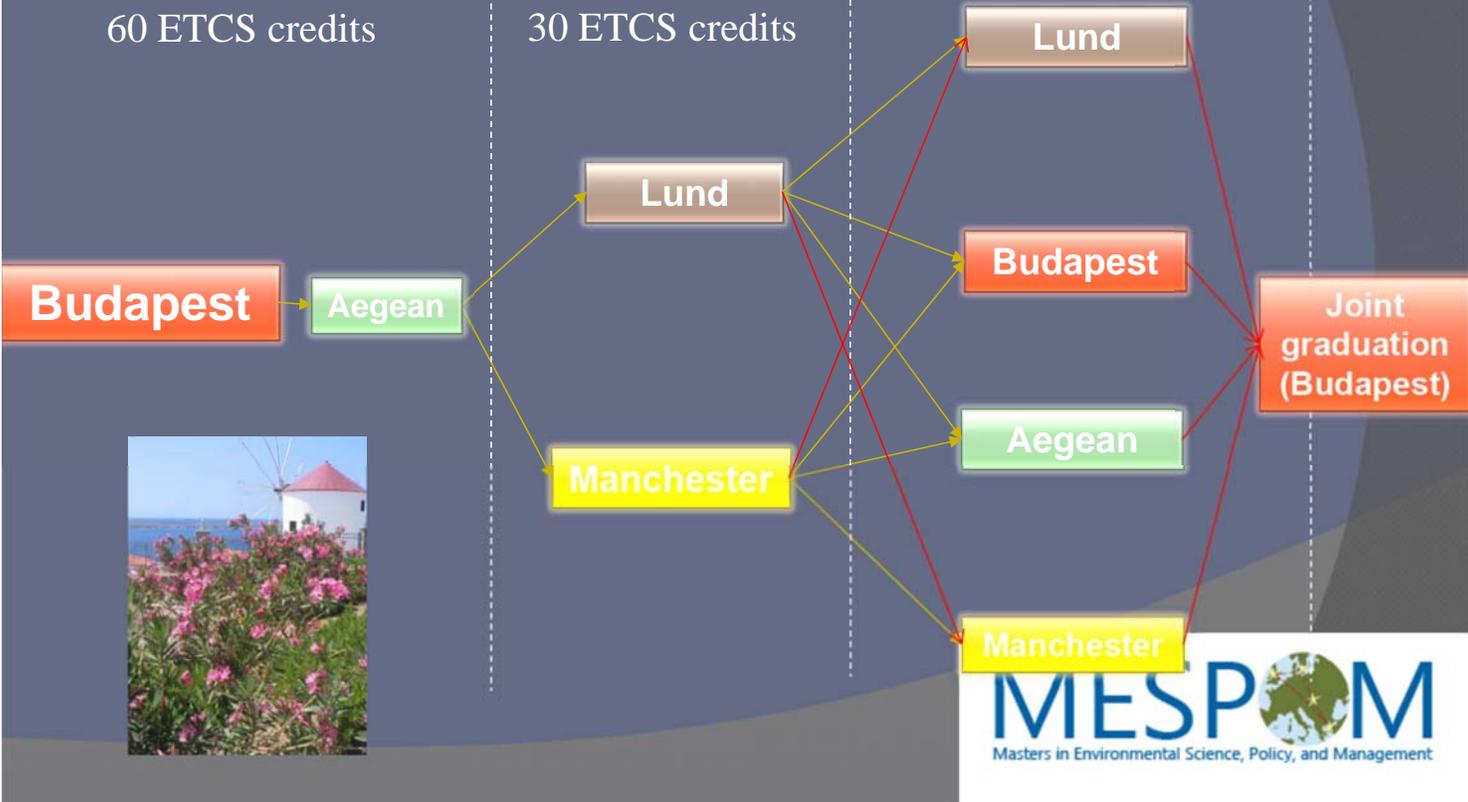
1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> terms

60 ETCS credits

3<sup>rd</sup> term

30 ETCS credits

4<sup>th</sup> term (thesis) 30 ETCS credits



# MESPOM Scholars

- Faculty and student exchanges among Consortium partners
- Outstanding scholars from outside Europe teach and conduct research with MESPOM partners on EU fellowships

# Some Facts about Rio+20

- The UN Conference on Sustainable Development
- UN GA Res. 64/236
  - Recalling, inter alia, 1992 Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, outcomes of Johannesburg, Doha Declaration, Monterey Consensus
- Rio de Janeiro, 13-22 June 2012
  - PREPCOM, Sandwich Days, High-Level
- Side Events

# A Generational Opportunity

- Ban Ki-Moon – “A generational opportunity to set the policy framework for the next 20 years”
- Rio Earth Summit 1992: 172 countries and 108 heads of state
- Rio +20: estimated 150 heads of state (more than 110 confirmed by mid-March)
- The largest event ever organized by the UN
- 50,000 people expected





# Two overarching themes

- Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication
- Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD)

# Seven priority areas

- combating poverty through green jobs
- advancing food security/sustainable agriculture
- water management
- energy access, including renewables
- sustainable cities
- management of oceans
- improving resilience and disaster preparedness

# Additional and cross-cutting issues

- Biodiversity
- Forests
- Land management
- Mountains
- Sanitation
- SCP
- Gender
- Education/technology
- Means of implementation

# Outcome Document

- “The Future We Want”
  - Preamble/Stage Setting
  - Renewing Political Commitment
  - Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication
  - Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development
  - Framework for Action and Follow-up

# Outcomes from Rio Earth Summit

- Rio Declaration
- Agenda 21
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- Forest Principles
- Global Reporting Initiative
- [Johannesburg Declaration and Action Plan]

# “Zero Draft”

- 128 paragraphs – 19 pages – placeholders but no “meat on the bone”
- 677 comments received
  - 493 from NGOs
  - 100 different UN member states
  - 6000 pages
- Compilation Document available online

# From 0 to 1

- What has happened to the Zero Draft
  - number of paragraphs

Section	Zero draft	informal draft as of 27 Mar
Preamble/Stage Setting	5	18
Renewing Political Commitments	19	76
Green Economy	19	80+
IFSD	18	120+
Framework for Action	65	~500

# Negotiating blocs

- G77/China
- EU+ (accession; sometimes N, CH)
- US
- Canada, NZ, Australia etc
- NGO Participation

# Breadth of the vision

- G77/China – transparency in international finance and technology transfer; aid effectiveness (missed 0.7% target)
- US – reproductive health/contraception
- Japan – universal health coverage
- G77/China – reaffirming sovereignty
- N – better cooperation and coherence among UN, IFIs and WTO

# Selected Political Priorities

- US – knowledge base
- Japan – disaster preparedness/response
- G77/China - oceans
- Mexico – sustainable urbanization
- EU – maintaining fishery subsidies
- Turkey – recognizing large-scale water projects (GAP)

# Green economy

- Consensus emerging
  - Addressing the social agenda
  - Respecting sovereignty
  - Avoiding protectionism and aid conditionalities
- Differences remain
  - Terms of technology sharing
  - Bearing the costs of transition
  - Investment financing

# Green economy (1/3): context

- Reaffirming Rio Principles
- Key to achieving SD
- Process orientation
- Country-specific
- Win-win
- Structural adjustments necessary

# Green economy (2/3): policy tools

- Country-specific
- International knowledge-sharing platform
- Structural adjustments necessary
- Major Groups experience sharing

# Green economy (3/3): action

- Country-specific
- Transparency
- UN support
- Private sector involvement
- Voluntary commitments
- Eliminating EHS
- Capacity development
- Roadmap with milestones

# IFSD

- Consensus emerging
  - Strengthening links between science and policymaking
  - Transforming the CSD
- Differences remaining
  - Enhancing role of UNGA and ECOSOC
  - Creation of Sustainable Development Council
  - Transforming UNEP into treaty-based org

# IFSD (1/4): integration

- Promoting implementation of Agenda 21
- Developing policy guidance and action plans
- Progress monitoring
- UN program coherence

# IFSD (2/4): UNGA, CSD

- Reforming ECOSOC
- Transforming CSD into SDC
- SD Performance review mechanism
- Progress monitoring
- UN program coherence

# IFSD (3/4): UNEP or ?

- Reforms needed to enhance SD considerations in UNCTAD and other UN processes
- UNEP Universal membership
- Increasing financial base
- Specialized agency
  - Treaty based
- Ombudsperson for future generations
- Rio P10

# IFSD (4/4): Multi-level Governance

- SEA
- Better coherence in development policies (e.g., urban and national)
- Science and knowledge base

# Framework for Action

## ○ Zero draft priority areas:

- Food security
- Water
- Energy
- Cities
- Green jobs/social inclusion
- Oceans and seas/SIDS
- Natural disasters
- Climate change
- Forests/biodiversity
- Land degradation
- Mountains
- Chemicals and wastes
- SCP
- Education
- Gender equality

# Framework for Action

- At least 15 new proposals, e.g.:
  - Sustainable tourism
  - Sustainable transportation
  - Population
  - Health
  - Infrastructure
  - LDCs
  - Mining

# Innovative ideas & proposals

- New IPs modeled on IPCC (e.g. IPSD)
- Peoples sustainability treaties
- Global, “socially-curated” compendium of commitments (Access)
- Global convention on Rio Principle 10 (Brazil, not pursued)

# Focus on selected policy issues

- SDGs
- Corporate accountability
- Access to information and public participation

# Sustainable Development Goals

- MDGs
- Proposal of Colombia and Guatemala
- Negotiations through 2015
- Based on Agenda 21
- Means for measuring advances and bottlenecks in efforts to balance sustained socioeconomic growth with the sustainable use of natural resources and the conservation of ecosystem services
- Scope:
  - Social inclusion
  - Coherent policies and programs
  - Overarching themes: integration, implementation, coherence

# Corporate Accountability

- Agenda 21 chapter that was not accepted; GRI
- Call for a convention at Johannesburg
- ISO 26000 on social responsibility
- Other voluntary initiatives
- Renewed calls for global framework convention
  - Driven in part by insurance industry (Aviva)
- Current status of Zero Draft

# Zero Draft para. 24

- 24. We call for a global policy framework requiring all listed and large private companies to consider sustainability issues and to integrate sustainability information within the reporting cycle.

# Informal Draft para. 24

- [24. [We call for a [n effective – Switzerland] global policy framework [, building on the global compact and global reporting initiative, – Switzerland] [the strengthening of the existing international mechanisms aimed at incorporating sustainability standards into the functioning of the business sector as well as setting up – Montenegro] [requiring [all / which promotes and encourages publicly – Australia] listed and large – Japan, Switzerland delete] private [- Norway delete] [and public – Switzerland] companies /encourage the private sector – Canada] - [that are listed – Switzerland] to [consider / take – Switzerland] [taking note of all – Kazakhstan] sustainability issues [into account in conducting their activities, to implement corporate sustainable development policies – Switzerland] and to integrate sustainability information within the [ir – Switzerland] [appropriate – Kazakhstan] reporting cycle [s – Switzerland]. – RoK delete paragraph] – EU bracket paragraph; G77 under consideration] – US, Canada, G77 delete para; New Zealand delete and some concepts can be moved to other parts]
- [24. alt We encourage the private sector to consider sustainability issues and to integrate sustainability information within their reporting cycle. – Canada]

# Zero Draft para. 104 dec

- ◉ [104. dec We recognize the need to establish a process aimed at agreeing on and developing a reliable and robust global system for national sustainability accounting and reporting across the world. We also recognize the need for a global commitment on corporate sustainability reporting for all listed companies based on the “Report or Explain” principle to introduce comparable, reliable and output oriented accounting and reporting systems as complement to financial reporting. The Global Reporting Initiative launched in Rio in 1992 can serve as reference for such a commitment and its enforcement. – EU, Switzerland, Norway; US, New Zealand reserve]
- ◉ [104 dec alt We encourage all organizations to disclose environmental and social performance in accordance with international recognized standards such as the global reporting initiative. –Canada]

# Access

- Global Convention on Rio 10
- Regional Conventions (Chile)
- Globalizing Aarhus
- Eye on Earth Summit A4A SI
- Compendium of Commitments

# Will anything actually happen?

- Achim Steiner – “The world is drifting away from the UN ... the UN is paralyzed ... Collectively we are on the wrong side of history and that is something Rio must tackle.”

# Rio Declaration and Agenda 21

- Introduced concept of sustainability in economic development on political level
- Have shaped IFI policies
- Around 100 countries have NEAPs
- Thousands of cities and towns have developed LEAPs
- Local communities empowered and better knowledge-based decisionmaking
- Increased transparency & accountability
- CDR – intl justice stds
- International conspiracy theory

# In conclusion

- “The Zero Draft is the best, because everyone is unhappy with it, and equally.” – Sha Zukang, UN DESA
- “A more valuable alternative would be ... a brief political statement that ... captures the attention of a new generation.” – Jacob Scherr, NRDC





Thank  
you!

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**MESPOM**  
Masters in Environmental Science, Policy, and Management