Environment and sustainable development: Johannesburg World Summit 2002, 10 years after Rio

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The Council welcomed the consensus achieved among Heads of State at the Johannesburg Summit on the Political Declaration and the Plan of Implementation. Eradicating poverty is among the great challenges facing the world today. It is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development to be achieved through a multidimensional approach which mainstreams gender and environmental issues, and ensures access to sanitation, energy, healthcare, education, land and shelter as well as income generating activities based on decent employment and disaster prevention. The Council reiterated its commitment to ensuring coherence between external and internal polices, including its development assistance programmes, in order to achieve these goals. It is committed to halving by 2015 the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, to restoring depleted fish stocks not later than 2015, to establishing representative areas of marine protected areas by 2012, to reducing the loss of biodiversity before 2010, and to reversing the current trend in natural resource degradation as soon as possible. The Council went on to state that globalisation must be made to work for sustainable development, and especially for the poorest, whilst respecting cultural diversity. The EU is committed to the promotion of corporate responsibility, through the effective implementation of international agreements and measures, international initiatives and public-private partnerships. The Council supports the ILO and its on-going work on the social dimension of globalisation. The Council noted the support at Johannesburg for the Doha programmes. The EU is committed to further trade related technical assistance and capacity building and will work towards this end in recognition of the major role that trade can play in achieving sustainable development and eradicating poverty. On financing, the Council welcomed the announcement in Johannesburg by some Member States to ensure additional voluntary contributions totalling $80 million, allowing the third replenishment of the Global Environment Facility to reach its original objective of $3 billion. With regard to follow-up at an international level, the EU will pursue the follow-up to Johannesburg as an inclusive process involving all major groups. The role of ECOSOC must be strengthened. Within the EU, follow-up includes continuing the implementation of the "Water for Life" and "Energy for Sustainable Development" initiatives in co-operation with partners. The Council recognises that in order to achieve sustainable development, sectoral ownership and responsibility is required. It called upon the Council in other settings, in preparation for the spring European Council and the Cardiff Process, to review the Johannesburg commitments within their respective competencies. The Commission is asked to identify key measures to implement the Johannesburg outcome within the Sustainable Development strategy and the Cardiff Process of sectoral integration.