

EEAC Statement: Sustaining Europe For a Log Way Ahead September 2008

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Identifying the problem

This Statement focuses on designing a wide range of institutional arrangements for implementing policies aimed at establishing sustainable development, and to shape political and social outlooks, for a very long way ahead. The long-term characteristic is mentioned in the declaratory preamble to the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006, p2):

Sustainable development means that the needs of the present generation should be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is an overarching objective of

the European Union set out in the Treaty governing all of the Union's policies and activities.

This statement was elaborated by the EEAC Working Group Sustainable Development. It is accompanied by a more detailed Background Paper and supporting papers for the eight themes.

Sustainable development is becoming more widely accepted as a political concept, but it is still not being put into effective practice. Society pays lip service to this concept, but it is not yet committed to it. Sustainable development seeks to ensure that humankind cares for the needs and interests of all people, among different nations and between generations, in such a way that all are treated fairly and with justice. Such a robust society will act in such a way as to maintain and enhance the life support functions of the planet, and will establish an economy designed to foster livelihoods that create both prosperity and a fundamental sense of personal and collective wellbeing. This trajectory encompasses not only all citizens alive today, but all generations to come. Their wellbeing should be intrinsically "our" wellbeing. Sustainable development requires transformation and innovation in the public and private sectors, creativity in society, the capacity to anticipate future effects, to act with precaution and prevention, and to make responsible decisions affecting the vitality of the future.

The European Union is founded on a binding legal and political system, which promotes social cohesion, environmental integration, and economic competitiveness, whilst maintaining the flexibility and adaptability that allows for differing national and cultural identities. European integration and enlargement aim at making Europe more competitive and innovative - and hence more able to operate globally. Europe as a sustaining global player for a long way ahead requires a vision based on a European Social, Ecological and Economic Model as a framework for resilience. Further, Europe has a responsibility to act as partner through supporting social and economic development in developing countries and emerging economies in a sustainable way, guided by the Millennium Development Goals and by key global environmental agreements, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, and

the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. Europe needs to take a lead on this, initially within the Union, and externally to the world. In this context, this Statement also reinforces and encourages all EU institutions to conduct the recommendation offered in paragraph 27 of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006):

The Commission should elaborate a concrete and realistic vision of the EU on its way to sustainable development over the next 50 years. Such a vision should be prepared in a participatory manner and should identify the main long term objectives and describe immediate stages and steps towards their achievement.

EEAC supports the suggestion that this vision should be created so that citizens and governments shape and negotiate their futures in a companionable way. This process should develop more profound and effective measures of a range of social and ecological outcomes. Moreover, it should involve horizon scanning, as well as appropriately designed sustainability impact assessments for policy-making, and subsequent implementation.

EEAC believes that addressing the very long term through the lens of sustainable development is now a matter of urgency. The prospect of highly damaging, and extremely costly, effects of global change in climate, in natural hazards caused by human intervention, in the loss of biodiversity, and in the disruption of soil stability and food security, poses serious threats to personal and collective human health and wellbeing. The consequences of climate change are already becoming more painfully evident, particularly in developing countries, through the human misery of increased poverty, catastrophic disruption to livelihoods, and enforced migration. In addition, unstable financial markets, waves of terrorism and social riots, caused in part by unsatisfactory living conditions, the widening gap between rich and poor, deepening unemployment, and lately, by sharply rising food prices world-wide, need to be taken into account. The long term is indeed here already.

The difficulties in achieving such purpose are enormous. It is not evident that society has adopted, or adapted, its methods of governing, of establishing social justice, of designing markets, of offering education and learning, of responding to its changing demographic patterns, of readying its cultures and social outlooks for the convulsive changes ahead, and of maintaining the very varied and regional communities and landscapes of the European Union for this purpose. To this end, the Working Group has prepared a set of seven theme papers on these topics. The purpose of these papers is to analyse and assess how far all of these key themes and ways of working are suitably fashioned for promoting a sustainable long term. In addition, the manner in which the EU budget is generated and designed

to implement policy and to safeguard European public interests may need to be more appropriately handled to create a sustainable long term. This aspect provides the eighth theme paper.

This Statement provides the summary of all of these deliberations. It offers an assessment of the peculiar challenges offered by this very long-term perspective in a rapidly changing world, and makes a number of practical suggestions for public, private and civil society sectors to establish simultaneous and mutually supportive action. Details of the main argument, and of the proposals, are contained in the Background Paper.

What makes “a long way ahead” so challenging, lies in its following characteristics:

The huge uncertainty as to what could happen to the fabric of the planet, the habitability of many populated regions, the health and security of vast numbers of people, and even the viability of humanity itself. These uncertainties are a reflection of imperfect knowledge and understanding over how these processes operate, and over the huge range of possible outcomes caused by human intervention. There is also very little capacity to forecast how these two sets of forces interact with the life support functions of the planet.

Added to this uncertainty is the almost impossible set of predictions of how policy, technology, managerial innovation and social outlooks may themselves shift by deliberate human choice. These adjustments may be the result of recovering from early mistakes, or consciously seeking to promote a sustainable future. Whatever, such highly interconnected shifts set the scene for the staged, step by step, forecasts of planet, people and prosperity for the century to come. One set of uncertainties entwines with another set of unpredictable policy and financial investment responses. Some of these shifts will be incremental, building on experience, courage and experimentation. Others may be convulsive, abrupt and ill-coordinated, driven by desperation or panic as conditions for human wellbeing deteriorate. In either case, the uncertainty of long-range prediction is compounded by the near impossibility of forecasting how politics and policy may respond. It is therefore necessary to create stories, or scenarios, of futures, but never guarantees of outcome.

There is, as yet, little clarity as to how the EU itself may evolve politically, socially and geographically over the next three generations. Nor is there, as yet, a common view of what kind of democracy either at EU or member state level, needs to be designed to make and support policies that benefit future generations, that overcome injustice for present, as well as future generations, and which ensure a healthy and appropriately valued natural world.

Markets are becoming more and more a mix of multinational regulation, national guidance, civic

intervention and corporate responses to achieving profits, adding value, and acting responsibly. Markets do not cope well with the wide ranging implications of actions on human generations to come. Demands for immediate profit returns, and unregulated speculation in day to day commodity markets, offer no scope for prolonged sustainability. It is very difficult to forecast how markets might function in three generations' time, but some kind of synergy between the state, civil society and private enterprise should be forthcoming.

Individual and communal culture, lifestyles, consuming habits and sense of local identity are also very difficult to forecast. Recent changes to "culture" in Europe have been influenced by technology, media, social activities, and events, - local to global. Whether a cultural shift to a sustainable long term can be shaped and guided, rather than evolve from its own transformation, remains to be assessed. Profound shifts in cultural values and behaviour are usually very slow-moving and episodic, unless society as a whole is confronted by a common and credible threat, and can be driven by well-founded policies, be it at regional, national or EU level.

Education is not fully designed for social justice, ecological resilience and sustainable livelihoods. Education has the responsibility to prepare society to identify sustainable solutions to complex problems, and to recognise that there may be many possible approaches to identify earlier in decision streams, the possible unintended consequences of well meaning choices. The issue here is the extent to which education may be consciously shaped to prepare society to work for a sustainable long way ahead, whether education becomes the basis for profound cultural shift, or whether it evolves without specific direction in this regard.

The longer societies do not adjust to a sustainable long term, the more difficult it will be to manage highly unpredictable and possible abrupt changes to the running of the planet that could overwhelm humanity. We believe that the European Union should accelerate its efforts in trade and aid to help establish "one planet living" for the whole globe by 2050. This means advancing the Human Development Index for all developing economies, so that it faithfully measures progress, which is both socially just and ecologically resilient, and hence working cooperatively with such economies and societies to reduce substantially the total ecological footprint. A sustainable Europe cannot coexist in an unsustainable world.

We do not have to stress that the challenges are enormous. Our purpose here is primarily to emphasise that there are ways to achieve a more sustainable future. We also recognise that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution for transforming to sustainable development. There are many different opinions on what is wise, and this is why we have po-

litical and societal discussion. But we can, and do, present some suggestions on possible ways forward. We say this with limited time for manoeuvre. At best, there is a 25 year "window" for genuinely significant response. Beyond then, it may be too difficult and too socially disruptive to bring about ecologically and socially just change.

We therefore use the "long term" as a device to assess a vision for the rest of the century that enables citizens, governments, economies, and the planet itself, to adjust to an outlook that is robust, resilient, creative, supporting and nurturing in nature and for nature, and for all humankind. To get there, we have to imagine a manageable and realistic "short term" of 1-5 years, namely the current political and budget life cycle of governments, people and business. This process has to take into account short term steps to contribute to sustainable long term outcomes. It will also require some sort of "medium term", namely 5-25 years for purposes of middle level decision analysis and institutional reform.

Governance

The concept of "governance" embraces formal government structures – legislatures, executives and courts – at international, national and sub-national levels. It extends to networks of organisations (business, voluntary groups, non-profit bodies, and civic leaders), also aimed at creating viable societies and economies. In general, governance combines horizontal networks and hierarchical, as well as vertical, structures, designed to inform policies, make decisions, and carry out actions in the name of their electorates or supporters. Present patterns of governance in the EU and in member states, and which also include the body of market-based arrangements, rarely takes all aspects of sustainability fully into account. The outcome is that European governance inadvertently acts to increase overall inequality, social disruption, and ecological dislocation.

We urge all EU institutions to develop and test new and comprehensive ways to integrate sustainability criteria, into all policy-making and implementation, and to introduce effective monitoring and evaluation. This means that all actors will benefit from training to manage long-term complexity, endemic uncertainty, and to redefine problems as sustainability opportunities. They should also undertake "long-term proofing" of all short-term decisions, and any choices either to delay, or to avoid, action.

As events in the long-term future normally are beyond individual experience and today's stakeholder preferences, effective and organised knowledge about long-term system dynamics and potential crises plays a key role for preparing for the future. Uncertainty and unknowability are key de-

terminants of any such forecast, scenario or other description of the future. It is therefore indispensable that a wide ranging discussion between scientists from different disciplines and schools of thought, as well as of with and within the policy arena, on possible and probable futures, as well as the action needed for preventing plausible disaster, continues to be well organised and institutionalised, in order to earn the necessary authority and public attention. In this respect, the IPCC is a model for this kind of knowledge dialogue, bringing thousands of scientists globally together and reviewing all available knowledge on possible futures. EEAC supports the establishment and development of similar bodies of knowledge dialogue on biodiversity, ecosystem services, sustainable resource use, and more specific policy issues such as migration and agriculture. At the EU level the European Commission has developed or experimented with permanent research institutions. It is now essential to consolidate different strands of knowledge of the future in order to establish a strong strategic message on the long-term future of Europe's environment, social cohesion and its role in the world economy. Also several member states have good experience with the institutionalisation and aggregation of knowledge on the future, all of which can be considered as the first movers for today's sustainable development processes.

The key governance challenge is to create the link between the more scientific discourse on possible futures and threats, and the present day political decision-making system. Linking problems with solutions and decisions in the view of long-term futures is far from simple. Formally established advisory councils can also contribute to bringing and keeping long-term issues on the political agenda, against and beyond the day-to-day political reality. Furthermore it is desirable to convey from scientific research to the legal and economic instruments to enable politicians to take into account the very long term in their actions.

Governance institutions should be based on the political and geographical cultures of their nations and localities. Within that context, they should be (re)designed in order better to incorporate the long term in present-day decision-making. They should also be prepared to learn from successful practice of others, yet maintain their own distinctive styles. Nevertheless, basic principles still need to be universally applied – social justice, sincere and effective participation, full impact accounting, and responsible citizenship.

It is essential, that all features of policy formation and decision analysis take into account the wide-ranging manner of sustainability reporting and measurement, and that these procedures are coherent, open, and accountable. This will influence the future pattern of pricing, of attention to social jus-

tice, and of regulation to ensure sustainability practice becomes the norm.

Pilot schemes for sustainability governance for the long-term should be tried out via the use of scenarios, decision-workshops, appropriate training programs, and well-monitored and evaluated case studies. These should reflect the distinctiveness of localities, histories and cultures that actively shape the overall character of the European Union.

Social justice

A socially just world would ensure that fair treatment and appropriate opportunity is offered to all citizens irrespective of gender, age, disability, religious belief, race, and history of previous treatment. All decisions involving a long-term should explicitly take into account all aspects of social well-being and ecological resilience. Sustaining Europe means making a sincere and effective contribution to sustaining the whole world in such a way that all future societies live and act within the limits of one planet, and that their well-being meets the highest standards of personal esteem and collective capability.

Social justice extends to ensuring decent homes for all, for effective capacity and appropriate opportunity for decent work, to extend skills and labour flexibility, for affordable availability of all basic needs in the provision of food, water, health, shelter, energy and other services, and for the profound sense of solidarity and empathy for the improved wellbeing of all future citizens.

All decision-making should gear itself to a social justice framing, so that any outcome meets the criteria of fairness, tolerance, lack of discrimination, and the capacity to create socially viable living and decent working conditions. The *acquis communautaire* should be reviewed to ensure that such vital objectives become part of future European law making.

Demography

How to adjust to demographic change, which includes ageing, migration and spatial population change, is an issue for a growing number of societies in Europe. Providing for social protection, pension arrangements, human resources, and education for lifelong learning all threaten to fall behind need, as does the promotion of the quality of life in urban and rural settings. But, taken seriously and framed by sustainability concepts, the demographic transition may also provide opportunities for a profound modernisation of society, prosperity, new jobs and renewed identity for the local level.

All this suggests a fundamental need to rethinking urbanism, mobility and social security and safety in the light of the long-term sustainability challenge. A transition of public services and decentralised

renewable energy and mobility supply would help to develop sustainable patterns of production and consumption. This suggests the shift to a more coordinated mix in the overall picture. The ecological dimension would benefit from a rethinking of social service provision, involving the corporate responsibility dimension of businesses, the targeted role of the state for the most disadvantaged, and the direct and sensitive involvement of the charity and active civil society. Here is where local wellbeing may begin to take hold. Sustainability action would be the key. Demographic change carries with it the potential for fostering social cohesion via new social justice arrangements, opening up pathways to social well-being for all levels of governance from international to local, and for ensuring that both governing and citizenship share the common values of responsibility and dedication to maintain the sustainable long-term.

Markets

Markets range from informal exchange arrangements found at many local levels, to integrated socio-legal patterns at various national levels, to global corporate structures on the international scale. All markets tend to manage risk and uncertainty, so coping with the long-term is in their purview. But few markets manage to incorporate long-term sustainability criteria. Markets cannot handle this by themselves. For one thing, there is too much uncertainty, too little reliable measurement, and no incentive in prices or in regulation to ensure that the sustainable long-term is given appropriate consideration in modern market procedures. This is why a robust regulatory framework for markets is needed in which they can operate in a sustainable way for the long term. Some regulatory frameworks already exist, through international conventions and bodies such as the WTO, and also at national level. But they are not by any means well designed for the sustainable long term. Much more supportive interconnectedness between regulation, social judgements, and reciprocal exchange arrangements may be necessary.

This means that linking reforms in governance to reforms in market procedures will be essential to build a much better synergy between legislation, regulation, pricing, taxation, business management, and customer scrutiny. Particular attention will have to be given to ensuring social justice, to moving toward one planet living on a global level, and to providing much clearer values for ecosystem services and planetary life-support functions. A more regulated market framework is necessary to ensure that appropriate attention is paid to long-term sustainability outcomes. Such regulation should be designed to encourage the first movers and sustainability entrepreneurs, and to penalise the

opportunistic speculator. Reforms in the political process in order to encourage a greater focus on the long term are necessary to ensure that any government intervention in markets works effectively for promoting sustainability for a very long way ahead. This is why a move towards more participatory elements in democracy, sensitive to sustaining the very long term, will be so very crucial.

The social entrepreneur should be championed. Social entrepreneurs are frontrunners and innovative social networkers, who experiment beyond conventional approaches to markets, technology development, media communication, and investment. They specifically seek to combine civil improvement to the more impoverished and marginalised populations and economies, taking into account international labour, social and environmental rules.

Responsible citizen values mean a balance between efficient global markets and the safeguard of local specificities. Then, markets can become, and in turn will shape, a responsible civic culture, fully aware of its commitments to preserve different cultures in a one planet living. Markets need to be more embedded in responsible citizen values as well as being fully informed by the emerging measures for ensuring social and ecological resilience. Markets will become, and in turn will shape, a responsible civic culture, fully aware of its commitments to one planet living.

Education

Education is a life-long process of learning and enlightenment, which embraces the classroom and the world beyond. It involves local action, civic responsibility and supportive media involvement. Education and training will also increasingly involve close integration with business and with governance structures, so that all sectors will be learning from each other in the long road to sustainable development. The ultimate aim is that all schools become laboratories for sustainable living, learning, and training for all occupations and for all citizens to build in the capacity to care for and design ways of living that sustain all humankind and a living planet for all time to come.

Education in the round, enabling everyone to understand the outlooks and aspirations of each other and the circumstances which frame their thinking and outlooks, should help to promote a more effective participatory democracy. Education and training can also assist citizens, policy makers and business managers alike to handle ambiguity, to search for interconnectedness, and to seek new perspectives from seemingly intractable problems.

Education builds on civic responsibility, in exploring the belief that both urban and rural communities can work more effectively together than can individuals acting alone, and that the experience of

achieving this becomes vital for creating all sustainable communities. Education requires a fresh engagement with the media, with the forward-looking social responsibility aspects of business, and with sensitive approaches to furthering community cohesion.

Culture

Culture shapes the identity of the past, the present and the future for all peoples and places. Cultures set values, guide expectations, and influence how everybody feels about themselves and their neighbours. Cultures influence consumption, markets, governance and the manner in which localities develop and reveal fairness of treatment, in the framework of their competence. Sustaining Europe for the long way ahead will require cultures to enmesh with new forms of education, social justice and markets. Sustainability is part of the cultural and historical experience of European societies, nowadays beginning to recognise again the notion of accepting limits. Fostering this basis could provide a way for strengthening social cohesion, advancing environmental integration and global interconnectedness. This means creating responsible citizenship that behaves to planetary limits, aware and capable of translating long-term visions into day to day actions, so the whole promotes well-being of all in a nurturing natural world. Cultures will become living, learning and leading pathways to the sustainable long-term. Innovative market mechanisms, such as “Cap and Share” and personal carbon trading, offer potential in the development of appropriate policy responses to tackle climate change which address inter-generational equity and social justice.

Diversity

Europe is a house of many rooms. Europe thrives on providing a sense of a governing whole and of enjoying local specialness. Diversity of functions, roles and economies as well as of cultures may be promoted or recreated as a tool to sustainability in balance with uniformity and unity. True diversity combines shifting cultures and education with full sensitivity to local ecological processes and life support functions. For Europe to shift to sustainable development for the long-term there will have to be a re-calibration of the relationship between the framing of responsibilities and actions at the international, national, and sub-regional levels. This process will need to reassess the current balance between the need for multi-lateral guiding frameworks for policy and financing, national policy making and budgets, and autonomy and flexibility at the local level. This in turn means that diverse localities will become the demonstrable laboratories of forms of social value and new patterns of sus-

tainable consumption and production, applicable to that level.

Budgets

The EU budget is often called a “soft power”, because EU governance is primarily about regulation and coordinating national policies. Nevertheless, Europe needs to develop a sustainable financing system based on the objectives of the EU Treaty and the EU Sustainable Development Strategy that puts safeguarding public and European values at its heart. This ought to reflect a change in view on public management where strategic goals are translated into an output oriented budget based on best available knowledge as well as an informed public debate, instead of the present intergovernmental bickering about short-sighted budget returns (‘juste retour’). Transparency needs to be an overall guiding principle of this new financing system, making all EU subsidies and expenditures traceable for European citizens.

Pressing issues, such as climate change, energy supply, food security and migration, request a Europe that remains loyal to its publicly pronounced European values and plays a fair and responsible internal and external role. Therefore the budget for ‘EU as a global partner’ ought to be enhanced and better harmonised with national budgets geared to sustaining the global arena. In the field of development policy, and in the broader field of conflict prevention, crisis management and the promotion of stability and reconstruction, sustainable development needs to be an integral part of all external actions.

In the long run the EU needs a budget and a budget process that is focussed on European shared values and strategic goals. Compulsory sustainability assessments should be introduced for all EU expenditures, in order to avoid costly counteracting measures also to be financed by EU-funds. Safeguarding European public goods such as nature/ecosystems and their services should be sufficiently taken into account in the EU budget. With respect to revenue, consideration should be given to shift gradually to a genuine EU resource system that reflects European shared values and strategic goals, supports adaptation to change (e.g. polluter pays principles), serves as a stabilising factor of financial markets, and promotes social and ecological equity. Such a system would probably be preferable to the present situation in which the revenues are part of the national budgets of the states, hence subject to annual discussion in national parliaments.

Possible staging

This Statement contains a series of proposals for specific attention and action. Here is a summarised list of possible focal events or activities to be con-

ducted over three phases: 1 – 5 years, 5 – 25 years, and 25 – 50 years. It is vital that the proposals in each time phase create processes and outcomes, which keep all future decision pathways open. The numbers are for information only, referring to proposals offered in the appended Background Paper.

1 – 5 Years

The EU Commission is invited to institute a series of visionary exercises, to be conducted at the EU level, and at national and sub-national levels, with the support of member councils of the EEAC. These visions should look into the issues of managing within nature's limits, creating a fair, just and resilient society, generating sustainable livelihoods, designing robust and appropriate technology, and laying out space for prolonged sustainability with the emphasis on rural viability, city regions and effective community mobilisation. [P1, P2, P3]

The EU and member states should seek an institutional agreement on how to overcome the present democratic and information deficit between the EU and its member states, and between the EU and its citizens. This process should creatively involve the media, schools and universities, civic organisations and think tanks, and should actively look for pilot schemes to link better citizen preferences for long term sustainability and the delivery of appropriate policies by EU governing institutions. The visionary exercise outlined above should be of value in this exercise. [P4, P5, P6, P7]

We invite the European Commission to make use of the best research and most visionary thinking to seek better measures for sustainable wellbeing. This should help to shape the future EU policy making and budget processes, as well as member state comprehensive spending reviews. [P9, P10, P11, P12]

The European Commission is asked to establish a process to improve the framing of comprehensive accounting for sustainability. This should run in tandem with the wellbeing measure evaluation, and should explicitly involve national accounting institutions. [P14]

The European Commission and member states are encouraged to instigate informed public debates to assess how the EU policy and budget processes can better reflect the changing values of its citizens. This would involve investigation of the scope for the EU taxation regime and associated regulations to promote more sustainability directed investments, and to penalise opportunistic speculation. It would also encompass more sensitive and comprehensive regulatory procedures, as well as the introduction of a resource based accounting arrangements to reflect the enhancement of ecological systems and natural resources. It is vital that any new tax and levy arrangements explicitly combine ecological, social and economic parameters, and not

be confined to segmentations of these three historically separated strands of analysis. [P39, P40, P41]

The European Commission and member states are invited to convene a series of rotating EU-wide workshops to analyse the scope for a new governance and democracy for the sustainable long term. These would cover the link between short term electoral pressures, the need for an effective long term view, where the benefits of future generations are not only a feature of a comprehensive social justice, but are also the basis for establishing a sense of civic responsibility in all learners and citizens.

We invite the European Commission to convene a series of workshops to assess the scope for establishing the appropriate mix of incentives and penalties to move the EU economy towards sustainable energy, high degrees of energy use efficiency, carbon neutrality and water stewardship, built into consumption patterns and responsible citizenship education so as to reduce and recycle all waste. This effort should involve the finance ministers of the member states and the national tax and accreditation teams. [P42, P43, P44, P45, P46, P47, P48]

We reiterate the recommendation of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy that all member states should establish sustainable development advisory bodies with sufficient resources and representation, in order to stimulate informed debate, increase the involvement of civil society in sustainable development matters, and encourage better linking of different policies and policy levels. This would also strengthen pan-European exchange and coordination in the EEAC network.

We suggest that all EU governing institutions, business interests and civil leaders initiate a sequential and organised analytical process to manage and build managerial and decision making capacity for designing and implementing the sustainable long term. [P49, P50, P51]

Schools should be prepared as living laboratories for effective sustainability. This should begin with a series of specialist studies and workshops around best sustainable management practice, followed by pilot supported by the media and the web. These experimental schools should open their doors to the learning by others that they can offer. The whole process should consider the effects, over time, on pupils' outlooks and behaviour patterns.

Establish training programmes to enable decision makers in all strands of society, public, private and civic, to build capacity to handle complexity, to pay attention to social justice and the long term implications of decision outcomes, and to be familiar with accounting procedures which recognise and incorporate social and ecological resilience in assessments of possible policies and subsequent actions. There should be skills training for coping with the unfamiliar, the uncomfortable and the uncoordinated.

EEAC member councils will explore how best to promote and extend the recommendations and proposals contained in the Background Paper. This response might be fashioned through a series of connected workshops, combining the parallel actions of other EU governing institutions, to build a common framework for action.

5 – 25 Years

Strengthening the international role played by the EU to ensure that the EU becomes a major global player in the promotion of sustainable development for a very long way ahead. All aspects of EU external relations should be geared to promoting long term sustainability.

To ensure this a deep assessment of all existing policies, programmes and measures would be required as an immediate next move.

Following the vision development and informed public debates, a series of policy initiatives should be put in train to ensure that the findings of wellbeing, sustainability accounting and resource efficiency/stewardship initiatives all lead to a policy assessment of sustainable rural futures and sustainable city regions. This will be a major exercise in the analysis of governance and financing at the regional level.

Creating a sustainability outlook coupled to a sense of community identity for all EU citizens, with sensitive involvement by immigrants, so that all EU citizens adopt sustainability values and behaviour by 2035 needs to be introduced by well monitored pilot schemes.

Improving existing governance models, institutional arrangements and technologies, to meet the objective of participatory, accountable, inclusive and decentralised forms of government, wherever possible and appropriate, to build on emerging forms, and to make use of central standards and rules, where necessary. New approaches to sustainability governance should be capable of generating appropriate responses and guidance for a changing society that is progressively moving towards sustainability for a long way ahead. This process would explicitly involve the media, schools and organisations at the local level.

Putting into place an EU-wide social justice framework for all policies, programmes and actions that promote the sustainable long term. This will build on the existing body of European law, and should help to establish a more comprehensive legal framework for ensuring that all EU and member state and sub-national policies are “proofed” for social justice and sustainable development.

25 – 50 Years

We invite all European governance institutions to monitor and promote a process that generates the inspiration and excitement of living and working sustainably for all European Union citizens. Diversity in economy and culture, and in more autonomous governing, within a suitably robust framework for a functioning multilateral and national state, with stable and responsible governance, is a prerequisite for satisfying prosperity, the advance of social wellbeing, the effective pursuit of inter-generational solidarity, and the maintenance of ecological resilience all over the world. Every citizen is an elector, a sustainable convenor, a communal supporter, an effective sustainability activist, and a companion in the slow, but successful, move to global sustainability.