

**Workers and Trade Unions Major Group lead discussant statement to High Level Political Forum plenary segment on review of SDG12, delivered on 12 July 2018 by Julius Cainglet (FFW Philippines)**

1. The guide questions given to discussants prior to the session pretty much sums up our general critique as to what hinders the achievement of Sustainable Consumption and Production. It asks: How can effective partnerships be promoted to engage key stakeholders, such as corporations and consumers? Chair, Dear delegates, corporations and consumers hardly make up “key stakeholders” in this case. Workers and their trade unions for one, who provide the labor in the manufacture of goods, who extract or grow the resources to provide raw materials and services; and the peoples and their communities where these resources are extracted or where industrial waste will go, will be left behind the farthest, if not left for dead, should SCP discussions and decisions exclude them.
2. Inclusion means among others, that governments should fully recognize and protect workers' rights, in particular, the right to form and join trade unions, do collective bargaining and social dialogue, receive living wages, be entitled to social protection and enjoy humane working conditions. Workers are exposed to the physical and chemical hazards in industries that compromise their life, safety and health. Communities affected by mine disasters continue to suffer the impacts to their health and local ecosystems decades after the incidents. Women and children are most vulnerable to these changes in the environment. They should all be allowed to freely organize. The fundamental principles and rights at work and international labor standards set out by the ILO should provide a framework to address this, leading to a more fair and less unequal society.
3. Could we regulate profit? Over-extraction and overproduction in the name of profit has leached chemicals to our land, water, soil, and air, and has poisoned ecosystems and cost lives and health. Profit is also shaping global consumption. What used to be “durables” have become disposable like mobile phones, laptops, and cars, creating mountains of poisonous e-waste. It is not the consumers who drive this unsustainable extraction and production, but the other way around. Consumerism is a culture created out of a need to profit out of overproduction without regard for sustainability and its impacts on the environment. Productivity continues to be measured by how much the workers produce fueling the cycle of overproduction under a neoliberal scheme. Resources and waste should be managed. At the minimum, corporations should abide by the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy including due diligence in the global supply chain.
4. It's a tragedy that “Just Transition” policies and programs have not been integrated into national Sustainable Development plans. “Just Transition” is premised on an inclusive approach that brings together workers, communities, employers and governments in social dialogue to drive the concrete plans, policies and investments needed for a fast and fair transformation towards environmentally sustainable and socially responsible modes of production and consumption. It focuses on jobs and ensuring that no one is left behind in a collective bid to reduce emissions, protect the climate and biodiversity and advance social and economic justice. It builds social protection, provides skills training, redeployment, labour market policies and community development and renewal within a landscape of environmentally driven adaptation of the means of production on which societies rely. Governments must strengthen their capacity to deliver just transition measures.
5. There is major potential for the creation of green jobs, which includes traditional occupations that conserves and sustains biological diversity and also brings in livelihoods to communities and renewable energy jobs.
6. SCP entails transitioning from dirty to safe, clean, sustainable, accessible, affordable and renewable sources of energy that will serve community and local needs.
7. In 2016, renewable energy employed 9.8 million people around the world – a 1.1 per cent increase from 2015. In the last two years, renewable energy jobs in solar and wind have increased by 3.3 per cent. An ITUC study says investing two per cent of GDP each year for

five years in seven major sectors (Energy, Construction, Transport, Water, Agriculture, Forestry and Manufacturing), could generate around 48 million green jobs. The ILO's Guidelines for a Just Transition Towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All is a good guide.

8. SCP must respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life. Production and consumption systems cannot be left to chance anymore and the prevailing trickle down system. Extraction and production for super-profit has to end.

9. SCP should be applied to extractive industries, large chemical producing companies and large-scale agriculture and logging industries that destroy people's sources of livelihood and their access to natural resources that basically undermine people's collective rights.

10. Enacting SCP needs stronger environmental and social safeguard measures that must influence decision making at the onset and be embedded in production including rehabilitation and clean-up. Big transnational corporations should be made to account under the "polluter pays" principle for all their environmental crimes;

11. Poverty alleviation and addressing inequality should be embedded in the principles of SCP;

12. People's issues and concerns should be at the center of crafting innovative solutions and recognize community-based, local and indigenous innovations;

13. Governments are encouraged to steer the shift towards the production of small-scale biofuels and community-based and managed sustainable energy resources;

14. Let us also rethink markets and promote sustainable and resilient business models such as community and social enterprises that promote decent livelihoods and sustainable resource use;

15. Behavioral change is needed to recognize the people's right to a healthy and sustainable lifestyle away from waste generating patterns of consumption;

16. And again we should make the SCP and the development process more inclusive by getting meaningful participation from workers, farmers, indigenous peoples, women, youth and other grassroots constituencies.

17. As we unpack systemic barriers to attaining sustainable consumption and production, we look forward to recognizing the need for development justice with its five transformational shifts: redistributive, economic, environmental, social and gender justice, and accountability to the people.