

# OUTREACH 2015

*Providing you an insightful lively critical analysis and news*

## EU PRESIDENCY HOPES FOR THE ENERGY CYCLE



STAKEHOLDER FORUM

**Minister Pröll, Austria is currently holding the Presidency of the EU. What is your perception as Austrian Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of this year's CSD?**

This year's CSD is crucial in particular because of the issues we are taking care of: energy, air pollution and atmosphere, industrial development and climate change. Energy features high up on the agenda. The implementation of the MDGs will only be possible through providing access to energy services for basic human needs. In the face of growing energy demand worldwide, we will need to ensure greater energy efficiency, higher share of renewable energy and turn towards more sustainable energy consumption and production. The discussions we are having here on all of the four issues clearly show that all countries alike will have to take action urgently.

**If you say action is urgently necessary, what does the EU believe will be vital steps to promote and expedite implementation?**

Well, first and foremost, we must be aware that we need a long-term integrated approach - that's why we have been discussing for years and years the need for *sustainable* development and that is just as true for the sectoral issues. Promoting one side does not necessarily mean that this might play out favourably for the other. Therefore, bringing in

all parts of society, bringing in a gender perspective, is just as vital for policy-making and implementation.

If you look into each of the issues, there is one element that is true for all of them: turning towards more sustainable consumption and production. This encompasses a lot. It is true for energy efficiency and savings, true for addressing high and increasing transport emissions, true for more sustainable management of natural resources. And then again, poverty eradication requires action to increase access to energy services and tackling indoor air pollution. We must take further our strong commitments for global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and next week in Bonn, the EU will have yet another opportunity to fervently support global response to climate change under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol.

**We always come here to the CSD to talk about deficiencies in global sustainable development and what we can do about them. What makes you sure, Minister Pröll, that these are not only empty phrases?**

This is the reason why we are so strong about our position on a meaningful and effective follow-up to our discussions at CSD. In fact, the EU has been talking about this issue quite for a while internally and is still on to that. During our Presidency we will organise an EU-internal workshop and this is one of the hot topics on our agenda. Over the next year on our way to CSD 15 we will explore opportunities for policy options and review and follow-up and will also seek dialogue with all relevant partners so that for CSD 15 we will be able to come up with long-term, ambitious and realistic suggestions for policy decisions.

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# SECRETARY-GENERAL'S HIGH LEVEL PANEL ON SYSTEM WIDE COHERENCE HOLDS SEMINAR IN NAIROBI ON THE THEME OF 'ENVIRONMENT'

Last week, the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-Wide Coherence held a seminar in Nairobi on environment issues. Although Panelist and former Chilean President Ricardo Lagos Escobar was unable to attend at the last moment, the seminar was attended by Mohamed El-Ashry, Swiss UN Ambassador Peter Maurer, incoming UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner, Pakistani Environment Minister Malik Amin Aslam, and various representatives from UN entities including UNEP, UNDP, WMO, UNESCO, HABITAT and FAO. Various experts on international environmental governance and one representative from civil society also attended.

Recommendations that were made on the issues of coherence in the normative and analytical work of the UN in the field of the environment and the institutional framework for the UN's environment activities included the need for a comprehensive assessment of existing global environmental governance, a strategic review of UNEP and its comparative advantages, and the creation of a new position of UN Under-Secretary-General for the Environment. Other suggestions included the need for stronger leadership, better communication mechanisms, a focus on knowledge generation and scientific assessment and monitoring, the strengthening of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum, more stable and predictable funding, a stronger Environmental Management Group, a swift, direct and effective reporting mechanism to review progress in implementation of policies, and the development of a strong norm and policy setting body with direct links to operational activities. The needs for national ownership and strengthened public participation in development policy-making were also stressed.

On the issue of mainstreaming environment in development decision-making, calls were heard from various UN bodies for incremental change and for further cooperative work between UNEP and UNDP. Others recommended the need for strong environmental expertise with direct links to UNEP in each country office, strengthening implementation of UNEP's Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, and the better provision of technical assistance to developing countries in meeting the 2005 World Summit commitment for developing countries to produce new MDG-consistent national development strategies in 2006. The establishment of sufficient incentives – both nationally and internationally – to correct market shortcomings and to recognize and account for environmental services in development policy and the need for the translation of environment issues into dollar terms were

also proposed. It was stressed that development without environmental care, cannot be sustained. The importance of institution building in order to ensure effective implementation was also emphasized.

Concerns were expressed regarding the links between the Panel's work and that of the General Assembly in its informal consultations on international environmental governance, stressing the need for the Panel's recommendations to emphasize measures to strengthen international environmental governance.

## **The Importance of Environment and Civil Society Input**

Although Panel members have stated that they wish to include the views of stakeholders, many members of civil society have expressed concerns that the process is not inclusive enough. In particular, various NGOs have noted their disappointment that the Panel has allowed few NGOs to engage and that it held its consultations in Nairobi while significant numbers of civil society representatives were in New York for the CSD.

Panelists will hold further meetings over the coming weeks in Islamabad, Geneva, Vienna and Barbados to gather regional perspectives and consider various other themes that are relevant to its work. In order for the Panel's outcome to obtain civil society support, there is an urgent need for greater civil society ownership in the Panel's work. To address this, the Panel should hold civil society hearings covering all three areas of the Panel's work as soon as possible.

The Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-Wide Coherence will provide the vision for UN operational activities for the foreseeable future in the development, humanitarian assistance and environment fields. It must provide a strong environmental message, which addresses the integration of environment with development, the need for strengthened international environmental governance, and better coherence in the UN's normative work in the environment field. The Panel's recommendations must be fed into ongoing GA work on these issues and must not be restrained by a risk of non-complementary outcomes. The Panel's recommendations must be open-minded, bold, ambitious, and realistic. But they must also be comprehensive. It must articulate a vision of the future commensurate with the environmental crisis, which provides the inspiration to address the roots of the problems, which have impeded the achievement of the MDGs.

# LOOKING AHEAD TO CSD 15



## **An Interview with Mr. Yvo de Boer, Vice-Chair of the CSD**

*By Felix Dodds and Jennifer Peer*

**Last week when we interviewed you for Outreach, we asked what your expectations were coming into the CSD this year. Now that we are near the end of the second week, do you feel your expectations have been realized?**

It is hard to say whether my expectations have been realized, because of course we do not yet know what will happen over the next day in terms of the way forward. At the moment, there seems to be a staggering consensus in the room surrounding the issues at hand. The question is whether the next day will deliver us what we need in terms of translating this consensus into action.

**What will be needed over the next day to ensure this?**

We need a clear signal to international agencies that they need to indicate what can be done to address the barriers and constraints identified and how they can make progress. We need a clearer indication in terms of what we can expect from the private sector and what they will expect from us. We need the Secretariat to clearly identify what can be done to address barriers in terms of access to energy for the poor. The session has shown that women need to be at centre of decision making on energy. We need to ask UN-Energy and UNDP what they can do about this. In my ideal world, at the end of this cycle we should be able to say that CSD 14 pointed to following constraints and that CSD 15 identified who will undertake what activities to address them and how progress will be monitored. Where possible, we need to be precise. The most important thing is for the CSD is to identify what people will do to address barriers identified.

*"In my ideal world, at the end of this cycle we should be able to say that CSD 14 pointed to following constraints and that CSD 15 identified who will undertake what activities to address them and how progress will be monitored. Where possible, we need to be precise."*

**Where do partnerships fit into this?**

Partnerships are important but should not distract from the need for policy direction. Partnerships are bottom up approaches to solving problems, but we still need the top down.

**What can be done to keep better track of progress on CSD commitments once the cycle is over?**

When I was helping Jan Pronk as Special Advisor for Kofi Annan for Johannesburg, we suggested the creation of an Intergovernmental Panel for Sustainable Development. This would be a neutral body to measure implementation of Agenda 21, who is lagging on their commitments, who is making good progress. For me, this is a good idea. But, in the absence of such a panel we need a review to keep track of progress. We need a State of the World Report, focusing on Sustainable Development.

*"We need a lot more accountability in the exercise of implementing sustainable development commitments."*

**What would you say have been the highlights of week 2 for you?**

The sessions I chaired!

**Finally, if there was one thing you would like to see change at the CSD, what would that be?**

I would suggest putting the review and policy cycle back to back. The fact that there is a whole year between the analysis and developing policies to address them is a weakness in the current process. For example, here at CSD 14 a significant consensus has emerged on the problems and what needs to be done. We have even heard positive statements from oil producing countries about oil as a problem and the need to move to cleaner technology. It is a pity that we cannot capitalize on that progress right away. I would welcome a conversation on this.

Also, if the CSD is the custodian of the Johannesburg outcome, and if UN system and Bretton Woods Institutions are the institutional mechanisms to deliver on that outcome, then I think we should be asking them in a very explicit way to respond to the challenges identified in the analytical cycle. We need a lot more accountability in the exercise of implementing sustainable development commitments.

# CSD 15 - BRING BACK STRUCTURE

By Felix Dodds



At a number of UN conferences, summits and commissions we often don't get to discuss the right issues because the structure of the document does not effectively facilitate such discussion. The structure of a document can be critical on a number of fronts to the conversations we have and the commitments we make. A good structured document:

1. Enables gaps to be clearly identified
2. Sets up priorities
3. Identifies problem areas to be focused on
4. Allows for principles and mainstreaming to be integrated.
5. Allows for the identification of who should be involved with the implementation

An example of a well structure document is the approach taken in Agenda 21. Stakeholder Forum offers a contribution to the Bureau for CSD 15 on how we might address the constraints and challenges building on the structure of Agenda 21.

Each section could be organised under the following structure:

**I. Programme areas: Identify priority issues, e.g. renewable energy**

**II. Constraint or challenge being addressed**

1. **Basis for action:** Chapters in Agenda 21, CSD decisions, Millennium Development Goals, setting of additional targets.
2. **Objectives:** For each constraint or challenge outline the aims and purpose for action, e.g. to improve access to renewable energy, improve trade policy for energy provision.
3. **Activities at all levels:** International to local action, touching on who should address which priorities international institutions, governments and different stakeholders.
4. **Timetable and targets:** 5, 10, 15 years to ensure some accountability for action.

5. **Means of implementation:** what capacity building, technology sharing, education and training are needed?
6. **Financial resources:** What public (domestic and foreign, aid and investment), Private (business, foundations, NGOs and other).
7. **Information for decision-making:** Monitoring and assessing progress, Indicators, data management and provision.
8. **Partnerships to deliver action against constraints and challenges:** Here an opportunity to start to focus and quantify partnerships on addressing constraints and challenges.

## CSD 14 Side-Event



### Energy and Atmosphere from the Perspective of Children's Health

Friday 12 May, 1:15-2:45 pm  
UN Conference Room A

Organised by:  
World Information Transfer

In collaboration with:  
UN NGO Committee on Sustainable Development  
World Association of Girl Scouts and Girl Guides

All are invited

For further information: Roma Stibravy, Chair, UN  
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# MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE WITH MAJOR GROUPS

*On Thursday 11 May, Ministers engaged with Major Groups in an interactive dialogue session on the thematic cluster. The following are excerpts from the statements of Major Groups:*

## Excerpts from Trade Unions Statement

...The CSD has yet to clearly articulate the position of "**industrial relations**" within its review of the industrial development theme.

...**Industrial relations** and collective agreements are entirely absent from the Chair's summary text tabled the other day. The CSD cannot continue to ignore the very structures that can impact on CO2 emissions or promote energy conservation or controlling the emissions of dangerous products.

...By including industrial relations, collective agreements, trade unions and joint workplace decision-making the CSD will help deal with climate, energy, air pollution but also in strengthening '**corporate accountability**' (and not just corporate social responsibility).

Mechanisms that foster company accounting and reporting of their activities and promises, are sorely needed in this CSD review.

Finally the role of the public sector and governments in providing essential services must be highlighted and the CSD must evaluate the negative effects of privatization and deregulations in its review.

Finally, the references in the chair's text to trade liberalization inadequately glosses over the repeated concerns about the effect multilateral trade negotiations on developing countries and the spirit of Rio92's principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

## Excerpts from Youth Statement

...The chair's summary includes nuclear and so-called "clean coal" in the definition of clean energy. For young people, for the future, the definition is clear; small scale hydro, wind, solar, marine power are clean, but nuclear, "clean" fossil fuels and large scale hydro-electric and incineration are neither clean, renewable, nor sustainable...

... We are concerned that many governments are willing to interfere in the market only on behalf of big business and not on behalf of the people or the environment. Therefore we call on member states to create such regulations along with enhancing clear corporate accountability measures...

... education has not been adequately addressed here. The words youth and education appeared in the chair's summary but there is no coherent strategy for implementation...

Delegates...Having read the chairman's summary, do you think that this document gives hope for your children in twenty years?

Here is the urgency in CSD 14. The future is more than a

legacy; it is our lives.

## Excerpts from NGO Statement

It is not possible to achieve sustainable development without transforming the way energy services are provided and improving access to energy...

...The best efficiency and savings strategy is through altering the production and consumption patterns of energy...

...We call on government and all stakeholders to urgently implement measures to move away from the current fossil, large hydro and nuclear energy systems... There needs to be a full recognition within the CSD process that nuclear can provide no solutions to the issues raised herein and it is indefensible as a source of energy for a sustainable future, nor is it a solution to climate change...

...We call on governments to apply corporate accountability as this is necessary for the private sector to restore public trust.

There must be an immediate redirection of funds through the IFI's to renewable energy. A similar redirection of funds is needed to implement the MDGs...

National sustainable development strategies should be reviewed by the UN to measure progress and assess the provision of sustainable energy... Renewable energy and energy efficiency should feature prominently in the strategies developed for achieving sustainable development by nations...

NGOs call on the Secretariat to produce two assessments on the real costs of all forms of energy... Only with this data can governments reasonably make policy on energy for sustainable development...

## Excerpts from Women's Major Group Intervention

We would like to highlight eight key actions to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment:

**The first action** is to ensure women's access to and ownership of clean and affordable energy sources, especially poor women in developing, transitional, and developed countries.

**The second action** is to replace nuclear energy with readily available renewable energy sources

**The third action** is to guarantee women's effective participation, representation and decision-making at every level

**The fourth action** is to develop the capacities of energy institutions to engage with gender issues.

**The fifth action** is to build the individual capabilities of women to facilitate their access to information, skills development, and management and ownership of energy technologies and businesses.

**The sixth action** is to ensure that conservation and environmentally friendly-approaches are central to the provision of energy services, with particular attention to women's use of biomass and the possible impacts on biodiversity.

**The seventh action** is to ensure that all climate change mitigation and adaptation interventions incorporate the different needs and interests of women and men...

These actions are...essential to addressing energy poverty, not only for women, but for all. The Women's Major Group calls on governments to work together at CSD to create a 'new era for women in the energy sector.'

### **Excerpts from Statement of Indigenous Peoples**

Indigenous Peoples share the following observations, derived from meetings of indigenous peoples around the world, and guided by abiding cultural and ecological values:

1. The precautionary principle requires a slow-down and moratorium on large-scale energy and extractive projects whose impacts on indigenous lands are devastating...
2. Governments must reverse the negative impacts of economic globalization on indigenous peoples by prioritizing local Agenda 21 solutions ...
3. ...Social equity requires that financial support is best directed towards decentralized and appropriate technologies which can immediately address the needs of the poor and developing countries, while promoting self-reliance.
4. Global warming affects indigenous peoples... Indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge of lands and local conditions is a vital contribution towards Climate Impact Assessments, as well as providing valuable input towards identifying measures for climate change adaptation and mitigation...
5. Actions undertaken to address climate change must not deepen social and environmental injustice. We oppose large-scale plantations for bio-fuels or CDM projects for carbon sequestration which lead to expropriation of indigenous lands, displacement of local communities, or loss of biological diversity.
6. Sustainable development must be participatory in planning and implementation... indigenous peoples are marginalized in national plans and strategies....
7. Finally, we underline that National Sustainable Development Plans must be informed and guided by education for sustainable development, ecological ethics and fundamental cultural and spiritual values.

### **Excerpts from the Statement by the Scientific and Technological Community**

... the actions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emission, which are discussed at their CSD session are long overdue. Urgent action is needed also to design and start implementing strategies to mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change which we will not escape, both in relation to

environmental impacts and socio-economic consequences.

There is a need for enhanced support to climate related observational networks and research at all levels, in particular international scientific cooperation programmes and assessments.

... The world needs cleaner energy technologies, including cleaner fossil fuel energies. Enhancing R & D efforts in the field of modern renewable energies, in order to increase the share of renewables in the world's energy mix is a particularly urgent priority...

### **Excerpts from Local Authorities Statement**

To meet [sustainable development] commitments, local governments need to partner with national and sub-national governments to enhance the technical, human and financial capacity of local governments, and their legislative authority.

To meet these commitments, local governments need to be fully engaged when strategic decisions on sustainable development and climate change policies are made.

To meet these commitments, local governments need to be engaged in the reform of global trade regimes, credits and banking reserve rules to advance debt relief and incentives for technologies and actions that allow for sustainable growth.

To meet these commitments, local governments need to be recognized and supported for utilizing and promoting renewable energy sources, ensuring sound development, and promoting clean air practices.

Collective global action and agreement is needed to make existing cities and emerging cities of the future more sustainable, less reliant on the depletion of the world's dwindling natural resources, and better able to accommodate the needs of all its local communities without deepening the current levels of poverty and inequality.

Local governments NEED to be fully engaged in all strategies that will achieve sustainable growth.

### **Excerpts from the Education Caucus Statement**

...In terms of education as a cross-cutting issue, we would like to see stronger language on implementation regarding education for sustainable development, meaning engaging stakeholders on three levels: the learning individual, the learning organization, and the learning society.

...what is needed to address the complexity of these thematic issues is an exponential increase in access to knowledge that links the global to the local. Indeed, accurate judgment and assessment of concrete actions and measures to understand and enhance international cooperation is highly dependent upon education as a cross-cutting issue.

Under Agenda 21 and JPOI, education in all its forms engaging all sectors is to be built into implementation strategies and therefore should be reflected in the chapeau of the Chairman's Summary as such...

# BIOFUELS, YES - BUT ONLY WITH SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA!

*Esther Neuhaus  
Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social  
Movements for the Environment and  
the Development (FBOMS)*



*Bioenergy generation in developing and developed countries can potentially raise the share of renewables all across the world and offer alternatives to large hydro dams, nuclear and fossil fuels, contributing to sustainable development and social inclusion. At the same time, bioenergy production bears potential environmental and social risks, taking into account the increased external demand, especially for biofuels. Therefore sustainability criteria and indicators for biomass energy should be carefully observed.*

Bioenergy production is booming in the Brazil and many other countries, and biofuels have become a credible addition to already existing petrol motor fuels. Brazil led world production of ethanol motor fuel in 2005, and "flex-fuel" cars, which run on gas, ethanol made from sugar cane, or a blend of both, have accounted for 54% of all vehicles sold in the country last year. Besides being renewable, the biofuel trend has indeed a huge potential to contribute to an increasing energy supply for transportation and also offers an excellent opportunity for South-South partnerships and technology transfer.

## **Effective and potential risks with the expansion of bioenergy production**

Prospects of expanding the biofuel global market could be limited by constraints relative to resources and costs.



Increased demand for biofuels may create additional pressure on land and on transport infrastructures. A rapid expansion in the scale of production for energy sources can lead to devastation of ecosystems, concentration of income and the expulsion of traditional populations from their lands. Potential risks with biomass energy resources also include deforestation and the degradation of other conservation lands. Monocrop cultivation may result in loss of biodiversity and soil fertility. Excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides is responsible for the pollution of land and water resources. There is also a risk of competition for land between food production and biomass resources. Bioenergy is not necessarily carbon-neutral, and frequently additional energy requirements are necessary for crop cultivation and fuel transportation.

## **Biomass energy must contribute to sustainable development**

Bioenergy development should meet sustainable management criteria, and benefit small family and organic producers and farmers. The Working Group on Energy of the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for the Environment and the Development (FBOMS) therefore developed a guide with recommendations for sustainability criteria and indicators for bioenergy. Basic principles that should be considered for the development of these criteria are the vision of a sustainable future, environmental justice, social interest, autonomy for local communities, prior assessment of individual and cumulative impacts and ecological economics. Decentralization and diversification of energy sources for self-sufficiency and solidarity integration should be privileged.

## General sustainability criteria for energy production

Social accountability: The affected population, local representatives and members of local NGOs should be included in social accountability mechanisms.

Participation in decision-making: Effective influence on decisions on bioenergy projects must be granted for local populations, in addition to their participation in public hearings and consultations.

Type of project management: Projects must be capable of bringing concrete benefits to the affected population, especially in terms of creation of jobs and income.

Job creation and income generation: Projects should promote family farmers throughout the production chain, create jobs and increase acquisitive power, strengthening local markets and solidarity grassroots economic networks.

Social inclusion: Bioenergy projects should consider training and sharing of the knowledge and be managed with a high degree of social responsibility.

Gender equality: Projects should promote the rights of women and their recognized role in the economy and the efficient use of energy, and support their participation in energy management.

Regulatory compliance: Project activities should respect all applicable municipal and national laws and regulations as well as international treaties and agreements.

Financing: Cooperative-based production and availability of financing are fundamental to the promotion of family agriculture throughout the production chain.



## Specific criteria for sustainable biomass

Land use: Drastic alterations and over-exploitation of natural ecosystems should be avoided. Previously defined instruments for management of land use, such as economic/ecological zoning, strategic environmental assessment and the ecological limits to occupation of biomes should be respected and developed in a participatory and transparent manner.

Origin of biomass: The use of plant residues, forestry activities



and production of vegetable oils are among the best ways to sustainably produce energy, as long as they do not prevent other important uses of agricultural wastes, such as soil conservation. Methane recovery from the decomposition of urban or agricultural wastes for energy production can also be a sustainable alternative. Incineration of urban and industrial wastes should be opposed, due to highly hazardous polluting emissions. With respect to crops that are generally accepted for energy production, the certification mechanisms developed by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) has been criticized by some Brazilian social movements for serving as a vehicle for increasing the acceptance of large scale monocultures.

Environmental management: Assessment of direct environmental impacts should be carried out with respect to water, air, soil, biodiversity and ecosystems.

Organization of production and labour relations: Family agriculture should be promoted throughout the production chain to achieve social inclusion. Family farmers should not be merely providers of raw material, but rather participate in higher value added processes. All employers must comply with labour legislation and the right to association and to form labour unions.

Food security: The expansion of plant production for bioenergy should not lead to an extreme specialization of territories, with a consequent reduction of local food production.

Technology: The employment of appropriate technologies should involve communities, decentralize energy production and contribute to energy independence and technological improvement. Technology transfer should not only be vertical, but also horizontal. Energy efficiency must be promoted. The carbon balance should be negative, or at least near zero, considering the entire project life cycle.

Resources for Research and Development: Investments in R&D and education should be used to overcome technological dependency.

Use and quality of bioenergy: Biomass energy should contribute to sustainable development. Biomass should supply high efficiency end uses which contribute to expand the domestic market and improve national family incomes.

## GORBACHEV IS AMONG THE 7 UNEP “CHAMPIONS”



Mikhail Gorbachev was among the group of seven individuals and organizations named “champions of the earth,” the second year the award has been presented by UNEP. The award recognizes “outstanding achievements of individuals and organizations in protecting and improving the environment.” The recipients were announced on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2006, and later honored at a gala event in Singapore on April 21<sup>st</sup>.

[Tewolde Gebre Egziabher](#) of Ethiopia, a champion against the patenting of life forms and for community rights in Africa. He has put much of his energy into negotiations at various biodiversity-related fora – in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). He has built a strong group of well-prepared African negotiators who initiated and took the lead in the Group of 77 and China Group. As a result, Africa has come out with united, strong and progressive positions, such as no patents on living materials and the recognition of community rights, which have strengthened the G77 and China’s negotiating positions

[Tommy Koh](#) of Singapore for his contributions to the cause of the environment by chairing the Earth Summit and the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea. At the international level, he has made significant contributions to the protection of the environment and sustainable development. He was elected to chair the preparatory committee for the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. He chaired the main committee at the Earth Summit. Subsequently, the UN Secretary-General appointed him to the High-Level Advisory Board on Sustainable Development.

[Mikhail Gorbachev](#) of the Russian Federation, a champion in the field of international environmental politics and conflict prevention on waterways, and for promoting environmental awareness and responsibility, especially among political leaders since long before sustainable development became the concern it is today. As President of the former USSR, his policy changes included closing thousands of heavily polluting

factories and preventing a plan to divert rivers of Siberia.

[Rosa Elena Simeon Negrin](#) of Cuba, a champion of small island developing states and a subscriber and regional force behind the philosophy of “thinking globally and acting locally”. Her steadfast, committed and selfless work has been vital for fostering the notion of sustainability and for raising the environmental awareness of Cubans. She took on a position of leadership, which continued for some 20 years, at a time when the issue of environment was beginning to feature prominently in the political agenda of governments and international organizations. She was able to translate the best environmental practices into everyday life in Cuba.

[The Women’s Environment and Development Organization \(WEDO\)](#), For over 15 years in the field of women’s economic, social and gender rights. WEDO is a beacon for the empowerment of women across the environment and development debate. WEDO is a leader in organizing women for international conferences and actions. Before the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), WEDO brought together over 1,500 diverse women from more than 80 countries for the World Women’s Congress for a Healthy Planet, where they produced a comprehensive platform they used at UNCED to put women’s rights and gender equality on the sustainable development agenda for the first time.

[Mohamed El-Ashry](#) of Egypt, the former head of the multi-billion Global Environment Facility, a champion for the wise use of natural resources, which helps developing countries onto the sustainable development path. Perhaps Mr. El-Ashry’s most significant achievement is his 12-year role in the re-structuring, management, and operation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), for which he served as its first Chief Executive Officer and Chairman. Under his leadership, the GEF grew from a modest pilot programme with less than 30 members and an \$800 million purse to the largest single source of funding for the global environment with 174 member countries. During his tenure, the GEF allocated US \$4.5 billion in grants and leveraged US \$12 billion in additional financing for the global environment, for a portfolio of more than 1,200 projects in 140 developing countries.

[Massoumeh Ebtekar](#) of Iran  
Iran’s first female vice-president and a champion of cleaner production in the petrochemical industry. Her philosophy that sustainable development depends on maintaining the balance between economic growth and environmental concerns is one that the United Nations shares. As Iran’s first woman vice-president, she has led efforts to tackle air-pollution problems in Tehran and promote the protection of marine life in the Persian Gulf.

*Photo by Alexander Krstevski*

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is an EcoSoc Accredited Organization

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## DIARY - SIDE EVENTS

1:15-2:45	Task Force on Energy for Sustainable Development. Environmental Defense Princeton University	2
	Nuclear Energy is not the Solution -Women's experiences from Chernobyl . Women in Europe for a Common Future	6
	Sustainable, affordable and accessible energy; Swedish experiences on renewable energy and modern bioenergy. Government of Sweden	A



## OUTREACH 2015

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