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## Closing Plenary Sessions

### Panel Discussion

## Toward International Collaboration of Green Purchasing

**Co-chairs: Ryoichi Yamamoto** *Chair of International Board (Honorary Chair, GPN, Professor of the University of Tokyo)*

**Konrad Otto-Zimmermann** *Co-Chair of International Board (Secretary General, ICLEI, World Secretariat)*

### "Work of UNDESA on Sustainable Public Procurement"

**Chikako Takase** *UNDESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs)*

In 1999, the United Nations expanded guidelines for consumer protection to include a section on sustainable consumption, and later created the Issue Management Group on UN sustainable procurement. Likewise, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) works on sustainable public procurement in a multitude of ways.

Chapter III of the 2002 World Summit Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) functions as a program for changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. Also contained in this chapter is the 10-year framework, called the Marrakech Process (in reference to Marrakech, Morocco), where paragraph 19 talks of encouraging the relevant authorities at all levels to take public procurement into account when making decisions; although here, within the overall sustainable development framework, it is only referred to as environmentally sound goods and services.

During the first International Expert Meeting in Marrakech, working group discussions on sustainable consumption broadened their scope to include sustainable institutional procurement, such as firms or private schools. The working group called for dissemination of best practices, capacity building and training, and promotion of sustainable production by industries in developing countries. UNDESA has also recognized the necessity for an information database, such as the GPN database, and information on the ICLEI website.

### "International Green Purchasing Networks: US Role"

**Julie Shannon** *US Environmental Protection Agency*

Two organizations that are important to US involvement in green purchasing are the North American Green Purchasing Initiative (NAGPI) and the OECD Steering Group on Greener Public Purchasing.

The Commission for Environmental Cooperation initiated NAGPI in 2002, and now has a 25 member steering group from government and NGOs. The goals of NAGPI are to compile and maintain a list or database of green purchasing efforts across North America and supporting tools and policies, and create a unified voice to engage all stakeholders. It has drafted the self-assessment tool "ECO-SAT" for institutional purchasers. NAGPI aims to harmonize green purchasing programs to help build markets for green products and services, which will also benefit of a concerned industry.

The OECD Greener Public Purchasing Steering Group began in 1996 with active participation from about 12 member countries. The OECD is well known to study complex policy issues that benefit all member countries, and avoid the duplication of effort. The group hosts workshops that have brought together up to 100 people, to study institutional issues and barriers to greener public purchasing. Also, a "Council Recommendation" was approved in 2002 concerning the training of procurement officers, developing measures and so forth.

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## <Panel Discussion>

### Panelists :

#### **Chikako Takase**

*UNDESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs)*

#### **Julie Shannon**

*US Environmental Protection Agency*

#### **Jill Michielssen**

*European Commission*

#### **Per Menzony Bakken**

*UNEP (United Nations Environmental Program),*

*DTIE (Division of Technology, Industry, and Economics)*

#### **Kiyau Loo Lee**

*Green Purchasing Network Malaysia*

#### **Ken Sasaki**

*Sendai City*

#### **Hideki Nakahara**

*Green Purchasing Network (GPN)*



A discussion was held about how to promote green purchasing internationally. The Chair Yamamoto proposed the following idea: First of all, environmental disasters we are facing such as 710 ton's carbon dioxide a second, resource extraction, and population increase are serious and we have to tackle them with a sense of impending crisis. Green purchasing is a critical idea and we have to put all stakeholder efforts together on creating an environmental marketplace with a scale of 300 trillion yen and 0.5 billion green consumers.

In the following discussion, the enactment of a proper eco-procurement law would provide guidelines and set targets for greening public procurement, to take into account the life cycle costs of products in order to make green public procurement economically attractive, to share the barriers and their solutions to overcome them, to support and encourage the less advanced countries to introduce green purchasing, and make programs for both institutional purchasers and individual consumers to implement easily. To make a paradigm shift from individual possessions to shared lifestyle was also pointed out from panelists.

The Chair, Otto-Zimmermann summarized the discussion.

Although a minority number of authorities, a minority of local governments are doing green purchasing, there is a lot of potential that others will follow this example and that it will spread until 100% of all the actors in the business sector, at the national level, ministries and so on will introduce green purchasing throughout. The question is how we can accelerate the movement, and how we can build a movement that is even wider than the individual, regional and national movements.

Therefore, the proposal of the organizers of this conference to create an International Green Purchasing Network makes sense. This network allows us to build a network through which we facilitate the exchange of information, so that all the information that is there in bits and pieces that we have heard throughout this conference are brought together and are accessible to everyone, through the Internet or leaflets in several languages, so that actually the information is made available. It is also valuable to share the experiences of purchasers. How are they actually doing it? Where are the hurdles that stand against green purchasing and how can we overcome them? But the key question is how do we make it work at low cost with high efficiency. This is an immediate task to which all of us who wish to take part in the development of this network should think about and contribute to.