

## INTERSESSIONAL ON THE MOVE

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### COMMENTARY:

**OUTREACH '97**  
CSD NGO Steering Committee

*World Federation of United  
Nations Associations (WFUNA)*

*Editors*

*Jan-Gustav Strandenaes  
Sharon McHale*

**OUTREACH 1997**

*Please send material  
/inquiries to*

*Jan-Gustav Strandenaes  
Fax (212) 963-0447  
Tel (212) 963-5610  
E-mail: wfuna@undp.org*

Today, we bring you a commentary on transportation as well as two in-depth articles, one on transportation and one on food security. They both represent two important issues dealt with in the NGO Recommendations for Action: Point 1.7 on Transport and Point 1.8 on Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security.

### TRANSPORTATION: A MORAL DILEMMA?

Until now, the transport question has been tucked away, practically hidden. It is almost as if it is guarded against debate. Why? Is it because the transport sector represents such a formidable force - both in terms of money and power?

Transport represents some of the toughest challenges and some of the most difficult choices we have to make for the future. NGOs think it is time to bring Transport to the forefront of the environment debate.

#### Tough choices?

No society can exist without functional transport systems. This demand has for the last 100 years been met by bringing motorized transport in general and cars in particular into any society.

Today, almost 500 million cars of all sizes drive around in the world. The car has also become synonymous with material development - the more cars a society has, the higher the level of development.

#### Transportation is freedom?

People in the North often associate the car with freedom. People in the South now also demand this development and this freedom. What right has the North to deny the South this development? Might not the flag of environmentalism appear false and deceitful when it is waved over the South to prevent them from becoming motorized in order to save their environment? Has any Northern country said they would relinquish their car park to help save the global environment?

### The righteous North-an environmental disaster?

Yet anybody can easily predict the environmental havoc an increased car density on earth will cause. Every person on earth has the same inalienable right to enjoy a reasonable material development. If the North has the right to enjoy a car density of 2 persons per car, so has the South. But to achieve that right means in reality adding to the present global car population, over the next 50 to 100 years, between 5 and 700 million vehicles in Africa as well as in Latin America and more than 2 billion vehicles in Asia. In total this is a 7 to 8 fold increase in the number of cars. This must be tantalizing for the car industry, havoc for any society and disaster for the global environment.

So here we are again - facing another insoluble dilemma. We all need transportation - but we have not decided on what kind. So instead of becoming defensive about this, why don't we follow the NGO model: get the discussion out in the open, look at the challenges of transportation needs, and develop new, environmentally sound and clean transportation systems flexible and available to all.

What about it delegates and politicians, industrialists and financiers? We're ready to discuss the problems of transportation.

Are you?

The opinions, commentaries and articles printed in OUTREACH are the sole opinion of the individual authors or organizations, unless otherwise expressed.

They are not the official opinions of the NGO/CSD Steering Committee or of WFUNA.

### STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR

*For more information on other side events and meetings, consult the newsletter "ISWG-CSD"*

Today" which can be obtained every morning in Conf. Room C and in the main meeting room. Or contact the CSD Secretariat - tel: 963-8811 / fax: 963-1267.

#### DAILY MEETINGS:

**9:15 a.m.** Conf. Room C  
CSD NGO Steering Committee

**2:00 p.m.** Lunch Room  
MEDIA CAUCUS

#### THURSDAY, 27 FEBRUARY:

**9:00 a.m.** Cafe Vienna  
US NGO meeting with US delegation

**9:15 a.m.** Conf. Room C  
Alexandra Bezeredi (GEF) will give brief presentation to CSD NGO Steering Committee

**1:15-2:15 p.m.** TBA  
Presentation of the first Global Environment Outlook report by UNEP

**1:15-2:45 p.m.** TBA  
Panel on Emerging Issues: Signals for the Future - Organized by the NGO Committee on Aging

**2:30 p.m.** TBA  
NGO Meeting with Dr. Mostafa Tolba (Egypt)

**5:45 p.m.** Conf. Room C  
NGO meeting with Maurice Strong

**6:30 p.m.** Conf. Room C  
TRANSPORTATION CAUCUS, chaired by Derek Osborne

#### FRIDAY, 28 FEBRUARY:

**3:00-4:00 p.m.** Conf. Room C  
ENERGY CAUCUS

**4:30 p.m.** Conf. Room C  
Briefing by NGOs participating in the Commission on Social Development

NOTE: ROOMS AND TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

## NEWS FROM THE CONFERENCE ROOM

### INTERVENTION BY GREENPEACE

### INTERNATIONAL

"Our intervention on behalf of the numerous NGOs represented at this meeting aims to focus on two initiatives associated with trade. Clearly issues associated with the globalization of trade, the environment and social development are inextricably linked. While these issues are lined, dialogue on these issues is not.

Major Groups have not had the opportunity for formal access to or dialogue with the World Trade Organizations, particularly the Committee on Trade and Environment. Hence, we have not had the opportunity to offer our expertise on these issues.

Regrettably, the maturity shown by governments in allowing Major Group participation in the various CSD processes has not flowed through to the World Trade Organization.

First, we would urge governments to support a resolution that facilitates participation by Major Groups into the various WTO fora, and in particular, the Committee on Trade and Environment.

Second, to ensure that dialogue is not entirely enclosed within the cloisters of the WTO, we would urge the establishment of an Intergovernmental Panel on Trade under the auspices of the CSD.

To this end, an NGO paper to be circulated later will elaborate on the terms of reference of such a Panel.

## SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

by Linda Elswick, *World Sustainable Agriculture Association*; Gary Valen, *Humane Society International*; Peter Mann, *World Hunger Year*; Jean Marc von Der Weid, *Consultant in Agro-ecological Agriculture*.

### A call for increased CSD leadership and partnership in the transition to sustainable and ecological agriculture

Since Rio in 1992, there has been limited progress towards building a more ecological agriculture at the local, national and international levels, the dominant industrial model of agricultural production continues to contribute dramatically to ecological disruption and deterioration.

This kind of energy-intensive and chemical-dependent agriculture degrades the fertility of soils, intensifies the effects of droughts, and pollutes water. It also causes salinization and compaction of soil, destroys genetic resources, wastes fossil fuel energy, contaminates the food supply, and contributes to climate change.

*Governments, International Institutions, NGOs and Farmers' Organizations can take immediate steps*

to foster the transition to ecological agriculture by doing the following:

- Avoid the false debate of choosing between achieving sustainability and feeding the world's burgeoning population. Producing enough food is not the problem. The problem is the imbalance of humans relative to the millions of other species with whom we co-evolved. A sustainable agriculture can produce enough food and maintain the evolutionary stability of the ecology on which we depend.
- Give priority to improving marginal lands where most small scale, resource-poor farmers are located.
- Recognize that intensification of production and protection of agricultural land are positively correlated.
- Recognize the imperative of promoting ecologically-sound food systems to achieve food security.
- Focus on small-scale food producers and effectively implement the participatory approach to strengthen local sustainable food systems.
- Develop partnerships of governments, small-scale farmers, international institutions and NGOs. For example, governments could help significantly expand a program such as the Brazilian Seeds Network of some ten thousand farmers who are recovering and providing sustainable use of traditional varieties of maize and beans, with highly competitive economic results.
- Emphasize agro-ecological agricultural research, education and efficient information systems.
- Reallocate existing funds to support ecological agriculture.
- Support the humane treatment of farm animals as an intrinsic aspect of ecological agriculture.
- Promote ecologically and socially sound consumption and production patterns.
- Restrict the use of pesticides through a strong application of existing laws and the creation of credit facilities to permit the transition from the conventional, industrial model towards agro-ecology.

## SOME FACTS ABOUT GLOBAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Over the past ten years, global agricultural production has yielded, on an average annual basis:

- 1,600 million metric tons of grain and 1,900 million metric tons of other foods. This makes a total of 3,500 million metric tons of food.

- This figure represents what is available to humanity. Animal feed, grain seeds, etc., have been subtracted from the total to arrive at this figure.

- Over the past ten years, the world's average population has been approximately 5 billion people.

- Consequently, 3,500 million metric tons of food divided equally among 5 billion people, gives each of us 700 kilos of food per year - or almost 2 kilos (4 lbs.) of food per day - or 6 average hamburgers per person per day: 2 for breakfast, 2 for lunch, 2 for dinner.

- If we all were to consume this every day, we would all very quickly change shape. There is enough food for everyone.

- Bon appetit!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Transportation Caucus will be held today at 6:30 p.m. in Conference Room C. This meeting, titled "Making Cities Livable: the Transport Challenge," is hosted by UITP and UNED-UK. It will be chaired by Derek Osborn (Co-chair of the Intersessional) and will feature Jonas Rabinovitch (UNDP) and Walter Hook (Institute of Transportation and Development Policy).

## FEATURE..

### TRANSPORT AND EARTH SUMMIT II

#### *Transport and the Challenge of Sustainable Development*

The planet is facing a motorization and mobility crisis. The environmental sustainability of the Earth and the social sustainability of our human settlements are increasingly threatened by the increasing use of private motor vehicles. 70% of the motor vehicle-related CO2 emissions currently come from developed countries. However, most of the increase in the next few decades is projected to come from

developing countries. The share of total transport-related CO2 emissions from developing countries is likely to increase from under 30% to over 50% by the year 2025. While currently only 20% of the motor vehicle fleets are in developing countries, motor vehicle ownership and use in OECD countries is increasing slower than in developing countries. In OECD countries between 1988 and 2000, motor vehicle fleets are expected to increase by 10%, while in developing countries motor vehicle fleets are projected to increase by 220%. Vehicle usage, which is far more important, is also increasing rapidly, with vehicle miles traveled per year increasing at between 3 and 30% a year in developing countries, well above GNP growth rates.

#### No. of persons per car in:

OECD Countries (excluding the US)	2.9
The United States	1.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	14.7
Sub-Sahara Africa	70.0
China	676.0

#### Transport Statistics

##### *Transport consumes:*

25% of all energy produced on earth  
58% of all global oil production

##### *Transport accounts for:*

22% of all CO2 emissions  
66% of all CO emissions  
47% of all nitrogen oxide emissions  
39% of all hydrocarbon emissions

#### **Motorization Is Costly**

Most estimates assume that transport sector energy use will double in the next 20 years, despite increasing energy efficiency in the OECD countries. Over half of this projected increase is likely to come from Asia. Between 1990 and 1991 the motor vehicle fleet in China grew by 172%. While there are currently only 1.2 million motor vehicles in China, one automobile company executive believes that there could be as many as 200 million motor vehicles in China by the year 2015.

#### **Health Hazards**

Health and safety impacts from growing motor vehicle use are also becoming a major concern. Airborne lead and CO has caused abbreviated mental development in 7 out of 10 children in Mexico City, while ground level ozone and nitrogen oxide has caused chronic bronchitis and other respiratory diseases in one out of seven of Bangkok's residents. This is not to mention the more than 500,000 people killed every year in road traffic accidents, and the 50 million seriously injured. In developing countries, more than 60% of the victims are pedestrians and

other 'vulnerable road users.'

Finally, dependence on private motor vehicle transportation also tends to worsen countries' debt problems, due to the high costs of road construction, and the dependence on imported oil and vehicles.

#### ***Earth Summit II as a timely opportunity for governments to take action***

Agenda 21 already endorses investment in pedestrian facilities, cycle infrastructure and mass transit as effective pollution control measures and recognizes the need for land use measures as a means for reducing transportation demand and car dependency.

Globally, there is an increasing recognition of the environmental, financial and health costs associated with dependence on motor vehicles and urban congestion. However, only in very few cases have strong financial mechanisms and/or economic incentives been implemented to actively encourage alternative means on transportation.

#### ***We recommend...***

**Governments need to more fully embrace an alternative development path, emphasizing livable cities, modern telecommunications, mass transit, and human powered vehicles. More specifically governments and international agencies should:**

- make transport a priority issue for the CSD Earth Summit II and start a Work Program on Transport in 1998.

- pass legislative measures guaranteeing the full internalization of all social and environmental costs into each mode of transport.

- improve the access to existing transport infrastructures for mass transit and non-motorized users and actively promote these modes as the most socially and environmentally sustainable forms of transport.

- review evaluation and planning criteria for transport infrastructure investments.

- improve and strengthen financial and legal mechanisms to promote sustainable transport modes.

- eliminate gender biases in the provision of transport infrastructures.

- governments need to give increased recognition to gender differences in transport and mobility needs, both in rural and urban contexts.

Transport is too urgent and far-reaching an issue to

remain "tucked away" under the Agenda 21's Human Settlements provisions (Ch. 7) and Atmosphere (Ch 9).

A first step towards full cost internalization is the integration of the polluter pays principle into transport planning and policies. Rather than giving wealthy motorists the right to further pollute and endanger human settlements and natural habitats, it is aimed at taking away hidden subsidies from car owners which they currently receive.

### ***Move people, not cars***

Transport should be to "move people rather than vehicles." For the vast majority of the world's population, especially the poor people living in rural and urban marginal areas, the most important transport question is adequate access to markets and amenities, not to cars or high performance highways. Only a firm commitment towards a prioritization of non-motorized and mass transit can address their problems and ensure the future social and environmental sustainability. Mass transit and non-motorized modes should receive priority allocation of road space. Non-motorized modes are de facto zero emission vehicles and take up much less road space than motor vehicles and trucks. They are also often the only affordable commuting and cargo vehicles for poor people. For example, a recent study from an industrial area in Lima, Peru, found that 72% of all people use buses and minivans to commute, paying \$25 on fares, which for many of them is over a fourth of their total monthly incomes. The introduction of bicycles into the area would save people \$16 a month. And in Sub-Saharan Africa, cycles would greatly alleviate the transport burden of rural farmers, most of which are women, often headloading weights up to 25 kg over large distances.

International Development Agencies need to ensure that the evaluation criteria which determine transport sector project viability are the same between all modes. Current criteria often make it easier for road infrastructure projects to receive funding. Agencies must also ensure

adequate consideration for the needs of lower-income people.

All social and environmental impact assessment procedures must be strengthened and special financial instruments need to be developed to benefit consumers who chose more energy efficient ways of travel. Using least cost planning techniques helps to bring infrastructure costs down. Municipal governments should also give more institutional and financial support to the designation of car-free areas in cities.

### ***Gender Transport***

With many women performing triple roles as workers, housekeepers and community leaders, women's trips tend to be more dispersed in time and location than men's. Urban women are particularly dependent on intra-communal and non-peak hour public transport and they generally have limited access to motor vehicles. Even in a highly developed country like Germany, only about one third of license holders are women. This gender-bias gets worse as a country's wealth decreases. In developing countries, only about 5 percent of the population has access to motor vehicles, and only a fraction of these are women. For example, in Nairobi 24 percent of male heads of households used a private car, but only 9 percent of the women. Women in rural communities, where mass transit is not an option are usually entirely dependent on headloading, the transport mode with the highest opportunity costs.

### ***Finally***

Transport is an essential part of global economic activity, and many of the social and environmental issues related to the rapid urbanization and industrialization of our human settlements are transport-related. Much damage could be avoided, however, if governments made a firm commitment towards more sustainable modes. No country needs to motorize in order to modernize. In fact, a growing body of evidence indicates that avoiding dependence on the motor vehicle can be critical to economic growth, as it maximizes individual savings. Given the high-level political support from governments around the world which Earth Summit II has received, it has the potential to be a breakthrough and initiate profound changes in the transport sector, provided that government recognize the urgency of the issue and take firm action.

**For more information, contact :**  
**Deike Peters, Institute for Transportation & Development Policy**  
**tel. (212) 629-8001/fax: (212) 629-8033**  
**email: mobility@igc.apc.org**

## **RIO GRINDS**

### **overheard at the coffee bar**

"Given the burden that governments have put on the co-chairs and Secretariat to turn their rambling into coherent action, the recent Scottish breakthrough on the ability to clone "exact replicas of sheep" comes none too early. Of course, we hope the rest would not just be more bleating sheet (bah!)

NGOs are considering the establishment of a Czar Strong support fund, given the news that his new position as UN Reform Czar has a salary of \$1. NGOs are seeking legal advice from the law firm of "Smash and Grab" on ways to ensure that their money is not directed into some Costa Rica "Las Vegas Resort" Development Project.

Rumor has it that the US has found an "innovative financial mechanism" for paying UNEP core funds. From now on, UNEP staff will be put on the payroll of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) where they can under go "skill shares" to learn revenue enhancement in large, Asian countries which have Human Rights problems.

Many countries are commenting about the professional nature of the NGO preparations and documents compared to governments. Rumor has it that the CSD/NGO Steering Committee is about to create a consultancy which countries will be able to hire for their preparations for April.

### **Rio Grinds (con't)**

#### Personal:

Former exiled South American President newly connected with largest oil industry in search of multi-national partner (no spending limits) for exotic weekends and long term lubricated relationships.

## **UPDATE...**

### **NGO Meeting with the European Union**

The European Union delegations' meeting with NGOs Wednesday night may have created a momentum that has unfortunately been lacking in other meetings at the Intersessional. Upon considering the NGO position paper, the Dutch Chair of the EU supported the suggestions for a legally binding instrument on POPs, the establishing of an Intergovernmental Panel on Oceans, and formulating an ecologically-sound Biosafety Protocol.

The EU found the suggestion on replenishing the GEF important, and the proposal on establishment of an Intergovernmental Panel on Finance for Sustainable Development worthy of further study.

The subsequent discussion highlighted such main topics as the UNEP, the role of Indigenous Peoples, Finance, GEF, Trade, Transport, Freshwater, Oceans, Chemicals, and the access of NGOs to Earth Summit 2. It is worth noting in this connection that the Legal Committee of the EU has stated that there is no legal problem in letting NGOs on national delegations attend the EU Coordination Meetings.

Regarding Finance, rumor has it that the European Parliament is not satisfied with the fulfillment of the obligations from Rio to happen "as soon as possible." A strong commitment is necessary not least from the EU.

Other countries could learn from the European Union in its consultations with NGOs, and in the EU's competence on the broad range of topics at the Intersessional Meeting.

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## DID YOU KNOW...

**"Towards Earth Summit II: A Summary of NGO Recommendations for Actions And Commitments for the 1997 Intersessional Meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development"** is now available in Conference Room C.

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On Wednesday, 5 March, UNA-NY has organized a meeting with H.E. Mr. Razali Ismail, President of the General Assembly, at the UN Church Centre from 6:00-7:30 p.m.

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**IMPORTANT:**

ANY CONTRIBUTION TO

"OUTREACH" SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY 4:00 P.M. THE DAY PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.

PLEASE SUBMIT MATERIALS ON AN IBM FORMATTED DISK TO EITHER SHARON McHALE OR JAN-GUSTAV STRANDENAES.

"OUTREACH" RESERVES THE RIGHT TO EDIT ANY SUBMISSION.

### **"OUTREACH 1997"\***

**...speaking for the NGO Steering Committee for the CSD**

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The NGO Steering Committee for the CSD was established at the Commission for Sustainable Development in 1994 to facilitate the involvement of NGOs and other major groups, where appropriate, at the CSD. Membership of the Steering Committee is determined in annual elections held at the CSD, and includes Major Groups, grassroots organizations, regional, national and global NGOs and networks. Our work includes facilitating NGO Working Groups, providing support for participation of southern and eastern NGO representatives, and organizing facilities which strengthen the voices of NGOs in the sustainable development debate. The Steering Committee is facilitating activities around the CSD Intersessional, the CSD V and Earth Summit II.

#### NGO Caucus Meetings:

These meetings are scheduled in Conf. Room C. To request use of this room, please call Abby Neville, NGLS: tel: 963-3125; fax: 963-8712.

*Deadline to submit a request for the following day is 4 p.m.*

The **Steering Committee** has a web page. <http://www.igc.apc.org/habitat/csd-97>  
There is also a general list server for those interested it is [csdgen@undp.org](mailto:csdgen@undp.org) just send a message to be added to it.

The complete NGO statement referred to under "UPDATE" will be posted on the web site in a couple of days.

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