



UNEP and Wuppertal Institute found Collaborating Centre

*UNEP Executive Director Prof. Dr. Klaus Töpfer opens the
“UNEP/Wuppertal Institute Collaborating Centre on Sustainable
Consumption and Production”*

“We should not be afraid to wish that everyone in the world became a consumer. The poor need more than food and shelter. They ultimately need to be able to make choices for their material and immaterial well being, just like we all can do so. This is of course an enormous task. We call it the challenge of sustainable consumption and production. And nothing less is the focus of the new Wuppertal Centre” declared Prof. Dr. Klaus Töpfer, the Executive Director of UNEP. Contributing to poverty eradication and sustainable consumption and production will be the focus of the Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production – CSCP. The Centre was founded on 25 November 2005 as a joint ‘Collaborating Centre’ of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy.

The Executive Director of UNEP came to Düsseldorf specifically to sign the Memorandum of Foundation. “We need better science-based approaches to enable developing countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and offer their citizens a normal life with good health conditions, access to clean drinking water, and all basic needs that we here in Germany are used to. Environment and development go hand in hand” said Töpfer.

The new UN Centre builds on the established research activities of the Wuppertal Institute in the thematic area of sustainable consumption and production and cooperates closely with the Institute. For the employees of the Wuppertal Institute, the foundation of the Centre signifies considerable recognition of the Institute’s past collaboration with UNEP. “We feel greatly encouraged to continue our successful path of restructuring in association with the CSCP,” announced Prof. Peter Henricke, President of the Wuppertal Institute. He commented further: “Our research groups take the commitment of the UN Summit in Johannesburg seriously and can demonstrate a good track record of concrete examples in the field of applied sustainability research. For example, the institute has demonstrated that an average household with four persons would only consume 600 kWh a year, if equipped with the most modern and efficient household appliances available on the market. Currently, the same household consumes an incredible 3500 kWh. We cannot go on like this, and luckily we do not have to because efficient appliances reduce the energy costs and the impacts on environment.”

**President and Chief Executive
for Research:
Prof. Dr. Peter Henricke
(responsible)**

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Prof. Dr. Ernst U. von Weizsäcker**

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Mr. Hennicke sees great potential for the prevention of environmental damage and costs through targeted research and development efforts in the poor Southern Countries. “At the Wuppertal Institute, in association with the CSCP, we try to speed up technological and social leapfrogging in the poor countries by using research impulses – in a process built on close partnership.”

The North Rhine-Westphalian Environmental Minister Eckhard Uhlenberg gave his blessing to the work of the CSCP. “We in North Rhine-Westphalia are delighted to support this work. Sustainable behaviour in enterprises, and of consumers, is of enormous relevance if we want to face the challenges of the future. Last but not least, we regard the CSCP as an opportunity to create competitiveness and employment in the NRW business and research sectors,” explained Mr. Uhlenberg.

The Head of the CSCP, Michael Kuhndt, commented on the tasks ahead of the Centre: “As another member of the international community of globally cooperating UNEP Centres, the CSCP has the task of making concrete the goals agreed on at the Johannesburg Summit, of developing action strategies and of implementing tangible projects. A mobile phone, for example, is a product now used all over the world. If one understands how a mobile is produced it becomes obvious that in a sense the whole world is contained in this one product – around 200 suppliers are involved in the production. Sustainable production requires communication between the abundance of players involved and the raising of awareness amongst these players of environmental and social issues. In this area the CSCP wants to make its contribution.”

The CSCP is located in Wuppertal. It is supported by the North Rhine-Westphalian Ministry for Environment, Agriculture and Consumer Protection, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Business and Employment Support Agency, Wuppertal.

Also participating in the Opening Ceremony and wishing the CSCP every success were Peter Jung, Mayor of Wuppertal, Dr. Michael Stückradt, Secretary of State from the Innovation Ministry of NRW, Dr. Hans-Peter Schipulle, from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and Dr. Hendrik Vygen, from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.