The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) or Rio+20 is being organized in pursuance of General Assembly Resolution 64/236. The Conference will take place in Rio de Janeiro Brazil in 2012 on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the 10th anniversary of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg.

The objective of the Conference is to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development, and address new and emerging challenges. To this end, the focus is on two themes:

(a) A green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and

(b) The institutional framework for sustainable development.

Contribution and Role of Regional Commissions:

1. Analytical Inputs to the documents prepared for the Preparatory Meetings and the Rio+20:

Regional Commissions are providing at least three rounds of inputs that will feed into the preparatory process:


b. Inputs for the Secretary-General’s report for the 2nd meeting of the Preparatory Committee on 28 February- 4 March.


d. Inputs for the Third Intersessional tentatively scheduled in March 2012 (Deadline 31 December 2011).

e. In addition, Regional Commissions are contributing to other substantive processes including the UN system-wide paper on Green Economy being produced by Environmental Management Group (EMG).
In providing the inputs as above, Regional Commissions will draw upon the analysis undertaken at the regional level on the issues addressed by the Conference. Many of the Regional Commissions have proposed models for development which integrate sustainability as a core element, and these could be used to guide the global debate. In addition, as chairs of the Regional Coordination Mechanisms, Regional Commissions would also benefit from analytical and normative inputs from the entire UN system through Environment Working Groups of the RCMs.

2. Providing the Regional Voice into the Global Process:

As the regional arms of the United Nations, Regional Commissions will be organizing the Regional Preparatory Meetings for the Rio+20 in the later part of 2011.

3. Building capacity of government policy makers to contribute more effectively at the global level:

In addition to providing regional inputs into the global process, the regional preparatory meetings and other regional intergovernmental processes have a more important function. They serve to improve understanding among policy makers in the different regions, on issues which are most critical and important for the region. They also help to build solidarity at the regional level and a common understanding on the key issues, which would allow stronger and more coherent representation of regional perspectives at the global level.

4. Follow-up to the Rio+20:

Regional Commissions are ideally placed to follow-up on the outcome of the Rio+20. The outcome would need to be adapted and structured to fit regional specificities. In addition, responsibilities should be allocated among the UN entities to support countries in the implementation of the outcome document of the Rio+20.