

# What we heard from partners

## Key messages from RIO+ Strategic Planning Workshop regarding the Framing and Agenda of the RIO+ Centre

December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2013

### Focus on changing policies, practices and attitudes

The main objective of the Centre is to contribute to changing policies, practices and attitudes in favour of a sustainable development model.

### Be ambitious and action oriented

The nature of sustainable development challenges and the legacy bestowed upon the RIO+Centre following the Rio+20 Conference makes this both necessary and possible. The Centre should think and aim big and be a true custodian of the sustainable development concept.

### Be bold and honest, expect and embrace controversy

Sustainable development will not accommodate all and not mean the same to all. Recognize the differences, the politics around them and use the Centre as a platform for debate and discussion between opposites that can help inform the debate.

### Place people at the core of its business

Sustainable development is about people and the Centre should stay true to this realization in its various initiatives.

### Focus on a couple of big ticket issues or items

Go for two or three work streams leading to initiatives that make real noise, position the Centre and help to create its brand and identity. Identify the themes according to their capacity to deliver this impact.

### Be driven by impact for sustainable development, not by service or product lines

Rather than following opportunistic trends, the Centre should define its actions, initiatives and streams of activities based on an analysis of barriers to change in achieving sustainable development as well as in function of potential impact on sustainable development policies and practices.

### Reach out and provide space for those who are often not heard

Look beyond the elites and usual suspects, and foster dialogue also with social movements and communities who face enormous challenges with today's unsustainable paradigms. Bring new voices to

the table of the sustainable development debate such as small and medium size companies, social movements as well as citizens who live in poverty.

### Go global

The location and origin in Brazil is a defining characteristic of the Centre – but it should be cautious not to become absorbed in or inward looking at Brazil only.

### Be a convener, connector and coalition builder

Be more than a think-tank, don't just be a repository for best practices as there are many of these around the world. The Centre should aim for change by fostering connections and coalitions for change and exchange.

### Prioritize the global South, but don't reinforce the old North-South dichotomy

A global Southern focus is the natural starting point, recognizing that challenges and opportunities vary also within countries. Initial partnerships with other emerging economies are an important and will give added value to the Centre. Eventually Northern partnerships will be important too.

### Add edge and lateral thinking

Let the “+” of RIO+ be the unexpected, the added perspective, the extra needed pillar of sustainable development, the extra visibility needed to scale up.

### Make the Centre and its operations a model of sustainability and creativity

When the Centre moves into its own premises it should radically show what sustainability means, in energy, recycling, social responsibility and how it organizes its activities. Be administratively and managerially agile and light.

### Connect the dots, be a clearinghouse for knowledge, distil the collective intelligence rather than aiming to be a primary producer

Work on the assumption that the best knowledge and expertise is outside beyond the UN and the Centre, and that the preference is to find, distil and use it for advocacy rather than focus on producing it inside the Centre.

### Be innovative

Use innovation methodologies and technology when relevant, partner with those on the fringes, scout and work out loud. Invest in social media and strategic communications.

### Expand its Governance

Ensure that its governance structure reflects its multi-stakeholder and global vision by bringing to its Advisory and Governing Boards not only Government and the UN but also civil society and private sector representatives from Brazil and the world.