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UN agency calls for ‘fundamental change’ in production and consumption



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The world must radically alter the way it produces and consumes materials if genuinely sustainable development is going to take root, the head of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) said today.

Kandeh K. Yumkella, Director-General of UNIDO, told the Nevsky International Ecological Congress in the Russian city of St. Petersburg that countries need to urgently “green” their economies.

“We need a fundamental change in how we produce, consume and exchange goods,” he [said](#). “This is how we can green our economies, our growth strategies and our industries, creating new green jobs, stimulating green investments and encouraging green innovations.”

Mr. Yumkella said this meant switching to more resource-efficient and cleaner forms of production and increasingly using renewable energy to power industries.

“This in turn will improve the efficiency of our energy, material and water use” and promote conservation, he noted.

UNIDO is encouraging businesses to adopt its Green Industry concept, which asks industries – regardless of their scope or location – to continuously improve their environmental performance through such measures as phasing out toxic substances, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and strengthening occupational health and safety.

This week's congress in St. Petersburg is aimed at promoting environmental security among the member nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

It is also hoped that the gathering will help with preparations towards the global summit on sustainable development, known as Rio+20, which is slated to take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June next year.

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