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The Voices of the NGO Community at CSD

Countdown to Earth Summit II

CSD 5 SPECIAL EDITION

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COMMENTARY FROM THE CONFERENCE ROOM...

The Women's Dialogue sessions

Sascha Gabizon, ANPED  
Women in Europe for a Common Future

It was not a full house, but there was quite a good representation of governmental delegates at the Women's Dialogue Session. Bella Abzug, director of WEDO Women's Environment and Development Organization, facilitated the session. In her short introduction Bella reminded the participants that women make up the majority of the poor, the majority of the landless and the majority of the underfed. She also reminded us that the demands of women are really humble, they are not asking for 90% of the places in parliament or government (as occupied by men today) but only 50%; they do not want to take over, they want to share.

Chief Bisi Ogunleye, president of the African Rural Women's Organization based in Nigeria, presented the case of rural women in developing countries who make up the main share of the 1.3 billion poor. She presented the women's caucus proposal that 1% of all ODA funding worth \$21.7 billion should go to a micro-credit scheme to support rural women. Bella Abzug then tossed the ball to the delegates by asking the delegates what they were going to do about setting up this micro-credit scheme. The response from the US was particularly exciting: we can not yet respond to this question".

Other panelists presented work and visions of women and local agenda 21, women's representation in government institutions, female farmers and women and sustainable consumption and production. One main conclusion was that food production should be foremost geared to feed local people, not for export and that government should develop mechanisms to reach 50% participation of women in government. The Swedish delegate Bo Kjellen explained that the struggle of creating a balance representation of women (Sweden has 50% women in Government and 40% in Parliament) had been a long battle but has been more than worth it. Other delegates from the Philippines, Cuba, Peru, Finland, The Netherlands, Norway and Canada also came with examples and suggestions of how to improve the question of fairer representation.

The dialogue was continued on the floor with other women's representatives. Dr. Natalia Mironova, chairperson of the environmental NGO Movement for Nuclear Safety from Chelyabinsk, Russia presented the health problems of women from her area due to 50 years of nuclear weapons production. She called on the delegates to strengthen the CSD document on stopping exports and dumping of nuclear waste. Dr. Oral Ataniyazova, Director of the NGO Perzent Center in Karakalpakstan (Uzbekistan) testified how women and children are suffering serious health impacts caused by pollution in the Aral Sea region and called on the delegates to put health and the precautionary principle at the center of sustainable development policies.

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EDITORIAL...

INCLUSION: The First Step  
by Esmeralda Brown  
Southern Co-Chair, CSD/NGO Steering Committee

All Issues presented in the NGO/CSD base line document are important. However, some of us wish to highlight two issues that we feel are extremely urgent and important although the issues themselves may not be high on the agenda for discussion.

One of these, the issue of Inclusion, is highly relevant to Indigenous Peoples, Women's access to resources, the youth, older persons and the condition of people of African Descent in many areas of the world.

Lack of inclusion is not only caused by discrimination of an ugly nature found in all societies, but by those institutional devices and practices in Civil Society and Government where those in power conjure up standards and processes limiting or substantially denying less powerful groups and groups with distinctive features opportunities to participate.

Some of us have attempted to present the fact that discrimination on the basis of race, gender, economic status, ethnic background, religion, political belief, sexual orientation, age and disability continues to prevent full participation of many social groups in both developing as well as implementing strategies for sustainable development. We find it troublesome that Economic and Environmental discrimination (which affects more than 70 percent of the worlds population) appears to have a low priority for discussion. It is often totally avoided under the pretext that problems of exclusion from economic participation are exclusively social or human rights problems.

I speak as a person from Latin America with roots in the Caribbean and Africa. I also represent persons from the South living in the North (a group that we call the Southern Diaspora in the North). With this background, I particularly call on the United Nations to recognize the fact that in large parts of the world resourceful and talented people that could be utilized in local programs for economic, ecological and social sustainable development, are excluded solely because of their race or ethnicity. In this context, I would specifically like to mention people of African descent as well as Indigenous Peoples.

This practice is in tragic contrast to what is found in Agenda 21. There we find inspirational as well as meaningful operational strategies for guaranteeing the fullest possible participation of all groups of peoples all over the globe.

Because of this we advocate the implementation of Agenda 21 as regards equality of participation of gender, the Youth and the Older Persons.

Because of this we call for all national governments to support national associations of local authorities in partnership with NGOs and other major groups to establish Local Agenda 21 campaigns.

Because there is a need to strengthen the issue of inclusion, we call on the United Nations to adopt the principles in the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the creation of a Permanent Indigenous Forum at the UN.

The vulnerability of the Small Island States, their fragile eco- systems, and the potential ravages caused by climate changes is another overarching preoccupation on the part of some of us from the South. Because we have this concern, we call for United Nations as well as Private and Public support for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the 1994 Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. During the Barbados deliberations, we witnessed genuine and true participation between a parallel NGO Conference and the Government Conference. Two documents were written: one by Government and the other created by NGOs. These offered strategies in regard to Tourism, Trade issues, Debt Service issues , Issues about the Ocean and Issues of Poverty that are applicable to all of the developing countries of the South as well as some countries in Eastern Europe. They also discussed issues, programs and solutions.

We believe that there is an abundance of ideas, visions and programs of action. Our world has almost become addicted to ecological and economic mis-use of the resources of the world. We must now apply to ourselves the same treatment strategy that we would apply to other addicts. We must now

take one step at a time. One bold step committing ourselves to meaningful resources and new solutions to break away from bad environmental and economic practices, and thereafter, one year at a time, proceed towards a new world that is ecologically and economically beneficial to all.

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#### DIALOGUE DIARY...

Excerpts from "Women Light the Path to Sustainability" session, 14 April

Sustainable Development,

Women and Health:

Statement by Nathalia Mironova,

ANPED delegate, President of the Movement for Nuclear Safety, Russia

- abridged-

Ten years ago, when the cold war had ended, Russian women started to write letters to the UN and asked for the help that was so desperately needed. Now, Russian women, including myself, have gained a lot of experience in NGO and local legislative activity. We have tried to push Russian authorities - truly male-dominated institutions - to listen to the voice of the NGO community. Now, I would like to draw your attention to the environmental and health impacts on women stemming from men's play in the Cold war and it's nuclear arms. With these grave concerns I speak with the voice of several generations of women from the Ural region. Over the last fifty years this region has been continuously polluted by plutonium - a substance with strong radio toxic effects and produced in plutonium facilities for weaponry and civilian purposes. Most of the information about plutonium contamination and plutonium impacts is still treated secretive. But genetic defects of children from my region in the testing- area Muslumovo, are fifteen times higher then the average in Russia. Moreover, compared to earlier expectations of scientists, plutonium contamination has affected a geographical area ten times larger and 100 times more intense. That's why our generation also needs to be extremely careful where plutonium and other radioactive wastes recycling is concerned.

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#### A Voice from the Aral Sea Region

Statement by Dr Oral A. Ataniyazova, Director of "Perzent", the Karalpak Center for Human Reproduction and Family Planning

I would like to speak about the health situation in the Aral Sea region. I am from the Republic of Karakalpakstan (Uzbekistan), directly located at the Aral Sea. The ecological devastation of the area has mainly been caused by the unsustainable water management in the agricultural sector, overuse of damaging pesticides, and the pollution of rivers by industrial activities. As a result, clean drinking water is not available in our region and soil, water, air and food are highly polluted. As a medical doctor (gynecologist) I have conducted research on the reproductive health of 5000 women in Karakalpakstan. The last 15-20 years have shown an increase in maternal and infant mortality (the highest figure of all the Republics of the former Soviet Union), an increase in the total of women and children suffering from anaemia, an increase in the rate of birth defects and cancer diseases. Moreover, 30% of the population has kidney stone disease.

My research has shown that women's and children's health have a direct causal link to the ecological situation in the region. Unfortunately, the ecological conditions continue to deteriorate, because our country -just as other central Asian countries - is completely dependent on the production of cotton. At this moment no governmental or international long-term programmes are in place dealing with these health issues in the Karakalpakstan.

I therefore call upon all delegates to place principles concerning health and precaution at the center of sustainable development policies. It is very important that the CSD supports the development of

programmes on hotspots like the Aral Sea. Addressing directly the concern of the local population living on the Aral Sea and securing their involvement in such a programme is crucial. So far this has not been the case in any international initiatives dealing with the Aral Sea.

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## RIO GRINDS...

In keeping with the WWF target of 10% protected areas for the world's forests, non-Forest NGOs are campaigning for a 10% protected area in which they would not have to talk about forests or conventions with their Forest NGO colleagues.

The 'special relationship' between the UK and the US was strongly strained during the Ministerial Meeting of the CSD when angry words were exchanged between UK Secretary of State for the Environment John Gummer and US Ambassador Bill Richardson over the United States' CO2 targets. Rumor has it that this resulted in the US moving its seats further away from the UK. Tanzania wound up in seats between them as a UN peacekeeping force between the two fighting factions.

A New Section of Rio Grinds Starting Today!

"What NGOs did before they became NGOs:"

Which notorious Forest NGO had a job as Newt Gringrich's driver?

Which International NGO staff member held a leading civil service position as an advisor to Maggie Thatcher?

In honour of the US deadline on filing taxes, the General Assembly has graciously decided not to charge any interest on US arrears.

## Final Quotes

"After three days of the high-level segment, one recommendation becomes evident: Mandatory supply of cannabis to diplomats!"

-- A former coffee shop owner of Amsterdam

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### DAILY MEETINGS:

(unless otherwise announced)

Women's Caucus

8:45-9:15 a.m., Room D

Youth Caucus

8:30-9:00 a.m., Church Center

NGO Strategy Session

9:15-10:00 a.m., Room D

Press & Communications Committee

12:00-1:00 p.m., Cafeteria

Process Sub-Committee

6:00 p.m., Vienna, Room E

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Other Caucus Meetings

Sustainable Agriculture/Food Systems Caucus  
15-18 April, 10-11 am in Room E

African Caucus  
Tuesday, 15 April, 12:30-1:30 p.m., Cafeteria

Desertification Caucus  
Tuesday, 15 April 10:00 a.m., Vienna Café

Australia & New Zealand NGO Caucus (ELECTION MEETING)  
Tuesday, 15 April, 1:00-1:30 p.m., Vienna Café

Freshwater Caucus  
Tuesday, 15 April, 2-3 p.m., Indonesian Lounge

Oceans Caucus (ELECTION MEETING) Tuesday, 15 April, 2:30 p.m., Vienna Café

Health and Environment Caucus  
Linking the Regions: Middle East & E. Europe  
Tuesday, 15 April, 2-3 p.m., Room E

Sustainable Production and Consumption (ELECTION MEETING)  
Tuesday, 15 April, 6:00-6:30 p.m.,  
Check door at Room E for location

Sustainable Societies Caucus  
(ELECTION MEETING)  
Tuesday, 15 April, 6:30-7:00 p.m.,  
Check door at Room E for location

Human Rights Caucus  
Tuesday, 15 April, 1-2 p.m., Rm. E  
Tuesday, 15 April, 2:30-5:00 p.m., Church Center  
(Human Rights & Environmental Justice Workshop)  
Monday, 21 April, 10-11 a.m., Room E  
Tuesday, 22 April, 10-11 a.m., Room E  
Wednesday, 23 April, 10-11 a.m., Room E

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ALL ARE WELCOME!

Tuesday, 15 April, join 'The women, Homes and Community Super-Coalition and the NGO Committee on Human Settlements at briefing by David Hales, Assistant Deputy Administrator, USAID and Co-leader of the US delegation at 2:00p.m. in Conference Room D.

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SCHEDULE OF DIALOGUE SESSIONS

Tuesday, 15 April

**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Conf. Room 1  
covering forests, biodiversity, human rights and more

**NGOs**

3:00-6:00 p.m., Conf. Room 1  
grassroots reflections, nat'l & int'l implementation of Agenda 21 and the Future Role of the CSD

Wednesday, 15 April

**LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Conf. Room 1  
Partnership, Decentralization, Local Agenda 21 plus other discussions

**FARMERS**

3:00-6:00 p.m., Conf. Room 1  
management techniques, policy & role of farmers organizations

Friday, 18 April

**BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY**

10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Conf. Room 1  
Signals of change and the Road Ahead

**SYNTHESIS SESSION**

3:00-6:00 p.m., Conf. Room 1  
Summary Overviews of the Dialogue Sessions

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**YOUTH VOICE:**

The Youth Caucus will hold its elections this morning at 8:30 a.m. - we look forward to the results. In addition, The Youth Caucus holds daily "youth hours" from 2:00-3:00 p.m. in the Church Center, 2nd Floor, at which time different youth NGOs present their projects for sustainable development. Today 's youth hour features "Mission Possible" from Coventry, U.K who will present their work with the implementation of local Agenda 21.

Susanna Groth  
on behalf of the Youth Caucus

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Integrated approaches to sustainable coastal and ocean management

Tuesday, April 15  
1:15 to 2:45, Conference Room A

A contribution to the CSD discussions in preparation of the UN General Assembly Special Session hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for North America (UNEP/RONA) and IUCN - The World Conservation Union.

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Change in Schedule! Conference on "Environmental Degradation: It's Effect on Children's Health"

will take place on Friday, April 18 from 10:00 am to 1:00 p.m., and from 3:00 to 6:00 pm in Conference Room 3. Lunch 1:15 p.m. (separate registration required by fax.) Organized by WIT and the Government of Chile. tel: 686-1996, fax: 686-2172.

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Panel discussion on: "Agenda 21 and the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" Friday, April 18 at 1:15 - 2:45 pm in Conference Room 2.

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Brown bag lunch & discussion of progress at CSD on Tuesday, 15 April, 1:00 p.m. - UNA-USA, 801 Second Avenue, 2nd Floor. All are welcome.

The Ad Hoc Desertification Caucus will meet on Tuesday, April 15 at 10:00 am in the Vienna Cafe' to discuss the inclusion of a new category of recommendations for desertification in the "recommendations for actions and commitments at Earth Summit 2 -NGO Revised Background Paper".

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#### STEERING COMMITTEE MEMO...

The Process Committee

meets every evening from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in Conference Room E. IT IS AN OPEN MEETING AND ALL ARE URGED TO ATTEND. The Committee handles, including other issues, consensus of NGO representatives for the speakers list the following day.

Re: NGO speakers at official meetings,

Caucuses should designate speakers and give names to Pauulu Kamarakafego on Tuesday, 15 April at the morning strategy session (Rm. D @ 9:15 a.m.) or at the 6:00 Process Committee meeting. Speakers may be called at anytime from various caucuses so be ready!

Re: Criteria for Major Groups status

A discussion of criteria for Major Groups status will take place on TODAY, 15 April at the morning NGO strategy session (Rm. D, @ 9:15 a.m.).

Desertification:

People who would like to work on desertification issues should contact Michel Faucon, Pickwick Arms Hotel, rm. 726.

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#### DIALOGUE SESSIONS...

##### INDIGENOUS DIALOGUE: A DISCUSSION AMONG EQUALS

We, as members of the Indigenous Caucus to the Commission on Sustainable Development, are here representing our indigenous peoples and organizations in recognition and continuation of a decades long process of indigenous peoples' involvement in the United Nations. We look forward to our dialogue session as a discussion among equals in which we will present our concerns relative to sustainable development and the environment.

The session represents an opportunity for interchange between government and indigenous caucus delegates. We will urge governments to address our concerns concretely. Our full and formal participation within UN processes remains a goal for us as self-determined peoples. In the interim, we urge the active participation of governments in our dialogue session.



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CSD 5 MANTRA: (Repeat)...Urgent Situation; Far Too Little Being Done; Bold Actions Needed; Measurable Steps Required; (Repeat)....

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## BACKGROUND...

In the 4 March issue, we introduced the Indigenous Caucus in our column NGO CORNER. Today, in light of the dialogue session on Indigenous Peoples, we reprint a slightly abbreviated version of that text, which includes the Caucus' summary of recommendations to the CSD Intersessional.

### THE INDIGENOUS CAUCUS:

It is worth remembering that we are now in the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples. We are therefore, pleased to begin our NGO Spotlight series by featuring the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus, who have combined their energies to speak on behalf of native inhabitants from every region of the world.

In terms of international activity, this diverse group, made up of hundreds of organizations, large and small, was formed (in most recent times) in Geneva in 1977 under the auspices of the UN. And while the Caucus is represented by several organizations at the current CSD Intersessional, they also participate in various other fora now within the United Nations.

During the Intersessional, the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus is represented by the following organizations: The American Indian Law Alliance; The Native American Council of New York City which represents four indigenous organizations; Cordillera Women's Education and Resource Center; The Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education (Tebtebba Foundation); Asia Indigenous Women's Network (AIWN); Bangladesh Indigenous and Hill People's Association for Advancement; The New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council - representing approximately 90-100,000 aboriginal people in New South Wales; The NGO Committee on the United Nations International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples - Ad Hoc Committee on the CSD; El Consejo General de Tainos Boricanos; and the Wittenberg Center for Alternative Resources.

The Caucus has developed a summary of recommendations which NGOs and governments alike are invited to support. Calling for the UN System to play a more proactive and coordinated role in ensuring the effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in achieving Global Sustainability, they propose that;

1. The CSD should organize a day on Indigenous issues at a future CSD;
2. All UN agencies should ensure the dissemination of comprehensible information in relation to Sustainability and the associated processes of all levels;
3. The mandates for the UN Voluntary Funds for Indigenous Peoples and the International Decade for the World Indigenous Peoples should be amended to facilitate Indigenous Peoples' representation at the CSD and the associated processes;
4. The Department of Policy Co-ordination and Sustainable Development coordinate an Inter-agency task force directed at ensuring more informed, active participation of Indigenous Peoples in programs designed to contribute to Global Sustainability;

5. The DPCSD and the CSD contribute to discussions on the establishment of a Permanent UN Forum for Indigenous Peoples';
6. The CSD should review the progress of UN agencies in relation to the impact of Genetic Research programs on Indigenous Peoples, especially the Human Genome Diversity Project;
7. The CSD should examine the impacts on Indigenous Peoples of the implementation of the policies, programs and activities of the World Trade Organization and International Institutions and other similar processes;
8. The CSD should review the activities of National and Transnational Corporations with a view to ensuring greater corporate accountability;
9. The CSD should be guided by Indigenous Peoples' own principles and perspectives, as expressed in the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, especially bearing in mind that there has been a united call by Indigenous Peoples worldwide for its early adoption, in its present form;
10. All UN bodies should recognize that Indigenous Peoples worldwide have called for the adoption of the Draft Declaration in its present form.

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#### NGO VIEWPOINT...

#### WATER RESOURCE PROTECTION MAKES UN TOP PRIORITY LIST

by Lyn Billman-Golemme  
Citizens Network For Sustainable Development

Freshwater protection has moved to the top the international agenda with predictions that if current trends in water use continue around 2/3's of the world population will suffer water shortages in the next 25 years, so states the NGO draft background paper from the recent intersessional meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development(CSD). The figures were reported in "The Comprehensive Assessment of the Freshwater Resources of The World".

"Water resources are essential for satisfying basic human needs, health and food production, the preservation of ecosystems and for economic and social development in general. There is growing concern over the increasing stress on water supplies caused by unsustainable use patterns, affecting both water quality and quantity and the wide-spread lack of access to safe water supply and suitable sanitation in many developing countries. This calls for the highest priority to be given to the serious freshwater problems...

There is an urgent need to assign high priority to the formulation and implementation of policies and programs for integrated watershed management, including issues related to pollution and waste, the interrelationship between water and mountains, forests, upstream and downstream users, biodiversity and the preservation of aquatic systems, land degradation and desertification..." (Co-Chairs Report Of the Ad hoc Intersessional Working Group of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

In "Global Change and Sustainable Development: Critical Trends", Report of the Secretary-General of the UN, the multi facets of water value and protection were addressed. There is increased awareness that the contamination of water resources is reducing the amount of water available. Since 1945, global water withdrawals have risen faster than the rate of population growth. A number of developing countries are trying to adjust to the shift in population from rural to urban settings, through reallocation of water use rights, water trading and plans to buy out farmers, all with the aim

of redistributing water rights. If the scales tip too much in the other direction, there could be serious implications for food production.

The importance of having high quality water for human health and a healthy society is evident by the increased spending to ensure such water. Even so, an estimated 30 percent of wastewater in developed countries is still dumped raw into local rivers, lakes or marine waters, increasing health risks.

In many developing countries decreasing water quality represents one of the most serious health hazards and constraints on socio-economic development.

During the Water Decade (1981-1991) the impressive gains in the number of people provided with water services was off set by the population growth, especially in urban areas. In 1994, an estimated 1.2 billion people in developing countries lacked safe water supplies and nearly 3 billion lacked access to sanitation services resulting in an overall decrease in the amount of people with water services. The World Health Organization estimates that almost half the world's population is suffering from serious water born or water related diseases resulting in close to 5 million deaths each year.

Demand for water supplies has resulted in a rapid increase in the number of significant dams built. In 1950 there were roughly 5,000 dams compared to nearly 38,000 today. In many of the world's great rivers, the volume and rate of water flow is almost completely controlled, resulting in some cases, with no water at all is reaching the sea. This has negatively impacted the aquatic habitats, declined the fish stock, and decreased biodiversity.

Future economic development and increased urban dwelling will push water management more and more into the political, health and social arenas. Present and future economic development depends on the availability of enough water to meet those needs. Water resource protection planning now, will have a long term ripple effect on health, eradication of poverty, socio-economic development and environmental protection.

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## WHAT IS THE WATERSHED APPROACH?

The watershed approach is becoming a major framework for water resource protection. Projects are being initiated where people are beginning to implement the watershed approach to manage resources in a sustainable manner. A watershed is the geographic area within which surface and ground water flows to a common point. What goes into the water upstream flows downstream. Having the watershed be the context in which decisions are made creates a regional view based on natural resource boundaries. Environmental assessment and planning regarding protection and restoration is most effective when the watershed is considered in its entirety.

Although specific goals would vary, general goals for watershed protection could include: measurable improvement in water quality/environmental quality; protection and restoration of habitats; improved access to and balanced use of waterways; improved local capacity to protect water resources; shared responsibility for sustainable watershed protection and management.

Key to the success of the watershed model discussed here is a top down decision to have the process include a bottom up, locally focused approach. Collaboration and shared responsibility by subnational and national agencies, watershed groups and other conservation organizations, businesses, and local governments is a major component. Watershed stakeholders with assistance from subnational and national government agencies partake in watershed ecosystem assessment and problem solving including subwatershed problem identification and action planning and or implementation. Communication, coordination and integration of local, subnational, national and

regional resources is necessary to address priorities of watershed stakeholders.

Key to this initiative is the success of building teams of citizens, businesses, and government officials to set priorities and manage shared natural resources.

These teams, made up of stakeholders, develop a community-based watershed approach project resulting in strengthened local decision making and stewardship regarding water resource protection.

Components of the watershed approach include:

- \*Improved coordination among government agencies at the local, subnational, national, regional levels.

- \*Reorientation of the government water resources commission to watersheds.

- \*Establishment of a Watershed Initiative Steering Committee(WISC) to develop watershed methodology.

- \*Conduct a pilot project to test the watershed approach.

- \*Secure passage of Rivers Protection legislation.

- \*Pursue wetlands mitigation banking based upon watershed ecosystems.

- \*Focus land acquisition/protection on a watershed basis.

- \*Convene a Government Task Force to recommend Clean Water legislation/changes that advance the watershed approach.

- \*Provide grant funding to watershed associations, or groups, or regional agencies conducting or wanting to develop watershed protection programs.

- \*Creation or reorganization of the appropriate government level agencies/departments to establish an Office of Watershed Management(OWM) to coordinate environmental programs formerly performed in isolation or not at all. An example of a Five Year Cycle Plan:

Year 1. Initial outreach: includes determining what information is available and what is needed; initiate outreach to stakeholders.

Year 2. Research: includes reviewing information, filling data gaps, start environmental monitoring.

Year 3. Assessment: determine current condition, causes and sources of pollution, develop solutions to immediate problems.

Year 4. Planning and implementation: includes compliance and enforcement, and project funding.

Year 5. Evaluation: analyze programs effectiveness, update information, renew cycle.

#### Conclusion

This innovative watershed approach better engages stakeholders and also redefines the role of government to act, support, and guide watershed interests. This approach is based upon developing/maintaining environmental standards that will insure the quality of water resource protection will be sustainable.

Increased support and involvement at the local level, the site of the resource to be protected, will aid

government agencies.

Challenges include:

- \*The need to develop a manual to guide watershed management.
- \*Further define the environmental, health, social and economic components that will be integrated into the five year watershed schedule.
- \*Educate, coordinate and expand the involvement of basin teams to include a wider range of stakeholders.
- \*Basin team collaboration with the watershed community council working toward integrating action planning, public outreach, permitting and management decisions for the five year cycle.
- \*Availability of funds for comprehensive planning and capacity building projects.
- \*Access to computer mapping and modeling to develop science-based decisions regarding lowest cost and highest accuracy to control pollution. To help
- \*Creation of trained Citizen Stream Teams to gather information, energize links among citizens, agencies, and watershed groups, identify natural resources management issues, and take action to resolve problems and protect local water resources and waterways.
- \*Collaboration among national, subnational and local government officials to approve/administer River Protection and Clean Water legislation.

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## WEEKEND REVIEW...

Building Sustainable Communities  
by Chris Church, UNED UK

Over 50 community activists from around the world joined US organizations meeting at the first International Sustainable Communities Forum in New York this weekend. The Forum was set up and run by CitNet, the US Citizens Network for Sustainable Development, with support from ELCI, the International Environment Liaison centre in Nairobi and ANPED, the Northern Alliance for Sustainability, which works across East and West Europe.

Presentations about work at a community level came from four continents, but a common theme was summed up by Kathy Lawrence of the 'Just Food' programme in New York, who stressed that to make local sustainability work, the answer is to "Start where people are" and build on existing community activity. The success or otherwise of 'Local Agenda 21' initiatives was discussed; presentations from the UK, where the idea has been enthusiastically taken up, and from ICLEI, the local authority run International Centre for Local Environmental Initiatives, showed how communities and local government can successfully work together.

Some activists suggested that it was unfortunate that Local Agenda 21 has been largely ignored in the USA, but it became very clear that a number of the 'sustainable communities' initiatives, such as the very exciting 'Sustainable Boston' project, are working on exactly the same lines as the best European programmes. As one delegate said "The key is giving power to people to work on sustainable solutions that meet their own needs It doesn't matter what you call it".

The organisers successfully managed to link sessions on community action with presentations on

trade and globalisation, none more powerful than that from Goodwill Digbo, a representative of the Ogoni people in Nigeria. The Ogoni are fighting for their community in the face of a military government working hand in hand with foreign oil multi-nationals to exploit the resources under the Ogoni lands. For them community sustainability is about survival, and one of the hardest targets for any more fortunate community is to work out ways in which they can genuinely help communities in other states that are losing their basic human rights.

The key idea emerging from the weekend was perhaps 'interlocal' working: the need to develop ways in which community-based organizations around the world can help each other develop local sustainability from isolated examples of good practice to common practice around the world. For that to happen capacity building programmes and effective support for them must be a priority for governments and the CSD.

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OUTREACH `97  
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