



WHAT'S INSIDE

- COMMENTARY	1
- WHO'S WHO	2
- PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT	
- TURIST VIEWS	3
- MONDAY EVENTS	
- TUESDAY PREVIEW	4
- SUBMITTING to OUTREACH	

"I read OUTREACH every day."



Zehra Aydin-Sipos
Major Groups Focal Point

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THE DIALOGUE SESSIONS: Paradigm for democracy

The U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development's governments/major groups dialogue sessions are fast becoming a model for multisectoral participation at the global level.

While it is little heeded today, the presence of NGOs was considered a vital element when the U.N. was founded in 1945. NGOs were the symbolic representatives of the world's often voiceless people -- the so-called grass-roots. At the U.N. in 1945 they had no real official say.

In the early 90s, as the Rio process occurred, the U.N. recognized 9 major groups as players in negotiating and achieving sustainability. As they always have, NGOs played an essential role in achieving this. The grass-roots were on their way to achieve representation and a real voice in international processes.

The dialogue sessions are taking this role to the next level. Not only are the various non governmental sectors allowed into the conference, but they've been given a primary and equal role to the governments at the negotiating table. This means that governments can no longer ignore the positions of NGOs and other major groups. Indeed, they are almost obligated to adopt them. This both has lightened and complicated the role of governments.

For instance, last year when NGOs made their precedent-setting

proposal for a major groups review of voluntary industry initiatives, and it was backed by trade unions, governments soon came on board.

While seen as helpful by some governments, the NGO presence apparently threatens others. For the last 12 months there have been efforts underway in the ECOSOC to roll back much of the access NGOs have gained since Rio.

NGOs are now asked to queue up only at the visitor's entrance to be allowed into the U.N. NGOs may not be allowed on the second floor at the U.N., which in effect restricts lobbying. There is increasing resistance to the distribution of NGO papers.

Beyond that, and perhaps more important, NGO participation at every U.N. conference is now made an issue. While access is being protected for now by governments which are NGO supporters, what seems to be a growing number of governments have been taking positions opposed to NGO participation.

Such an attempt to roll back to an earlier position is contrary to the entire spirit of Rio, and would in the end cost the U.N. and the international community the very tangible gains in principles and implementation that the dialogue sessions have so effectively shown themselves capable of achieving.

NGOs

The NGO delegation is the biggest and broadest based since 1993, with 500 to 600 accredited NGOs and trade unionists, with at least 35% of NGOs from the South. Groups include a range of long-standing participants like WWF to new groups like Kenya Tourism Concern. The broad range of participation results from the Steering Committee's large outreach operations, partly due to financial support from UK, Sweden, New Zealand and Germany, and partly because NGOs feel that more can be achieved from these meetings. They detect a positive mood, with improved advance planning, and are also gearing up from Earth Summit 3 - of which tourism is a key element.

WHAT NGOs WANT

The first of the NGO's four demands concerns local country involvement, where they want government regulation and planning for tourism at all levels, and local community involvement in all aspects, including employment, training and ownership of tourism enterprises. They support the World Tourist Organisation's work on indicators, and want the CSD to promote a process for deciding on sets of indicators which take into account the scale of tourism development and cultural considerations. They want the CSD to invite public/private/NGO certification initiatives to join in an evaluation process to determine the best procedure for tourism certification and monitoring. The NGOs support the Agenda 21 for Tourism as a policy framework for

WHO'S WHO

and what they want?

a dialogue diary
by Daphne Davies

sustainable tourism. They are willing to participate in a multi stakeholder advisory group to look at its improvement and practical implementation.

TRADE UNIONS

This year the trade union delegation has 25 members from 14 countries. It is the biggest ever, and delegates come from Barbados to India to Tanzania. It is being coordinated by the Brussels-based International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD. The delegates concern at the CSD are lobbying to make globalisation more responsive to environmental and labour concerns.

WHAT THE UNIONS WANT

They are putting forward their general approach that tourism is a web in which workers are both providers of tourist services and consumers as tourists themselves. Tourists workers as providers have a huge potential to influence the behaviour of tourists by giving out information on the importance of sustainable tourism. But they will be arguing that to do so they have to have sustainable workplaces, which means workplaces which respect basic

union rights, like forming trade unions, and being allowed to bargain, must promote employment equality and prohibit forced and child labour. On the other side, union members, often because their unions have fought for them can afford to take holidays, are tourists themselves, and here there is potential to educate them into being 'sustainably responsible tourists'.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

This 31-member delegation is being coordinated by the World Travel and Tourism Council and the International Hotel and Restaurant Association. Delegation members come from the whole spectrum of the tourist industry, from members of national tourist associations, to large travel operators such as Kuoni, to hotel chains such as Accor and Pacific Hotels and Resorts, and it even includes a sustainable tourist consultant. The Delegation's two speakers will be Geoffrey Lipman, WTTC President, and Ken Hine Chief Executive Officer with the IR&RA.

WHAT INDUSTRY WANTS

In the first dialogue on Business and Industry, the delegation is asking for support and participation in the existing Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism. This is a policy framework for sustainable tourism which has been developed with the World Tourist Organisation (another WTO!) and the Earth Council, and lays out a broad framework for action by partners and stakeholders. It will be calling on other groups and NGO bodies to implement it.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

GENDER AND TOURISM:

Women's employment and participation in the tourism industry

Panel Discussion Monday, 19 April 1999, 1.15 - 2.45 pm
Conference Room A

Speakers:

I.A Agung Mas Sua Bali Indonesia
Richard Dewdney, DfID, UK
Sarojinie Ellawela, Woodlands Network, Sri Lanka
Geoffrey Lipman, WTTC
Lara Marsh UNED-UK
Thea Sinclair

Chair: Margaret Brusasco-Mackenzie

This lunchtime side event will discuss a Gender & Tourism report produced by UNED-UK. The speakers will review the key findings of the report and refer to the present global situation. Women's status in the labour market relating to hours of work and wage rates in comparison with their male counterparts is an important issue. Case studies of good practice, potential activities for pushing forward the active role of women in the tourism industry, key policy needs and recommendations will be debated. The other twelve case study authors in the report will also be present at the event.

TUrist Views

by Daphne Davies

No, that isn't a spelling mistake in the title. This daily column will be telling OUTREACH readers about the Trade Unions at the CSD's session on Tourism and Sustainable Development.

So what have trade unionism and tourism in common? The answer is A LOT. Trade unionists can change the face of tourism both as tourist workers and as consumers.

First of all, about 1 out of every 9 workers in the world is employed in the tourist industry, and this will increase. By next year, tourism will generate nearly 200 million jobs, and 11.7% of world GDP. Secondly, tourist workers can be active in changing the views of the tourists they are paid to serve. If they are convinced of the value of creating tourism which supports, not destroys the environment, the battle for greening tourism is half won.

Flight attendants, restaurant workers, travel and ticket agents, musicians, bus drivers - are all part of a vast, untapped pool of promoters of sustainable tourist behaviour, if sustainable tourism programmes were given to these workers. Tourist workers could work with employers on improving their workplaces, by changing water and energy wastes and uses, and recycling waste.

So what's the catch? None. Only that for workers to be involved in sustainable development they must be democratically involved at work as well, and that means being allowed to join unions, and discuss these ideas.

Workers are also involved in the tourist trade as consumers, so with a growing tourist industry, and with unionised workers earning enough to take time off, unions could change the behaviour of their members as consumers as well.

Can work make people poor tourists? Trade unions believe it can. Where people at work feel they don't count, and their rights are not respected they won't be responsible tourists.

Negative consumption patterns are ingrained in the tourist industry itself. It promotes and caters to a 'consumerist approach' to the world, where foods, artifacts and resources are imported and imposed on the host community, for the benefit of these consumers.

Education is one of the keys to changing tourist behaviour. Workers have shown that when they are empowered with knowledge and institutional support, they can change, and become a 'market force' for change. So union members can be 'double agents' for change towards sustainable tourism, both as consumers and providers.

DAILY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Monday, 19th April

9.15am	NGO Briefing Session <i>NGO Steering Committee, CR-A</i>
10am - 1pm	Official Session Introductory Statements. Adoption of the Agenda and other organizational matters. Presentation of the outcome of the work of the Intersessional Ad Hoc Working Groups
10am	<i>Youth Caucus</i> following NGO Briefing Session - <i>Outside CR-A</i>
10am - 12pm	Training Training for NGOs new to the CSD - <i>CR-A</i>
12 - 1pm	Learning Center Foundation for the Future of Youth, <i>CR-B</i>
1.15 - 2.45pm	Side events Discussion on Revitalization of Regional Seas Programme and Implementation of GIWA and GPA - <i>UNEP, CR-1</i> Tourism and Sustainable Development of Small Islands <i>Government of Greece, CR-2</i> Informal briefing on Forests: Preparations for the third session of the Forum by Ambassador Asadi, IFF Co-chair <i>Secretariat/DSD, CR-8</i> Gender and Tourism: Women's Employment and Participation - <i>UNED-UK, CR-A</i>
1.15pm	Southern NGO Caucus Luncheon Meeting <i>U.N. Cafeteria</i>
3 - 6pm	Official Session: Dialogue Segment on Tourism Topic: Industry Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism (Background papers 1-4)
5 - 6pm	Learning Center Global Ocean Processes, Ocean Governance and Sustainable Development <i>Patricio A. Bernal, UNESCO, CR-B</i>
6.15 - 8pm	Side events UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection; Past Achievement and Future Potential <i>Consumers International, CR-8</i> Tourism and Sustainable Development <i>Tebtebba Foundation, Inc., Tourism Investigation and Monitoring Team, and TWN, Church Center</i>
	Caucus meeting Southern NGO Caucus <i>Church Center</i>

DAILY CALENDAR OF EVENTS - CON'T

Tuesday, 20th April	
<p>8.15am <i>Women's Caucus, CR-A</i></p> <hr/> <p>9am NGO Briefing Session <i>NGO Steering Committee, CR-A</i></p> <hr/> <p>10am - 1pm <i>Official Session</i> Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Segment on Tourism Topic: Changing Consumer Behavior</p> <hr/> <p>10 - 11am North American Caucus Meeting <i>CR-A</i></p> <hr/> <p>12am - 1pm <i>Learning Center</i> Sustainable Design: Lessons from Nature, <i>CR-B</i></p> <hr/> <p>1.15 - 2.45pm <i>Side events</i> Presentation on Sustainable Tourism in Mexico - <i>Government of Mexico, CR-2</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Caucus of Older Persons: Tourism and its Impacts <i>Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, CR-A</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Sustainable Tourism <i>Government of Germany, and Touristik Union International, Delegates Dining Room</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Inter-sectoral Cooperation in Promoting Sustainable Tourism <i>The Netherlands Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development, CR-8</i></p> <hr/> <p>1.15 - 2.15 pm <i>Caucus meeting</i> Southern NGO Caucus Luncheon Meeting <i>U.N. Cafeteria</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Northern NGO Caucus followed by Australasia, Eastern and Western European Caucus meetings <i>Church Center</i></p> <hr/> <p>2 pm Fourth International Day to Commemorate the Victims of Unsustainable Production <i>ICFTU, CR-1</i></p>	<p>3 - 6pm <i>Official Session</i> Dialogue Segment on Tourism Topic: Promoting broad-based sustainable development through tourism while safeguarding the integrity of local cultures and protecting the environment</p> <hr/> <p>3 - 4pm <i>Caucus meeting</i> Sustainable Production and Consumption (SPAC) - <i>CR-A</i></p> <hr/> <p>5 - 6pm <i>Learning Center</i> Inter American Development Bank: Youth Liaison, <i>CR-B</i></p> <hr/> <p>6.15 - 8pm <i>Side events</i> Tourism and Mountains <i>Government of Switzerland, CR-1</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">WBCSD's Work on Sustainability with two Company Examples <i>WBCSD, CR-2</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism <i>WTTC and IHRA, CR-8</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Australian Presentation on Oceans <i>Government of Australia, Dag Hammarskjold Library Auditorium</i></p> <hr/> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>Caucus meeting</i> Southern NGO Caucus <i>Church Center</i></p> <hr/> <p>7 pm <i>Bread and Puppet Theater</i> Judson Memorial Church 55 Washington Square South call for tix - 212-254-6230</p>
<p>SUBMISSIONS TO OUTREACH</p>	
<p>OUTREACH will be produced daily during CSD VII. NGO representatives are invited to submit articles and announcements via the following:</p>	
<p>1) E-MAIL: northclear@csdngo.org 2) Labelled 3.5 diskette. Drop off (preferably with print out) at DC2-1764 (Two UN Plaza, 17th Floor).</p>	
<p><i>Feature articles should be NO LONGER than 450 words. Information articles should not exceed 250 words. Deadline for announcements is 4:00 p.m. and deadline for articles is 6:30 p.m. The editorial staff reserves the right to shorten/omit submissions.</i></p>	

