



DRAFT

Synthesis Document

Strategic Opportunities for Sustainable Production and Consumption in North America

Thursday, December 5, 2013: 8:30am – 4:30pm,
Venue: UNEP Regional Office of North America, 900 17th Street Northwest,
Suite 506, Washington, DC 20006

This draft synthesis document produced by One Earth gives a brief history on the movement of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), and lists key recommendations that emerged from the various workshops over the last decade linked to Sustainable Consumption and Production including the 2012 NARSPAC Advancing SCP Workshop, 2011 Green Economy, and Ottawa Workshops on SCP and Green Building, the first North American Workshop on Sustainable Consumption and Production in November 2008 in Washington, D.C, and NASCA meetings in 2005, 2004, 2002, and 2001. This draft is a living document to review in preparation for the NARSPAC Strategic Opportunities for SCP in North America Workshop in December 2013, and welcome your comments, suggestions and additions.

Summary of key recommendations of past conferences/workshops:

Process-focused recommendations:

- North America needs more multi-stakeholder meetings to discuss sustainable production & consumption, whether civil-society led or government led
- The sharing of best practices, sustainable-production-and-consumption success stories, and lessons learned is a useful way of both collaborating and of helping each other develop roadmaps for our work
- Opportunities around the UN 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption & Production need to be explored further, including influencing the governance and structure through increased stakeholder involvement, providing feedback on the 10YFP on SCP programmes template, and submitting 10YFP proposals for SCP programmes. 10YFP could also benefit from a translation of SCP concepts in order to make the terminology relevant to key groups
- It would be useful to examine the links between NAFTA and sustainable consumption, and engage the ECE in discussions around this issue
- There is a desire to develop a vision and policy framework for North America around sustainable production & consumption (with or without Mexico, depending on how "North America" is defined)

- Building a movement around sustainable production & consumption requires engaging in unexpected alliances
- Collaboration and sharing are key approaches to shifting production & consumption systems
- There are opportunities to advance sustainable production and consumption through participation in the definition of the Sustainable Development Goals

Key insights around sustainable production & consumption:

General

- Sustainable consumption & production is one system; these two spheres cannot be disconnected
- It would seem that relatively little has been accomplished in North America over the past decades in terms of reducing personal consumption, changing lifestyles and shifting institutions and political contexts
- North America has a unique opportunity and responsibility in taking the lead on sustainability
- The impacts of North America's production and consumption patterns are felt around the world
- We need to focus on the quantity of how much we consume (monitoring for absolute reductions in per capita eco-footprints) to complement the current focus on quality (eco-labeling; certification)
- It would be useful to conduct an analysis of how sustainable production & consumption can contribute to overcoming the economic downturn
- Collecting the work and visions of different stakeholder groups on sustainable production & consumption could yield useful insights
- Supporting the development of positive, compelling, integrative narratives on SCP can help to challenge the status quo and redefine ideas of progress

Leverage points

- Affecting social change requires the recognition that individual behaviour is largely shaped by norms, emotions and structures
- Procurement/purchasing policies of institutional consumers are powerful levers to shift demand and policy chains
- Food, as well as wellbeing, are powerful thematic entry points to discuss sustainable production & consumption
- New narratives, messaging, storytelling and ways of framing can help motivate and spur social change
- We need to develop, adopt and use new/smarter metrics, moving beyond GDP and measuring wellbeing
- Increased regulation, coupled with smarter pricing and the elimination of harmful subsidies, are key to reform financial systems
- Innovative ideas like reduced workweeks and new education models need to be developed and spread further
- Developing sectoral commitments to sustainable production & consumption, such as around aluminum production, electricity generation, mining and other resource sectors, would be helpful
- Existing international activities such as Earth Day and World Environment Day can be used

to communicate the SCP message and engage people

DESCENDING WORKSHOP CHRONOLOGY AND KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Advancing Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) in North America, December 11-12, 2012 at the United Nations Environment Programme – Regional Office of North America in Washington, DC.

Link to conference website: http://nasca.icspac.net/about/NARSPAC_2012workshop.aspx

This workshop was a sharing and strategy session among stakeholders engaged in advancing sustainable production and consumption, including civil society, academia, US and Canada government representatives, international organizations, and the private sector. This meeting was organized by the North American Roundtable on Sustainable Production and Consumption (NARSPAC) in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme – Regional Office for North America (UNEP RONA). It included representatives of the Global Research Forum on Sustainable Production and Consumption (GRF-SPC) from the North American region (see participant list below). The results of the meeting were shared at UNEP RONA's North American Major Groups and Stakeholders consultation (12-13 December 2012).

Goals of the meeting included:

- To share goals and activities of existing sustainable consumption and production initiatives in North America,
- To discuss opportunities that arise from the adoption of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20), and
- To identify strategic areas of collaboration, possible expansion of the network (e.g., to include trade unions, local authorities and other stakeholders), and next steps.

Significant outcomes of this meeting included:

- The formation of a Strategic Working Group on Sustainable Production and Consumption in North America, with the aim of continued coordination to advance this issue
- The identification of actors and communities to include in the expansion of the network and to interview about how sustainable production and consumption relates to their activities, specifically:
 - Private sector
 - Faith groups / networks
 - Canadian Government
 - Education for Sustainable Development networks
 - Local governments
 - Insurers
 - Financial Institutions
 - Media
 - Marketing (e.g., Climate Nexus)
 - Youth, children, young professionals, students
 - Funding organizations / networks

- Organizations focused on poverty alleviation and natural resources
- Environmental justice organizations and networks
- Issue based / identity /multi-stakeholder groups – (food, poverty); (climate change) – Communities of Practice
- New Economy / Solidarity Economy networks and organizations
- Social economy groups
- A number of opportunities for possible joint activities were identified, specifically:
 - Convening a multi-stakeholder **North American Sustainable Production and Consumption Workshop** to build on the 2008 Washington DC and 2011 Ottawa, Canada workshops hosted by the Canadian and US Governments and UNEP’s Regional Office of North America,
 - Further developing a **North American Sustainable Production and Consumption Framework**, including the regional implementation of the 10YFP on SCP,
 - Developing and populating a **North American portal on the SCP Clearinghouse** to be launched by UNEP DTIE in January 2013 with initiatives, actors, concepts, activities, and events,
 - Influencing the governance and structure of the **10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production**, including:
 - Advocating for stakeholder involvement (e.g., on the Board),
 - Defining the process for selecting and the role of stakeholder focal points, and
 - Recommending that the Trust Fund includes earmarked funding for stakeholders.
 - Providing feedback on **the 10YFP on SCP programmes template** developed by UNEP DTIE, and considering ways of becoming engaged with the 10 YFP Programs as they take shape,
 - **Submitting 10YFP proposals for SCP programmes**,
 - Participating in the definition of the **Sustainable Development Goals**, including the possibility of a stand-alone goal on sustainable production and consumption as well as on integrating SCP approaches throughout the goals,
 - Supporting collaboration on **Life Cycle Assessment activities** including International Guidance on Product Category Rules and proposing a new international cooperation platform on LCA under the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production,
 - **Translating sustainable production and consumption Concepts** for the following communities to make the 10YFP and related concepts and terminology relevant to them:
 - **Federal Government officials**, many of which don’t use the term SCP but are engaged in activities that are related to sustainable production and consumption,
 - **Private sector** representatives, including small and medium sized businesses and the World Economic Forum
 - **Environmental justice groups and networks**,
 - **Green, social and new economy initiatives**,
 - **Educational institutions** (including greening schools and engaging higher education) to offer sustainable consumption and production values and knowledge, and
 - **Cities, local governments** and sustainable cities initiatives,
 - Identifying **financial support and funding** for research and stakeholder activities,
 - Using existing international activities such as the **Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, Earth Day, World Environment Day, and the UNEP Food Waste Campaign** to communicate the SCP message and engage others, and
 - Supporting the development of **positive, compelling, integrative narratives** on sustainable production and consumption – new stories that challenge the status quo, redefine the American Dream, the ‘good life’ and ‘progress’, and are attractive and

hopeful.

Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI) 3rd workshop:
"Challenging consumerism: toward living well sustainably", March 8-10, 2012 at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.

Link to conference website: <http://scorai2012.wordpress.com/>

Link to conference report: <http://bit.ly/Sjtwxe>

The workshop was convened and facilitated by One Earth. The theme was: Challenging consumerism: toward living well sustainably. This workshop had **three objectives**:

- To deepen the knowledge base of how systemic changes toward a more sustainable society can take place;
- To assemble the empirical findings from local practices in sustainable well-being that are being demonstrated in localities across North America and internationally;
- To examine the above findings through the lenses of critical theory, policy making, business strategy, technology assessment, sustainability education, and others, with an eye toward identifying those that have potential for mainstreaming and promoting systemic change.

Burning issues and areas that need to be explored further:

- What does this emergent new/green/sustainable economy represent in terms of jobs, investment dollars and actual money flows in the economy?
- We need to develop business cases for supporting policy changes
- How do you mandate incentives for reduced workweeks?
- We need to "rethink, reduce, reuse" upstream, since 97% of material and energy waste occurs at the production stage
- We need to identify the leverage points that can affect change in the production and consumption system
- There needs to be more research around social inequities
- Industry can sell recycling services, but how do you get it to sell source reduction?

Insights from the conference:

- Sustainable consumption is a political issue. Is it appropriate / useful as a term?
- Sustainable consumption and production are one system – they cannot be disconnected.
- Norms, emotions and structures (e.g., trust, social context, social practices and identities, policies, choice architecture, land use & transportation planning, macroeconomic and development paradigms, business models) are critically important in determining individual behavior.
- Individuals are citizens not just consumers. We need to support building citizenship.
- Individual actions become deeper changes when an individual is embedded within a group that reinforces virtuous behavior.
- Collaboration and sharing are key approaches to shifting production and consumption systems – these are encouraged by, for example, creating the culture and architecture for sharing.
- Institutional consumers are powerful in shifting demand and influencing supply chains, for example, through their procurement / purchasing policies.

- Transparency along the supply chain is important.
- We need to move towards building a movement beyond our silos to identify strategic leverage points for interventions, to scale up our efforts, and to achieve big-picture systemic change.
- A balance between organic / emergent approaches and strategic approaches is necessary.
- It is important to look for unexpected allies in building a movement / creating a coalition of the unexpected (marketers, multicultural).
- There is no strong evidence that initiatives / projects in alternative lifestyles and systems of provisioning significantly reduce material consumption and ecological footprints; however, some emergent evidence supports the idea that such projects have other important effects that would be relevant to a transition toward a post-consumer sustainable society.
- Some ways to increase the power of grassroots and other local initiatives is for activists to break down the sectors and project silos and to engage in hybrid projects that include multiple activist organizations, local businesses, policy makers, politicians and others.
- Food is a powerful entry point for engaging people on sustainable consumption & production.
- A positive approach and vision is necessary for motivating and spurring social change (regenerative vs. limits, 'more of what matters', mindfulness, satiability, value). This requires proper framing, new narratives, stories and making a business case for change – how can we support the transition to sustainable consumption? What frames and messages work?
- Empirical evidence shows that we, in affluent countries and at the global scale, are over consuming; there are US survey results that support our work in shifting from overconsumption – a majority of US survey respondents agree that the country would be better off if they consumed less.
- Keeping in mind that profound social changes have long latency periods, it would seem that relatively little has been accomplished in North America over the past decade in terms of reducing personal consumption, lifestyles changes, and institutional and political shifts.
- We need to focus on the quantity of how much we consume (monitoring for absolute reductions in footprints) to complement the current focus on quality (eco-labeling, certification).

Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI) 2nd workshop: “Socio-technical Transitions, Social Practices, and the New Economics: Meeting the Challenges of a Constrained World”, Mountain Lakes House, Princeton, New Jersey, USA, April 15-16, 2011

This workshop had the aim of bridging three distinct approaches to research on sustainable consumption. In the first instance, work on socio-technical transitions emphasizes technological innovation and diffusion and the co-evolution of technologies, societal institutions, and culture, but is relatively silent on economic and political context and the nature of technology-human behavior interactions. In contrast, work on social practices centers on the mutual interactions between technology and ordinary daily human behavior and examines how more resource-intensive social practices emerge in response to technological innovations, but scholars pay less attention to the evolution of new technologies from a complex system perspective or issues pertaining to prevailing economic or political contexts.

From yet another angle, studies in the political economy of consumption give prominence to the institutional factors that shape prevailing modes of consumption, but this work in the so-called “new economics” has to date devoted much less attention to the role of technology. The workshop sought

to forge intellectual bridges among these three perspectives, with the goal of enriching each one through novel framings, new analytical lenses, and development of a shared language.

Green Economy Multi-stakeholder Dialogue -- 2 February 2011, Ottawa, Canada

The North American Roundtable on Sustainable Production and Consumption (NARSPAC) hosted a workshop dialogue on the green economy. The workshop was co-hosted by Jeffrey Barber, Executive Director, Integrative Strategies Forum and Philip Vergragt, Senior Associate, Tellus Institute, and was facilitated by Vanessa Timmer, Executive Director of the One Earth Initiative Society. The workshop was held in Ottawa at the headquarters of the Canadian Environmental Network, one of the four founding networks of NARSPAC.

The purpose of the workshop was to bring together Canadian and United States government, United Nations, academia and civil society representatives as active members of the sustainable consumption and production (SCP) community and create a shared understanding of what is commonly referred to as the green economy.

Link to Green Economy Workshop report: <http://bit.ly/WJL1dt>

Key Priorities:

- **Reformed Financial System:** increased regulation, with emphasis on regulation, risk mitigation and smarter pricing, as well as the elimination of subsidies that creating an unequal playing field for green solutions.
- **Smarter metrics:** moving beyond GDP, measuring wellbeing differently;
- Infrastructure and markets: putting a price on carbon, increased investment in the renewable energy sector; and
- **Reframed values & paradigm shift:** from growth to degrowth, innovative ideas like a reduced workweek, new education models, focusing on equity, a strong social safety net, and an overall focus on well-being.

Key Recommendations:

- **More Workshops:** NARSPAC committed to hosting future workshops on the green economy, encouraging participants to spread the word in their networks about the value of these discussions.
- **Listserv Collaboration:** a number of participants expressed interest in starting and utilizing a green economy working group email listserv, wherein participants at the workshop could remain in contact and collaborate on spin-off initiatives.
- **Green Economy Newsletter:** it was suggested that the group produce a series of writing projects stemming from ideas put forth by the participants, either in the form of a newsletter, a series of journals collections, or other various written products.

North American Workshop on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) and Green Building -31 January – 1 February 2011, Ottawa, Canada

The Government of Canada (led by Environment Canada), the United States Government and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) hosted the North American Sustainable

Consumption and Production Workshop on Green Building at the Minto Suite Hotel in Ottawa, Canada (January 31 – February 1, 2011); it was convened and facilitated by One Earth. This was the second North American regional meeting on sustainable consumption and production, building on the first workshop held in Washington, DC, U.S.A, November 6 and 7, 2008.

The goal of the Ottawa workshop was to convene a multi-stakeholder dialogue promoting bi-national collaboration on green building as an important application of international sustainable consumption and production (SCP) efforts, particularly towards the development of a 10-Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) in support of regional and national initiatives for sustainable consumption and production.

Link to the workshop report: <http://bit.ly/VFK1HX>

Key Recommendations:

- 1. Sustain a lifestyle assessment database** through building industry awareness, making 'IT' Real, approaching the PMO of CEQ to affect tri-lateral meeting, and meeting with Chambers CAC and Industry Associations.
- 2. Create /sustain sharing of best practices and accelerate collaboration** through continuing conversations with industry associations to communicate issues to industry groups, working with governments to refine true target, creating online platform / clearinghouse (3rd party case studies), and sharing best practices from other countries.
- 3. Support / learn / accelerate green building innovation in cities** through convening meeting between GSA and municipalities regarding PULSE and other energy management companies, coordinating the program "Road to Rio, creating a Conference on Sustainable Development where cities can showcase their initiatives (US Green Building Council is starting to consider such an initiative), following up with FCM (re: emerging showcase program), collaborating with US Conference of Mayors on a conference (future FCM event?), and consider the peer-to-peer charette concept.
- 4. Transform building codes and standards to an outcomes focus** through a "Concept Code" (develop; determine a location for the 'playground'), forming mechanism for sharing "accepted exceptions", engaging with the ten groups (see report), comparing Canada / US rating standards, developing performance measurement framework, and assessing / sharing highly rated green buildings.
- 5. Financial drivers and levers to accelerate green buildings** through the education of Stakeholders, building on existing - PACE, Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), and marketing Strategies.
- 6. Zero Energy Housing (US) and Equilibrium Housing (Canada) initiatives, across hot and cold climates** through establishing an action group to bring key partners together, identifying gaps and opportunities for collaboration, looking for early adopters and innovators, and setting visions / milestone targets.
- 7. Informing UN CSD (the 10-Year Framework of Programmes) and beyond**
 - Progress towards developing a draft North American SCP vision and framework was discussed, and the topic of green building could be an interesting and high-leverage entry point for such a regional framework. This would be a useful contribution to the 10YFP as Programmes are implemented after the UN's 19th CSD.

- Innovative ways of convening that include dynamic, interactive, adaptive and engaging sessions and activities like a “world/collaboration café” tap into the collective intelligence of participants, build collaborations, stimulate breakthrough solutions, and provide concrete inputs to current research efforts.
- The idea of putting a “big name” behind the need to transform current consumption and production patterns (like a greener life show with Oprah Winfrey) could help educate people and elevate the issue.
- Perhaps one way to give life to the term SCP is to focus on wellbeing, and explore other issues starting from that particular entry point.
- Improved coordination and coherence within governments around SCP, and to align scarce resources with priorities.
- A distinction needed to be made between “Framework” and “Programmes”, and that neither was currently defined explicitly.
- Potential of relevant UN agencies to lead on sustainable consumption and production is not fully realized, and could be explored in the context of the Rio+20 themes.

Inaugural Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative (SCORAI) Workshop: “Individual Consumption and Systemic Societal Transformation”, Clark University, Worcester, MA, USA, October 2009

Scientists, academics, and practitioners from across North America met at Clark University on October 15-17, 2009 to explore approaches and the potential impact of sustainable consumption at the individual and household level. The aim of the gathering was to design a coherent North American research program, to forge connections between scholars and communities of practice, and to contribute to the ongoing policy dialogue on these issues.

Link to SCORAI: <http://scorai.org>

The North American Multi-Stakeholder Workshop on Sustainable Consumption and Production SCP, Washington, DC – November 2008

UNEP’s Regional Office for North America (RONA) and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) organized the workshop “The North American Multi-Stakeholder Workshop On Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)”, which aimed to discuss strategies to advance Regional SCP Framework in North America. Key strategies to advance SCP in Canada and the USA over the next 10 years included discussing the way forward both regionally and in terms of the global Marrakech Process, preparing the Co-Chair’s summary of the workshop, and how to most accurately frame SCP issues.

Link to the workshop report (pg. 17-22) <http://bit.ly/RkEMlC>

Three high level priorities were identified that would best advance SCP in North America:

- (1) Developing a vision and policy framework to establish SCP as a priority for government, industry and civil society (bureaucracies and individuals would need training in how to think differently about consumption and resource use);
- (2) Achieving a level of awareness of the importance of SCP that would cause behavioral change; and
- (3) Identifying and making progress on critical issues that must be addressed to move toward SCP.

Key Recommendations:

Framing SCP Issues:


- Further develop the conceptual framework of SCP, its meaning, benefits and actions required of stakeholders in order to help gain broader understanding and support for it.
- Prepare scenario analysis on what a sustainable world and sustainable lifestyle would look like and how SCP would help achieve it.
- Consider formulating an SCP element focusing on demand side programs for both governments and business, e.g., criteria for governments to apply when purchasing goods and services and businesses to use when reinvesting in its manufacturing base.
- Conduct an analysis of how SCP links and can contribute to greening approaches to help overcome the current economic downturn and the climate change problem.
- Make a concerted effort to develop metrics to measure the progress towards SCP, both for the design of the framework of policies and incentives and to monitor their subsequent effectiveness in achieving SCP.
- Collect the work and visions of different stakeholder groups on SCP.
- Provide greater information to the public on sustainability choices.
- Compile and publish SCP success stories, lessons learned, best practices and their potential replicability.
- Make a greater effort to explain work on the demand versus supply side.

Work in Various Economic Sectors:

- Establish an independent or authoritative groups or organizations to assess the life-cycle impacts of products.
- Explore the possibility of developing commitments to SCP targets within sectors, such as the aluminum production, electricity generation, mining and other resource sectors.
- Examine and make use of the sectoral analyses contained in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Poznan meeting documents addressing the greenhouse gas emissions from electricity grids, steel, cement and chemicals industries.

Other Specific Action Items:

- Establish a group or task force to look into specific issues, such as ways to reduce the proliferation of product labels.
- Develop a website analogue to the election-related factcheck.org, like a lifecyclecheck.org that could help inform citizens about issues, such as organic vs. local, organic cotton vs. bamboo.
- Promote relevant analytical work on consumption and production together
- Seek to identify how the SPC work can be related to the other discussion topics—transport, chemicals, waste management and mining—at the upcoming CSD 18-19 cycle sessions.
- Link SCP efforts to the UN Millennium Development Goals, to poverty reduction and the needs of developing countries
- Create a draft template of SCP programs and ensuring more involvement of stakeholders in that effort.
- Create a multi-stakeholder expert advisory group in advance of a next workshop tasked with identifying potential participants and working on developing a draft SCP vision for North America.
- Create an interactive online forum for exchange of information and collaboration, which would allow discussions of regional SCP issues to continue in the interim.




Experts' workshop convened by the North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance (NASCA): "Towards a North American Framework for Achieving Sustainable Production and Consumption", Washington, DC, USA, May 31 - June 1, 2005.

The [North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance \(NASCA\)](#) and [Integrative Strategies Forum](#) hosted a regional multi-stakeholder workshop to discuss and report on what is happening in North America to promote sustainable production and consumption. One objective of the meeting was to develop a regional framework to improve cooperation and effectiveness. Another function of this meeting was to provide citizen input into the upcoming International Experts Meeting on SPAC to be held in Costa Rica in September 2005.

Link to statement: <http://bit.ly/TgXsLc>

Key ideas:

- North America has a unique opportunity and responsibility in taking the lead on sustainability
- The impacts of North America's production and consumption patterns are felt around the world
- To improve the quality of life for ourselves and our neighbors, we must better understand, monitor and alleviate these impacts and the unsustainable patterns driving them
- We need better ways of measuring progress
- A movement is afoot to change our patterns of production and consumption
- Citizens: need to improve their knowledge and understanding about the environmental and social impacts of their consumption and production choices
- Business: needs to adopt socially and environmentally responsible measures and standards, policies and practices
- Investors: need to use their power as shareholders to pressure companies to develop socially and environmentally responsible systems and products
- Educators: need to include sustainable production and consumption in academic curricula
- Researchers: need to track and assess trends on material flows and impacts, consumption trends and sustainable product design and production processes
- Public interest groups: need to build greater public knowledge, capacity and demand for more sustainable choices
- Governments at all levels: need to develop and implement policy frameworks, strategies and programs addressing sustainable production and consumption issues and objectives



Strategic priorities for promoting sustainable consumption in North America-- April 2004, Ottawa, Ontario

The [Canadian Center for Pollution Prevention](#) and the [North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance \(NASCA\)](#) hosted an experts workshop on "Strategic priorities for promoting sustainable consumption in North America" in Ottawa, Ontario on April 30th 2004.

Link to the workshop report: <http://bit.ly/REDib7>

Key recommendations:

- Foster partnerships with: Green Communities Association and its members, Federation of Canadian Municipalities and its members, and Canadian Environmental Grant makers
- Have sustainable consumption sessions at key environmental conferences
- Document Best Practices for encouraging sustainable consumption
- Start conducting regular teleconferences
- Ensure the sustainable consumption and production database is easily searchable for partners

Strategic Priorities for Promoting Sustainable Consumption in North America—January 2004- Washington, D.C.

The [Worldwatch Institute](#) and [North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance \(NASCA\)](#) organized an experts workshop on "Strategic Priorities for Promoting Sustainable Consumption in North America" in Washington DC on January 27th 2004. The workshop aimed to advance the process of developing a concrete, constructive, and collaborative strategy for promoting sustainable consumption in North America. The participants, including both NGOs and charitable foundations, discussed possible initiatives in the fields of government initiatives, industry targeted activities, purchasing, communicating and promoting sustainable consumption. As a next step, the participants suggested building on the Sustainable Consumption database created by NASCA.

Link to the workshop report: <http://bit.ly/TAZRST>

Key Recommendations:

- Determine participants' interest in and commitment to the activities or actions discussed in the "Open Space" exercise:
 - **Government Initiatives:** Work to make sure that the federal government supports comprehensive product labeling, raises consumers' awareness about products (manufacture, composition, environmental impact, etc.), and protects consumers' right-to-know.
 - **Industry:** Campaign to make Wal-Mart more sustainable (socially, economically, environmentally).
 - **Purchasing:** Green the "big guys" - especially government and retailers. Target specific entities for campaigns.
 - **Communicating:** Develop a message about sustainable consumption that is concrete, actionable and positive. Select appropriate messengers: use new media (Internet) and pop culture to spread the message. Incorporate sustainable consumption into formal education/training curricula.
 - **Promoting Sustainable Consumption:** Promote multi stakeholder dialogue. Promote working groups and networks. Create concrete pilot projects. Identify common interests, opportunities and obstacles. Organize a national meeting/conference. Promote a national action plan.
- Expand the NASCA database of SPAC activities and initiatives to make it an even more useful tool to promote collaboration and coordination (see <http://www.p2win.org/main/ns/7/doc/89/lang/EN>). Add metrics to show what the projects listed in the database have achieved, how many people have participated, and what strategies have worked.
- Seek additional funding to conduct a more systematic analysis of trends and activities taking place in the U.S., including an examination of the gaps in communication among groups, the nature of the obstacles they are encountering, and the potential means for overcoming those obstacles.
- Prepare a report on U.S. civil society's accomplishments, challenges, and ongoing efforts to

promote sustainable consumption. Submit this report as a U.S. civil society contribution to the post-WSSD review of national progress on sustainable development.

- Seek funding for a NASCA “strategy summit.” Building upon the ideas discussed during this experts workshop, summit participants will develop a blueprint for a comprehensive national strategy around sustainable consumption. They will also produce an action plan for U.S. NGOs that spells out their roles and responsibilities in the strategy implementation process.

North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance Workgroup Meeting-- June 12-14, 2002, Montreal, Quebec

June 2002: The Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention and Environment Canada (C2P2) hosted the second meeting of the North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance (NASCA) Workgroup. The first objective of the meeting was to formulate strategic plans to move the issue of sustainable consumption in North America forward from a macro and micro perspective. The second objective of the meeting was to consult with North American organizations active in sustainable consumption on a path to move sustainable consumption onto the North American political agenda.

Link to the workshop report: (pg 12) <http://bit.ly/TgILaW>

Key Recommendations:

- Setup a website and list serve by Sept 2002
- Supply a summary of their organization’s sustainable consumption activities by July 2002
- Provide a paragraph for the eight potential projects that outlines the existing research on the project and key action items/plans associated with the project by July 2002
- Draft a proposal on conducting a survey of the North American sustainable consumption activities July 2002
- Meet with funding agencies to discuss the plate of eight NASCA projects.

North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance Planning Group—October 11-12, 2001, Lowell, Massachusetts

The Lowell Center for Sustainable Production at the University of Massachusetts Lowell hosted the inaugural meeting of the North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance planning group. The objective of the meeting was to bring together key people who are actively involved in promoting sustainable consumption in Canada, Mexico, and the United States in order to begin developing a plan for working together more collaboratively. The United Nations Environment Programme assisted in the development and design of the meeting, which was inspired by UNEP’s initiative to organize and support sustainable consumption roundtables worldwide.

Link to the workshop report: <http://bit.ly/TVMJ5x>

Objectives:

- Selection of a formal name for future collaborative efforts: "the North American Sustainable Consumption Alliance";
- Preliminary discussion of core Alliance objectives and activities;
- Identification of possible next steps for the Alliance and for individual organizations;

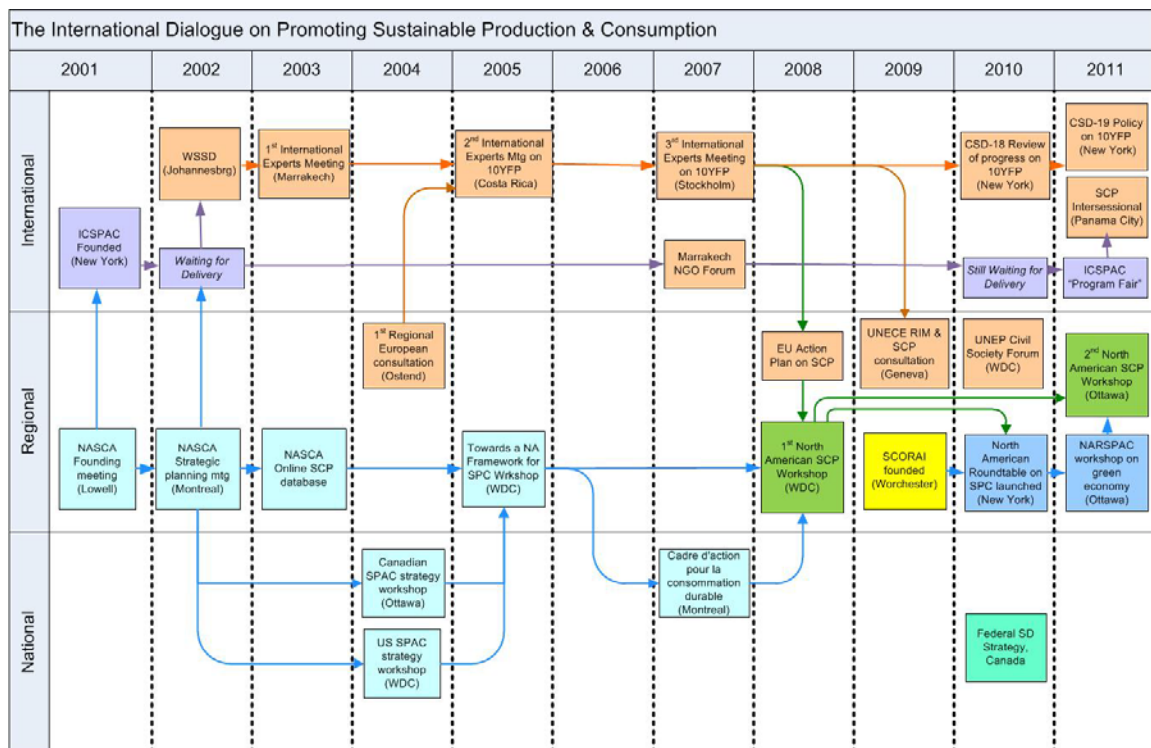
- Identification of possible additional key stakeholders to be included in further discussions about the Alliance; and
- Commitment to participate in electronic discussions and future meetings to refine the Alliance's objectives and strategies.

Key Recommendations:

- Working toward a common North American vision from the three country visions; 11
- Defining a policy framework for sustainable consumption and standardizing sustainable consumption language;
- Participating in the RIO+10 consultation process by issuing a white paper on the North America's progress in the area of sustainable consumption;
- Organizing or sponsoring conferences and workshops (e.g., co-sponsoring a sustainable consumption issues forum with SPAC);
- Examining the links between NAFTA and sustainable consumption and engaging the CEC in discussion around this issue;
- Developing and disseminating sustainable consumption case studies;
- Conducting or sponsoring comparative research on sustainable consumption obstacles and successes in all three countries; and
- Involving youth, media, and celebrities in sustainable consumption initiatives.



Overview of sustainable production & consumption-related initiatives at the national (Canada & USA), regional and international levels:



Source: Jeffrey Barber, Integrative Strategies Forum



Additional Resources:

- UNEP Marrakech Process: 10YFP Report: <http://bit.ly/SloVKT>
- Sustainable Consumption and Production: A Draft Canadian Framework Prepared by Five Winds: <http://bit.ly/P66oCs>
- Sustainable Consumption & Production, January 2011. Prepared by One Earth: <http://bit.ly/TVMJ5x>
- International Processes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, UNEP <http://bit.ly/TB0D2n>
- Paper 1: Background on SCP in the Context of North America: <http://bit.ly/P3vMss>
- Paper 2: A Regional Overview of Initiatives and Strategies Promoting SCP (and appendix): <http://bit.ly/RhpXHU>
- Paper 3: SCP Perspectives on a North American Vision: <http://bit.ly/TVJXwU>

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<http://scorai2012.wordpress.com/scorai/>