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NEWS

# OUTREACH 1999



Voice of the NGO Community at the UN CSD



"Working Towards Earth Summit III"

LETTER

Volume No. 4 • Issue No. 10 • 22 April 1999 • CSD VII

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**OUTREACH** is published by:

UNED-UK and the Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development.

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## OUTREACH - 99

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The production of OUTREACH is made possible through the generous support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## A challenge from youth to adults at CSD on Earth Day

Commentary by Aron Koleszar

**North Americans make up only 5% of the world's population, yet consume one third of the global resources and produce over half of the world's garbage. The role of consumption is almost the same among the upper classes in all the countries of the world.**

This over consumption, fuelled by transnational corporations, their advertising, and their wasteful practices, is setting an unprecedented example for people world wide that consumption is the path to fulfillment, and convenience is our right.

Conservation biologists and other scientists seem to agree that human consumption, must be reduced to 10% of today's levels for there to be a sustainable future.

Tinkering around the edges will not prevent an oncoming ecological and human crises which will impact most drastically on youth, future generations, the South, the poor, the Earth, and wildlife. We need profound behavioral and systemic change. Half-measures and compromise will just not suffice.

Globalization, increased deregulation and liberalization of trade and investment, which transnational corporations and world governments are pursuing with insatiable vigor are dismantling the few protections that people and the envi-

ronment have. International trade agreements and rules place the rights of capital, investment and trade above people and the environment. Trade must resume its place as something that is done to meet human needs rather than human greed.

I challenge all to consider how much garbage international conferences like this create. If the UN really cares about sustainability, as opposed to talking and writing about it, the UN could lead by example and implement a sustainable consumption program within its own processes and buildings. Zero waste and organic food is possible if the proper level of importance is placed on it.

How can we advocate sustainability with a straight face, while we drink our coffee in disposable cups and water in disposable bottles, eat from paper plates using plastic cutlery, and napkins made from murdered trees.

There needs to be systemic change, bringing about true sustainability, but Can we wait for that. We must simultaneously push for change, and take responsibility for our own over-consumption by changing our personal behavior.

The solutions are available if we also change our values. Remember, reduce (continues on the next page)

## **Reactions to last dialogue on coastal tourism**

### **Trade Unions**

Trade unions were happy with the progress and the level of agreement which had been reached in certain areas: a multi-stakeholder approach, the need to work with local authorities, and the need for voluntary initiatives which would fit into a regulatory framework. They were pleased that there had been support for the union proposals on regulating cruise ships, but concerned that there had not been any response to their plans on holiday planning. The unions stressed that they would continue to push for worker participation at all levels, and were confident that they would achieve their re-

## **WHO'S WHO**

### **and what they want**

*a dialogue diary*  
by Daphne Davies

sults in the long term. Finally they asked the Chair, to ensure that the process that began at the dialogue sessions could continue.

### **NGOs**

The NGOs felt that the positive sense of dialogue at these sessions had shown the importance of dialogue at local levels.

They welcomed the support which had been shown for pilot projects, as practical measure which would provide information on training opportunities. When judging resources and finance, the NGOs said that it was important to recognise the full costs, including both the hidden benefits and the hidden costs of tourist development and its effects on the natural environment. (The

speaker gave the example of destruction of forests.) Again the speaker stressed the importance of accommodating the local community when planning tourist facilities. The NGOs believe that public awareness is critical in sustainable tourism. They called for the establishment of a framework programme in which to plan tourist development.

## **Calling all CSD Sisters!**

Please join us every morning in Conference Room A from 8:45 AM to 9:15 AM (immediately preceding the daily NGO briefing) for the CSD Women's Caucus to share strategies and information as we develop gender perspectives on issues being discussed at CSD -7. Regional reports, updates on text and negotiations, issue briefings and more! We will be there early (at 8:30) to create space for networking and so we can start on time at 8:45.

All volunteers are welcome to help organize daily caucus briefings and presentations.

Need more information? Have some ideas for the caucus? Contact Mita Sen at the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) at (212) 973-0325, [mita@wedo.org](mailto:mita@wedo.org), or just join us in Conference Room A. (CSD brothers, off course, are welcome to join!)

(A challenge from youth... cont.) and reuse come before recycle, and are more effective. More effective still is refusing.

These options may not be as easy as throwing garbage in the trash, and they may take some planning ahead, but if

we (the promoters of sustainability) don't take responsibility for our behavior, how can we expect others to?

## **Human Rights and Sustainable Development: A Reactivated Human Rights Caucus Will Highlight Link**

The Human Rights Caucus is being revived and activated. Organizations with consultative status with ECOSOC as well as NGOs cooperating within the framework of the CSD NGO Steering Committee are encouraged to sign up and participate in the work of the caucus.

A reorganization of the caucus will be held on Thursday, April 22, from 1:15-2:45 at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Church Center for the UN (777 UN Plaza). The main agenda for this reorganization meeting is the election of the co-coordinators for both the Southern and Northern hemispheres. Liberato Bautista of the General Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church is currently serving as interim coordinator for the South. The reorganization of the caucus is dependent on at least ten accredited NGOs actively participating in its work.

At the reorganization meeting, the caucus's statement of purpose will be revisited. A draft mission statement hopefully will challenge NGOs in actively engaging in the necessary work of promoting awareness of the interdependence and interrelatedness of sustainable development and the promotion and protection of universal human rights.

# **“The Below Stairs” side of the tourist industry**

**At the end of the Dialogues, the unions reckon that some gains were made, but much still needs to be done. One area needing positive change is the hospitality side of tourism.**

The luxury hotel industry illustrates some of the contradictions of the tourist industry, with its ‘below stairs’ mentality reminiscent of Victorian England. Behind the scenes of a world where the consumer feels cosseted and important, are the maids, cleaners, cooks, etc working long hours, for low pay, in horrible conditions. This is hidden by a complex web of contracted, and sub-contracted agreements.

In fact there *are* international instruments to protect these workers, such as the International Labour Organisation’s *Convention 172 on Working Conditions (Hotels and Restaurants)*. It was passed in 1991, but so far only 10 countries out of 174 have signed up to it. Next time you visit a luxury hotel (how many Outreach readers are so lucky?) ask yourself if those serving you are allowed to join a union in order to enjoy decent working conditions. If countries passed this Convention, it would go some way towards supporting them.

The good news is that the trade unions and the tourist industry have agreed to meet after the CSD session to consider how to jointly implement the outcomes of CSD 99.

However, these are the not the only workers taking the brunt of poor working conditions in the tourist industry. Others further along the line produce goods, like tourist souvenirs, and products for entertainment empires. These are the workers in the world’s sweatshops in China or Indonesia or Haiti.

Next time you visit a toy or souvenir shop, look at the labels and find out where the goods are made. They were probably produced in a sweatshop, or in an Export processing Zone, which encourage investors with the words “No unions allowed to operate here.”

Operators at the top of the tourism industry must be encouraged to take responsibility this second “below stairs” aspect of the tourist industry.

#### **Culture “lends some soul” in promoting sustainable development**

An unusual proposal from the trade unions

## **TURist Views**

**by Daphne Davies**

greeted enthusiastically by participants at the dialogue sessions, was to use artists and musicians to “lend some soul” to sustainable development. This was backed up with promises of cooperation from the industry group.

#### **Core Labour Standards Supported**

One very positive outcome was the support given in the dialogue sessions for core labour standards in the tourism industry, and for the immediate elimination of child labour. Sustainable workplaces are the key to union engagement in sustainable tourism.

While trade unions did not gain everything we hoped for, we are experienced in fighting for what we want. To paraphrase what one (nameless) world leader said “We look to the future with the experience of 50 years, and with the enthusiasm of the first day”.

*Daphne Davies works for ICFTU*

## **NGO Position in New York**

- Position available as Northern Clearinghouse Director**

Responsibilities include organizing preparations for CSD, outreach to northern NGOs, servicing the Management and Steering Committee, producing publications etc.

Position is based in New York with a salary of US \$30,000.00 plus a US \$6,000.00 benefit.

Persons applying should have a great sense of humor, be proficient in the use of E-mail, desk top publishing, and word processing.

Apply to Felix Dodds by Monday, April 26, 1999 at noon.

## Norway exploring new ways of reporting to the UN: Video presentation of Sustainable Consumption

**The Norwegian Minister of Environment , Ms. Guro Fjellanger, inspired her own ministry to employ modern methods in reporting on sustainable production and consumption.**

She has brought the result, a video, called "Mission Possible" to the CSD 7 to be shown during her stay at the High Level Segment.

### **Breaking Barriers**

One of the major barriers to action on sustainable consumption is a lack of effective communications' strategies to engage key stakeholders in debate and inspire action. At the Consumption in a Sustainable World workshop hosted by the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment in association with UN DESA, the OECD and IIED in June 1998, 50 participants from more than 28 countries North and South recognised that the implications of sustainable consumption are still not widely under-

stood. Action has often been held back by a lack of conceptual clarity, the use of jargon and the tendency to take a moralistic approach. The benefits of changing consumption patterns need to be demonstrated in practical and accessible ways .

### **Upbeat style**

The Norwegian Ministry of Environment commissioned North-South Productions, a UK-based film company and IIED to produce an inspirational presentation on sustainable consumption for this year's CSD. The result is a 10-minute video, entitled Mission Possible, made in an engaging and upbeat style.

### **Mission Possible**

Mission Possible starts by using new ways to present the global consumption crisis, the environmental damage and inequality of current consumption patterns. It then turns to profile two practical examples of change. The first is the

Mumbai Grahak Panchayat, a consumer co-operative in Bombay that provides its members with quality products at reduced prices and cuts waste and transport. The second is the Interface floor covering company, which has a pioneering strategy to close the production and consumption loop. The film also includes interventions from leading commentators in Africa, Europe and the USA, and a series of snapshots on positive policy action.

The first screening of the Mission Possible will be at the High-Level Segment of CSD-7 on Friday 23 April at 2.45 pm in Conference Room 1. During CSD-7, please contact Catherine Rubbens of UN-DESA for more information on 963 5243 or Nick Robins staying at 545 1800. (Copies of the Video are available.)

## Factoring Sustainable Development

**Seldom is a report published that really helps those working on an issue move forward. The report combining case studies on Factors 4 and 10 in the Nordic Countries is a "must read", because it provides an analysis of the main obstacles to achieving these targets in 7 sectors.**

Factor 4 and 10 are resource efficiency targets that the Wuppertal Institute has proved to be technically feasible. One of the most exciting conclusions of the report is that Factor 4 and 10 material efficiency targets cannot be reached solely by technological improvements. The case studies show that eco-efficiency is not enough, but that social and economic elements have to be integrated into sus-

tainable development policy frameworks. The participants in the side-event identified the important role of "gate-keepers"- key players in pushing unsustainable consumption. These are the advertising industry, corporate marketing departments and the financial sector.

A sustainable society is one where all peoples of the world share equitably in the wealth of this earth. It recognizes that the planet's resources are finite, with a limit to its carrying capacity. To make a start towards sustainable societies, using the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, the north has to improve resource efficiency by a factor of 10; southern societies will NOT need to consume less, but they will need

to consume differently.

Ambassador Hanif of Pakistan, current vice-chair of the CSD, made the important point that there is no political will to implement factor 4 and 10, but that these studies could help create this. In the discussion that followed, it was suggested factor 4/10 should not be communicated as just environmental targets but also social and economic ones. An important final point was the need to dematerialize non-material needs such as human security and happiness. This can only be done by changing the value-system of our societies.

*Pieter van der Gaag and Sabine van Graafhorst (ANPED)*

**Education and Sustainable Development**

# **Education is here!**

The NGO Education Caucus met for the first time yesterday in the Learning Centre at 3pm. 10 organisations were represented at the meeting with a goal to strengthen education for sustainable development at CSD 7.

The Secretary General's report on the *Implementation of the International Work*

*Programme on Education, Public Awareness and Training* was considered and comments will feature in future meetings. Any organisation is welcome to join the Education Caucus to support progress towards implementation of the work programme and raise the status of education at CSD 7.

The Caucus also acknowledged the importance of education within the Chairman's summary of the Tourism dialogue segment. Education featured strongly in the dialogue on *Influencing Consumer Behaviour* with the need for formal and informal education and industry-led public awareness programmes.

# **Even hotel people go for sustainable development**

**IH&RA and UNEP publish teaching guide for tomorrow's hotel and tourism managers on sustainable development.**

The International Hotel & Restaurant Association (IH&RA) and UNEP has developed an **Environmental Teaching Resource Pack** aimed at introducing environmental issues into the education and training of tomorrow's tourism professionals.

The teaching guide aims to increase awareness among hospitality management students of the importance of environmentally responsible tourism. Initial IH&RA research for the project concluded that despite overwhelming support for environmental education, a lack of information, expertise and practical teaching tools were major obstacles to its integration into tourism school curricula.

The pack is divided into four inter-related units, each preceded by a study outline and a set of teaching objectives,

and concluding with a series of exercises for practical application of the information covered. The units cover the following areas :

Unit One is "**The global environment agenda**" discusses key environment issues facing individual countries, and the world at large, eg. climate change, the thinning of the ozone layer, biodiversity loss, land degradation and air pollution and so on. The unit also introduces the concept of sustainable development, with examples of action taken to promote it at international level.

Unit Two is "**The framework for environment improvement**" focuses on the scope and enforcement of environmental law, include the precautionary principle the important role of voluntary initiatives in promoting environment improvement in the industry and principles for environmentally sustainable development.

Unit Three has the concept and benefits of "**environment management systems**" (EMS) are introduced. The approach is based on the EMS specifications of ISO 14001 and covers four stages, from assessing responsibility and conducting an environment status review, to developing and implementing an environment management programme.

Unit Four is the teaching pack's final and unit covers the "**sustainable siting, design and construction of tourism facilities**". Aimed at enabling students to assess sustainable building placement and design plans for future constructions, the unit focuses on environment architectural features, environment considerations for the building shell, and on providing for the use of resource efficient technologies and appliances once the building is occupied.

Caroline Harvey gave this information to OUTREACH, but says the teaching pack contains much more.

**Older Persons and Tourism****Older Persons: A Critical Element in Tourism**

In this, the "International Year of Older Persons," it is important to recognize that those over the age of 60 represent a major group and are the fastest growing segment of the world's population. Issues for these individuals, both as travelers and as residents of communities, are suggested in the "Principles of Older Persons" (*A.46191*), a benchmark for progress for this major group.

**No Fraud**

Older persons have an important contribution to make to sustainable tourism. As travelers, particularly from developed countries, they are an increasingly large portion of the billion dollar tourism industry. It is important for the tourism

industry to recognize the diversity of older persons' interests, and health and ability levels. To better serve these and other tourists, efforts should be made by governments and trade organizations to collect age and gender data on travelers. Due to differences in life expectancies, as individuals in this population grow older, women travelers will outnumber men. For all persons, safety in the travel venue and avoidance of fraudulent marketing schemes are important areas for governments and the tourism industry to monitor.

**Include Elders**

Local residents, particularly older persons in developing countries, are fre-

quently the source of information on traditional methods, cultural heritage and belief systems which are of interest to travelers. Preserving these social, cultural and environmental elements is of concern to all parties in sustainable tourism. The voices of elders should be included in participatory tourism-planning processes. With respect to tourism host-communities, stakeholders (NGO's women, youth, indigenous people, older persons, the disabled, and others; should be defined.

*Peter Walker, Caucus of Older Persons*

**Older Experienced Tourists left out**

*The Caucus of Older Persons and Tourism featured talks by Daniel Dowd of Elderhostel, Stephen Salett of the Foundation for the Future of Youth, and Roberto Borrero, a Taino, speaking for the indigenous peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean. The main points in their presentation were:*

**Daniel Dowd** remarked that neither the morning CSD session nor Agenda 21 has recognized older people as a major group. Elderhostel was founded in New Hampshire in 1995, and had then 15 groups. Now it includes 1300 groups worldwide, and served last year 350 000 people. Most activities consist of just sightseeing and staying in hotels. Elderhostel invites clients to learn about the culture of the places of the places they visit and to interact with the people of those places. Recently Elderhostel added to these cultural trips some that have a service component. A variety of activities have been carried out. Some groups have gone to Eastern Europe to teach

English as a second language, some help HABITAT to build houses, some feature intergenerational groups.

**Stephen Salett's** group, which collaborates with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, designed a questionnaire called 'What's the big deal?' asking young people what they thought about tourism. Their responses were varied. Some said it would be beneficial to a few, others that it had negative effects on some, whereas some asserted it had a neutral effect on the community as a whole. When they questioned older people, most of the responses were negative and that tourism affected the young very negatively. Tourism would cause a lowering of moral values, school dropouts and prostitution.

**Roberto Borrero** said that there is some uncertainty as to who are the indigenous peoples. Tourism affects indigenous peoples whose sacred places are visited by strangers who do not always respect the

spiritual values of these sites. Even a few indigenous individuals do not recognize cultural values of artifacts and willingly sell them to curiosity seekers. Older members of indigenous communities are the 'encyclopedias' of their culture, are the keepers of the oral history of their people, transfer their knowledge of water sources, sacred places and sacred rights to the young. These people are often ignored. Borrero said that outside influences often undermine the values of old culture.

Nevertheless, the majority of tourists is soon the largest group of people who have the time to travel and the means to pay for it. Prosperous 'Baby Boomers' are now getting older and will soon make their contribution felt. Then they will be more than just a group of elderly persons: they will be an emerging major group.

*G. H. Aijimo, Caucus of Older Persons*

# New Hope for the World's Fish Stocks

## • *Conference builds more support for MSC initiative*

**Fish has rarely been more popular. Americans ate a record 1.79 billion kilogrammes in 1994. China's consumption has doubled in the last decade. In many countries, there are new and successful chains of seafood restaurants.**

As a major renewable resource, fisheries provide a livelihood for hundreds of thousands of people around the world, sustaining coastal communities and representing a valuable source of income to the global economy. In developing countries, seafood is a vital source of protein.

But now the future of the marine industry, and the livelihoods it sustains, are threatened. The crisis facing the world's fisheries demands urgent action. According to the FAO, 60% of the world's most commercially important marine fish stocks are either fully fished, over-exploited, depleted or slowly recovering. FAO predicts that another 10 to 20 million tonnes of fish could be caught world-wide for direct human consumption through better fisheries management.

Nearly a quarter of the world's entire marine catch is thrown back into the ocean either dead or dying (30 million metric tonnes a year), with the result that some species have been fished to the brink of commercial extinction.

The crisis was the subject of a Conference, held at the UN Plaza Hotel by the Marine Stewardship Council earlier this week, to coincide with CSD7. The meeting was addressed by a range of NGOs, industry representatives, government officials and ministers, including Yolanda Kakabadse from Ecuador. Both Simon Upton, CSD Chair, and Nitin Desai, the Under Secretary General of the

UN, attended a dinner on Monday evening. Three new US industry signatories were announced at a press breakfast the following morning.

We are often told the problem of over-fishing is about access to the sea and arguments about who should get the most. Nations compete for the right to exploit a rapidly diminishing resource. But like all environmental problems, the crisis cannot be dealt with by individual nations alone. Fish do not recognise international borders, and the globalisation of commercial fishing activity has intensified the problem. In fact, nearly half of all fish caught today is traded in the international market place, and fish constitute an increasingly important source of export revenue for many countries.

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) was created in 1996 by Unilever and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). These two multi-national organizations had a shared objective: to ensure the long-term viability of global fish populations and the health of the ecosystems on which they depend. Unilever was motivated by pure commercial imperative - as one of the world's largest buyers of frozen fish blocks, their seafood business depends on sustainable fisheries.

The MSC is now run as an independent international organisation with a range of commercial and NGO supporters. The MSC has developed a set of *Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing* to be used as an environmental standard in an independent, voluntary certification program. Fisheries wishing to seek certification are assessed against this standard. Prod-

ucts from fisheries meeting the standard are eligible to use the MSC logo on their packs, in order to provide consumers with the reassurance that they are not contributing to a major global environmental crisis when they buy fish. Many retailers support the MSC. The MSC expects that, within a year, MSC-certified fish will be available in supermarket chains in several countries.

Last year was the International Year of the Ocean, which helped focus attention on the crisis facing the marine environment as a result of over-fishing. However many key issues were left unresolved. The Seventh Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development is now in the progress. In order to be credible, the CSD must deliver further progress and place the growing concerns about the depletion of one of the world's greatest resources at the core of its discussions on oceans.

The market is currently working against sustainability; the MSC gives the market a crucial perspective for the future, by harnessing consumer power for the benefit of the next generation and beyond. That is what sustainable development is.

(Copies of the MSC's new publication: *Our Empty Seas: A Global Problem, A Global Solution* are available in Conference Room 2)

# Thursday's program

8:45 am	Women's Caucus	CR-A
9 am	NGO Briefing Session NGO Steering Committee,	CR-A
10 am - 1 pm	Official Session High Level Segment Topical focus: Oceans	CR-1
10 am	Learning Center US Earth Day Globe Program , Learning Center	CR-B
10 - 11 am	Caucus meeting Sustainable Production and Consumption Caucus, Election	CR-A
11 am - 12 pm	Corporate Accountability Caucus	CR-A
12 pm - 1 pm	Globe presentation Learning Center	CR-B
12 pm - 1 pm	Caucus meeting Sustainable Community Caucus	CR-A
12 pm - 1 pm	Earth Day Awards Ceremony, UNEP & Earth Day	Pub. Lobby
1:15 - 2:45 pm	Side event: Worldwatch Briefing on Oceans and Materials, Worldwatch Institute	CR-A
1:15 - 2:45 pm	Side event: Getting to Global Sustainable Tourism Principles: Reflections on Tourism and the CSD Process, LEAD International	Dag Hammarskjold
1:15 - 2:45 pm	Side event: Hydro-meteorological Support for SIDS, World Meteorological Organisation	CR-2
1:15 - 2:45 pm	Side event: Southern NGO Caucus Luncheon Meeting	U.N. Caf.
2 - 3 pm	Side event: US Government Briefing with US NGOs	Church C.
3 - 6 pm	Official Session: High Level Segmen, Topical focus: Oceans	CR-1
3 - 4 pm	Caucus meeting: Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems, Election	CR-A
5 - 6 pm	World Bank, The Development Education Programme, Learning Center	CR-B
6 - 8 pm	Southern caucus meeting and election	Church C.
6:15 - 8 pm	Side event: "Down to Earth - Sustainable Consumption in the 21st Century", UNA-UK,	CR-2
6:15 - 8 pm	Side event: Partnering towards Sustainability, WBCSD,	CR-8
6:15 - 8 pm	Side event: Tourism, GATS and Fair Trade, German NGO Forum,	CR-A
6:15 - 8 pm	Side event: Action Strategies for the Year of Ecotourism: creating policies for a new generation of ecotourism programmes Nature Conservancy	Dag Hammarskjold
6:15 - 8 pm	INSNI Meeting	Church C.
Party Time!	Social event: Jazz in the East Village Nuyorican Poets Cafe offers Latin Jazz Jam with Chris Washburne's SYOTOS Band at 10 pm for only 5 \$.	East 3rd. str. Ave A/B

## **SUBMISSIONS TO OUTREACH**

OUTREACH will be produced daily during CSD VII.

NGO representatives are invited to submit articles and announcements via the following:

- 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).

*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.*