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European Economic and Social Committee



The EESC delegation in Rio  
19-22 June 2012



European Economic and Social Committee

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Be sustainable  
responsible

European  
civil society  
on the road to  
**Rio+20**

EN

## The European Economic and Social Committee

The **European Economic and Social Committee** (EESC) is the advisory body in the EU institutional set-up representing European civil society. It is composed of representatives from employers' organisations, trade unions, various interests groups coming from the EU member states. We adopt opinions concerning the whole range of European policies and act as a vibrant forum for European civil society dialogue, ensuring broader democratic legitimacy and greater effectiveness of the European Union.

Engaging people for a sustainable development in Europe and globally lies at the heart of the EESC work programme. In our view the Rio+20 Conference has to result in viable political commitments that place sustainable development at the centre of global policy making. Civil society plays a vital role in pushing for and living up to such political commitments by enabling participation from the ground up and securing ownership.

Based on an intensive civil society dialogue the EESC contributed to establishing the EU's position on Rio+20. In February 2012, the major EESC conference *Go sustainable, be responsible! European civil society on the road to Rio+20*, sent out a list of messages to take on board at Rio+20 and called on our political leaders to step up their efforts to arrive to an ambitious outcome at the UN conference.

At international level we are discussing Rio related topics and our messages with our counterparts in various parts of the world – including civil society representatives in Brazil, China, Russia, India, South Africa (BRICS) and the ACP region.

### EESC activities in Rio

**19 June – 9.30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. \***

#### What is at stake at Rio+20? Recommendations from Brazilian and EU civil society

6th Meeting of the EU-Brazil Civil Society Round Table. Joint event of the EESC and the Brazilian Council for Economic and Social Development (CDES).

**19 June – 3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. \***

#### EU-BRICS Civil Society Meeting - Dialogue for Sustainable Development

Joint event of the EESC with Economic and Social Councils and similar institutions from the BRICS countries.

\* **Venue:** National Confederation of Trade in Goods, Services and Tourism  
Av. General Justo, 307 – Centro 20021-130 – Rio de Janeiro

**21 June – 11.15 a.m. to 1.15 p.m.**

#### Civil society taking global responsibility: Models of civil society participation in sustainable development from local to global level

EESC side event on sharing experiences concerning civil society involvement.

**Venue:** EU Pavilion, Athletes' Park

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## Our key messages to the Rio+20 conference

- At Rio world leaders must commit to a **concrete action plan** leading to sustainable development and poverty eradication within the limitations of the planet.
- **Promoting an inclusive green economy must be part of an overarching sustainable development strategy**, striking a balance between social, ecological and economic aspects while achieving distributional and intergenerational equity.
- **Eradicating poverty and secure access to enough food, clean water and sustainable energy for all must be a top priority on the Rio+20 agenda.** Governments must deliver on their commitment to meet the Millennium Development Goals.
- **Rio+20 should put emphasis on the social dimension of sustainable development.** Increasing social and wealth inequalities within and between countries require urgent action. A just transition to sustainable societies must guarantee gender equality, youth employment, decent work and high-quality jobs for the workforce and social security.
- **Rio+20 must lead to a green economy roadmap with specific goals, targets and actions and monitoring mechanisms.** World leaders should launch in Rio a process to establish by 2015 a set of global Sustainable Development Goals.
- **A robust institutional framework for future global sustainable development must be established** by a reinforced forum for Sustainable Development and by up-grading UNEP to a new UN agency for the environment. Both of these bodies should provide for effective involvement of civil society, as represented by the Major Groups.
- Political leaders have to agree on **additional measures to improve effective civil society involvement**, including legal and institutional frameworks such as the Aarhus Convention and multi-stakeholder fora such as Economic and Social Councils and Sustainable Development Councils.

### The EESC delegation in Rio

- Staffan Nilsson, EESC president
- Brenda King, EESC member
- Lutz Ribbe, EESC member
- Hans-Joachim Wilms, EESC member

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