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LETTER

OUTREACH

The Voice of the NGO Community at the CSD

Still Afloat... But how deep is the water?

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Editors: Jan-Gustav Strandenaes -- John Maskell

Journalists: Michael Strauss -- Karina Mullally

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Commentary

A Dry Season for NGOs?

How many times

have NGOs been put into the international spotlight as valiant guardians of democracy, safeguarding grassroots interests and participation, engendering pro-environmental activities the world over, spear-heading alternative thinking on sustainability?

Time and again

the presence of NGOs has been welcomed by the UN, urging governments to incorporate them into the official delegations precisely because of their different and alternative networks and capabilities.

More than 1,500 NGO individuals

representing some 200 organizations from all parts of this world attended the General Assembly Special Session on Agenda 21 at the UN in New York in June 1997. Where are they now?

Some NGOs are attending

the present Intersessional. Their familiar dedication is there, as is their willingness to view the process and scrutinize official statements critically. Filling the gaps where the official positions have made omissions seems to be natural for NGOs - as was shown by Tuesday's NGO statement. But this time, only a handful NGOs are present. Where are the others?

Have they left

the political scene for the time being only to emerge at a later stage - perhaps closer to the next Summit in 2002? Is there too little attraction, too little glamour, too little status and too much work involved in participating in the intersessional process? Does the same argument hold water for the CSD as well? Truly this is not the NGO spirit? Should these assumptions be true, we're in deep water. Leaving the political scene open at this stage, allows other forces to take the lead. Is this what we have fought for all these years?

Perhaps NGOs are actually squeezed out

of their position because they have become too critical, too questioning, too influential? There are reasons to believe this also. OUTREACH pointed out time and again during last year's sessions that several of the world's governments far removed from democratic principles, wanted nothing more than to see the position and influence of NGOs totally nullified. The Summit was almost made into an international laughing stock because several governments wanted to shy away from the texts in the Rio documents, texts that explicitly stated that Agenda 21 was based on participation, transparency and accountability - qualities that at least all NGOs are fighting for.

Almost no NGOs from the South

are here today. Why? The easiest explanation is that few or no funds are available. Why? Because the river of funds accidentally dried up? Or because governments have made sure the funds permanently have dried up? Why? Because NGOs bring grassroots activist onto the socio-political scene? There are enough ominous signals from the South to corroborate such a suspicion as well.

Or is the NGO world

just totally exhausted after having participated in so many major UN Summits over the past few years? Have the development NGOs more or less defined themselves out of the environment world, only paying lip service to serious environmental thinking? And have the big environment NGOs defined themselves out of the development world by referring to the development scene as something that had relevance 25 years ago? Neither of them has risen to the challenge that is implicit in the concept of "environment and development".

The media

and to some extent the public at large - maybe because of the media - respond with benign disinterest to efforts aimed at getting environment and development activities going again.

We all knew that this year would be a difficult one in terms of global public environmental interest. My delegate friend who is here again said: "We are too close to the old Summit and too far from the next one for the press to respond. And without media response there will be no public response". If he is right, and he may very well be, then all the more reason for NGOs to be active, alert and energetically pursuing the CSD process.

The UN building this chill February in '98

has been rife with activities - as always. But the humming and exuberance that permeated the preceding CSD process has somehow been lacking. Easy frustration could be detected in the eyes of the NGO representatives sitting at the coffee tables in the Vienna Cafe, where so many successful negotiations have taken place. The few players present had almost too many tasks to perform at the same time. Yet hope is never abandoned in the NGO world. A cautious, probing and somehow expectant feeling is also present.

We're back, we're kicking and still afloat and we'll be with you until the next Summit and beyond.

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STATEMENT OF NGO FRESHWATER CAUCUS

We welcome both the Secretary-General 's report as well as the Harare document as excellent contributions to the debate on freshwater. We also very much welcome the European Union's draft intervention on freshwater, industry and technological transfer and hope that this approach can be further discussed at the industry segment next week. However, with respect to the above documents, the NGOs would like to comment on some of the gaps that we feel need to be addressed. The gaps we have identified include the following areas:

1. Participation

With respect to participation, while we recognize what has been written about participation in the reports, we would like to stress that every effort towards rational water management has to be based on a participatory approach, especially at the local level. Programs to raise awareness and to integrate traditional knowledge of the issues are very important. Participation of all stakeholder groups, especially of women should be encouraged to ensure the quality and the successful implementation of good water management strategies. We recommend striving for participatory, integrated approaches, as opposed to an exclusive reliance on either top-down or bottom-up processes. We would hope that this would be done, where relevant, through Local Agenda 21 processes.

2. Gender Equity

With respect to gender equity, we very much welcome and support the comments made by the distinguished delegate from Namibia on this subject. We would like to further add that good water management must give appropriate priority to the issue of gender differences and the special roles responsibilities and burdens of women with regard to fresh water. Fresh water is a women's issue - for several reasons, and therefore, specific goals have to be targeted and specific methodologies have to be implemented. For example:

- a) Women are the ones who ensure their families' supply of freshwater, in the household, and often in the agricultural activities of families, particularly in developing countries and among the rural population. It has to be acknowledged that as fresh water continues to become scarcer in many countries, the workload of women supplying water for their families and farms will continue to grow enormously. Governments, local authorities and the public, in general, have to be made aware of this increasing workload, and appropriate steps to alleviate it must be taken.
- b) Public awareness raising and educational efforts which deal with water management at home reduction of waste, rational water use, safe reuse of water and waste water have to be targeted, especially for women and youth who (often literally) carry the responsibility of ensuring water supply for homes and farming activities. Women should be encouraged to develop and share appropriate methods of monitoring their water usage, and reduction of wastage should be rewarded as well as shared within local communities.
- c) Local authorities, NGOs and other major groups should be encouraged to integrate participatory approaches to fresh water management, especially with women, into their Local Agenda 21 activities.
- d) The development of technologies and devices for efficient, cheap and easy usable fresh water transportation for short distances should be encouraged and rewarded to alleviate the workload of women and to utilize their local knowledge and managerial skills.

3. Institutional Follow-up to CSD 6

With respect to institutional follow-up to CSD 6, we would like to make the following suggestions:

- a) UNEP should be asked to convene a meeting of the relevant Convention Secretariats that deal with fresh water issues to look for overlaps and gaps, by the end of 1999.
- b) There should be a review of progress toward implementation of CSD 6 decisions on fresh water, in 2000.
- c) UNEP's fresh water work program should be expanded to deal with the outcome of CSD 6.
- d) The ACC's fresh water subcommittee should review the work of UN agencies to ensure that they are fulfilling the outcomes of CSD 6 by the end of 1999.
- e) UN Regional Commissions should be asked to review the outcomes of the WHO's European Environment and Health conference's decisions on a legally-binding instrument for waterborne diseases to determine the need for each region to adopt a similar model.
- f) The CSD Secretariat should be asked to convene a meeting in 1999 to review indicators on fresh water issues which would report to the CSD by 2000.

4. Conflict

We believe that one of the possible areas of difficulty over the next ten years may be in areas of conflict over transboundary water courses. We believe that UNEP should conduct a study of current legal arrangements concerning transboundary water courses with the intention of bringing recommendations to the UNEP Governing Council meeting in 2000, on how to develop a generic approach to assist countries in arriving at their own regional agreements.

5. Finance

We recognise the importance of the statement on finance in the Harare document, and would expect it not only to be included in the Chairman's text but expanded. It should also include the identification of financial mechanisms and funding sources for the timely implementation of a programme of action by national governments and, in particular, by developing countries and countries in transition.

In conclusion - as has been emphasised by many delegations already - our concern regarding fresh water issues does not minimise the importance of food security, agriculture and the eradication of poverty as overriding objectives.

Presented by Malini Mehra, Friends of the Earth International

Contacts:

[Lynne Billman-Golemme](#) American Planning Association / Citizens Network for Sustainable Development

tel. +1-508-799 0500 fax: +1-508- 366 2021

[Malini Mehra](#) Friends of the Earth International

tel. +31 -20-622 1369 fax. +31-20-639 2181

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A Government Drought?
The plenary sessions of CSD 6 Intersessional have started

Delegations recognized

that fresh water is as essential to sustainable development as it is to life. Water has economic, social and environmental values that are inextricable, mutually supportive and linked to other international discussions taking place. It is crucial to ongoing deliberations on environment such as climate change, biodiversity, land-based sources of marine pollution, various forest related discussions, as well as the discussions on food security, sustainable cities and human health.

The statements made

in plenary during the first two days have agreed that the only effective approach to water is based on partnerships. We must have partnerships between humans and nature and partnerships across the various sectors of society that use water competitively. Competing demands for water are challenging our thinking about water institutions. At both the international and local levels we need to better co-ordinate and consolidate the number of institutions which have responsibility over freshwater and related resources and activities. Partnerships among both private and public actors need to link environmental, social and economic aspects of water and emphasize the roles of communities, local and state governments which manage and use fresh water.

Co-operative water discussions

offer immense opportunities to help prevent conflict and build co-operation in shared trans-boundary basins. Additional emphasis should be given to greater public participation in decision making regarding water issues

In spite of the widespread agreement

on the importance of water and its ubiquitous role in many issues of sustainable development, there must still be creative conflict. On the one hand many developed countries believe consideration of technology transfer in the context of freshwater necessarily involves the role of industry. Industry is a large user of water resources but is also a provider of technological and management skills that can provide efficient administration of water services from abstraction to waste water treatment. Linked to, and underpinning improvements in use, is the need for fresh water information systems to aid better understanding of the range in actual and potential uses and their efficiency.

The developed countries

have expressed the view that CSD 6 offers an opportunity to review industry's role on fresh water, including industry's own requirements for its uses, and to encourage the private sector to play its full part in finding efficient and sustainable solutions for water requirements in developed and developing countries in urban and rural areas.

Water management

represents a particularly fruitful area for successful technology co-operation projects involving partnerships among public and private sectors. Particularly in developed countries the private sector is playing an increasingly important role in water services.

Despite the significance of these few statements

and basic agreement that water management is a crucial aspect of sustainable development, there was a distinct shortage of government interventions. There was little detailed identification or description of alternative practices. There were few exchanges among government delegates. There was no significant debate even though there is real potential for differing and conflicting views.

The G77

is concerned with the tendency to view water mainly as an economic good. Water, they believe, is a basic human need of vital importance in meeting food security needs and the alleviation of poverty and the protection of the environment. In their view the management of water should not be at the expense of social aspects. Economic and social development as well as environmental protection should carry equal weight in the management of fresh water.

In the light of uncertainties manifested in the global economy, the G77 fear that elevating water's economic function over its other functions such as life-supply, food security and poverty alleviation would be detrimental to the interests of developing countries. They particularly consider that the adoption of pricing policies may be premature at this time, particularly when the stage of development of the majority of developing countries is taken into account. G77 stresses that governments should continue to play a major role in the management of freshwater in the foreseeable future. They strongly caution against turning the control of water resources over to private entities motivated solely by profit. Particularly, the G77 noted that the identifications of constraints such as those of finance and transfer of technology are necessary in order to find ways and means to overcome them.

Delegates at the plenary

heard that global problems stem largely from the finite nature of water supplies and the severe crisis that is inevitable if these resources are not sustainably managed. To forestall adverse trends, water resources development and management should be planned in an integrated manner taking into account both short-term and long-term needs.

Several times, at the end of each of the first day's afternoon sessions,

the Chair asked for additional comments and was met with a tangible silence - a drought of creative thinking by governments concerning water policy. It seemed to be politically sufficient to recognize that managing freshwater resources is such a serious matter. But it is not practically sufficient.

It was clear from the presentations

that CSD 6 should direct itself to building upon the consensus achieved by the international community in Agenda 21 and its programme of further implementation in order to not only offset negative effects of existing water policies but also to put water management on a sustainable footing. CSD 6 must also deal with the differing philosophical viewpoints that the management of water is, on the one hand, primarily an economic issue and, on the other hand, it is primarily a matter of balance among economic, environmental and social development parameters. Furthermore the objective should be to identify practical approaches to implementing existing agreements on water and dealing with the serious constraints faced by developing countries.

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RIO GRANDE

The Incredibly Hilarious NGO Topical Humor Column

'Rio Grinds' has evolved again --this time into 'Rio Grande', so-titled in honor of its fluid contents, and its symbolic value both as a testing ground for the new world economic order, and as a political boundary between two great hemispheres.

The column has also expanded to include cultural issues -- book reviews, television and movies guides, music recommendations and food selections --as part of OUTREACH's continuing mandate to explore and enlighten all aspects of achieving a sustainable professional, personal, psychological and cultural life.

But while some things have changed, the column remains the home of the most ironic and incisive humor -- always, of course, of the most constructive sort. The kind that sheds light on vital issues, that brings calm to stormy seas, that helps bridge difficult chasms, and that ultimately brings peace and joy to the peoples of all nations.

We start, warmly and simply with a feature devoted to an activity that unites us all:
"The NGO Cooking Corner"
'Daily Menus for the fast-paced,

environmentally-concerned
NGO on the go '
TODAY'S MENU
Watercress Soup Razali
Eizenstadt Leek Stew
Watercrackers a la Jesse
Watermelon Sorbet Strong
Baked Marshmallows Bill
Rainbow Ice Cream Floats
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FRESHWATER: A BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE

Statement by the WBCSD

Thank you Madam and Mr. Co-Chairs for giving me the opportunity to speak on this important issue of freshwater. I particularly want to address certain issues regarding public/private sector participation. In this connection, I was privileged to participate at Harare on behalf of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), and am the Environment Director at Severn Trent, an international water services utility headquartered in the UK.

Business and industry has a key role to play in the future provision of freshwater and sanitation services. Business and industry can provide action in support of the words that are agreed. Industry itself is not a major user of water, but it can play an increasing part in future developments.

So, what are some of the key issues raised at Harare that business and industry wish to see addressed? We do see the future being based on participation and partnership. We do support the need for a clear definition of the role of government, the private sector and other stakeholding interests appropriate to the provision of services to local communities. There is a clear need for political will, to ensure the process has the ability to be successful - what some have referred to as an environment conducive to private sector investment.

Governments need to establish the right conditions within which the private sector can add value and make a positive contribution. This means establishing legislative, regulatory standards and financial frameworks to promote and maintain the efficient and effective provision of freshwater services. The private sector can only operate satisfactorily if governments put in place the right framework.

The legislative framework is important in defining the way in which water services are to be provided and how the private sector can be involved. For example, there has to be greater certainty regarding legal institutions and contract rules.

The role of standards is crucial. Standards need to be set for the provision of services, in terms of quality, quantity and availability, and mechanisms are required to ensure these standards are met. These conditions are necessary whether local service provision is in the public or private sector. Standards are essential in defining what service is required and for ensuring it is being provided.

The output from Harare recognized that increased financial resources will need to be mobilized for the sustainable development of freshwater resources if the broader aims for sustainable economic and social development are to be realized, particularly in relation to poverty alleviation.

Industry can play its part where the financial framework is established within which investment can take place. Restrictions on foreign currency exchange rules and capital flows, and improved banking systems are an important aspect of the financial framework. In addition, costs need to be covered, including an adequate return on investment reflecting risk in the country. How costs are covered is a matter for governments to determine. The pricing of water is a complex and sensitive issue. But

unless the issue is addressed, and a satisfactory and certain revenue stream identified, the vital foreign investment, including technology, will not be mobilized. Also, real costs should be recognized in order to encourage where appropriate less wasteful consumption, recycling, reuse and adopting best practices.

Finally, I would like to inform the meeting that the WBCSD in conjunction with UNEP will shortly publish a joint report on "Industry, Freshwater and Sustainable Development." We intend that this document will be available in time for CSD6.

Madam and Mr. Co-Chairs, business can, and will, play its part in helping to provide future water and sanitation services. But governments must establish the right framework conditions - legislative, standards and financial - to enable industry to participate.

by Jim Oatridge, Severn Trent PLC
Birmingham, England

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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SPOTLIGHT

There must be international action against globalization's adverse effects, including crime, the UN Commission for Social Development concluded at its 1998 36th Session, February 10-20.

The session's theme

was social integration and participation of all people, including the disadvantaged and vulnerable. While acknowledging globalization's positive aspects, many of the 120 national delegates and 132 NGO representatives attending criticized its negative effects, adding that nations and local governments are powerless against transnational corporations, institutions and crime.

The effects of drugs and crime

on social well-being were one focus of the session. Pino Arlacchi, executive director of the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, described its triple attack on addiction, drug agriculture and drug trade. More than half of crime in some nations is drug-related, he said, and, noting the link between crime and global money laundering, insisted that combatting drugs and crime must be global.

Although the EU

expressed disappointment that a condemnation of corruption was deleted from the session's final text, G77 explained that it could not accept it when other elements contributing to social disintegration, such as foreign occupation and terrorism, were not specified also.

Among other issues

stressed at the conference, all centering on ways to alleviate poverty and make societies more inclusive and tolerant, were the need for jobs, especially for the fast-growing proportion of youth-better quality of life for the ageing, including an Internet database and research index on ageing-greater attention to women's roles and needs, as well as those of families (including more flexible work hours); health; and education, not only of the very young but also lifelong. Participation of all peoples especially at the grassroots levels, and partnership among governments, business, and civil society were again urged, to be aided by greater access to information technology, especially in developing nations. Violence against women and vulnerable groups requires greater action, according to several speakers.

Social assessments of policies, present and future, including all topics addressed at the conference, must be instituted or improved, many delegates and invited experts declared.

At a final meeting with NGOs,

John Langmore, director of the UN Division for Social Policy and Development, urged them to make concrete suggestions before the 1999 Commission meeting. He echoed session Chairman Aurelio Fernandez (Spain), who urged delegates to make action recommendations rather than re-iterating the 1995 World Summit for Social Development declaration and action programme.

The Social Development Commission meeting was notable for its openness to NGOs including two NGO dialogues in the plenary sessions. Delegates praised the specificity and brevity of NGO presentations and questioned speakers further on their subjects. The Friedric Ebert foundation sponsored a valuable day-long briefing for NGOs, before the 36th session opened.

By Pat Aller, Land Value Taxation

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[FOR IRAQ.....FRESHWATER NEEDED FOR IRAQ.....FRESH]

The Peace Caucus calls for this review conference to address the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. The Iraqi people have suffered enough. 150,000 were killed during the Gulf War, and the nation's infrastructure, including its water and sewage treatment plants was completely destroyed. Today human waste is still piled in the streets of Iraq's second largest city and most Iraqis don't have access to clean drinking water. According to the UN's own Food and Agricultural Organization the seven years of harsh economic sanctions have claimed the lives of over one million Iraqis-- including 567,000 children. UNICEF reported late last year that 4500 Iraqi children are dying each month.

The Iraqis are unable to purify their water supplies because chlorine could be used to manufacture a chemical weapon. We call on this conference to implement an alternative way to purify water there. This would be a good opportunity to put to use green technology that has been developed elsewhere.

The Peace Caucus of the United Nations, composed of over 100 groups, many of which are themselves umbrella organisations call for a time-out to assess the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. We must separate the humanitarian crisis from the problems involved with inspecting Saddam Hussein's weapons program. We must be realistic in recognizing that the children are the victims of the sanctions. The present policy represents institutionalized child abuse.

The world community should deal with this humanitarian crisis as it would any other, whether it is caused by hurricanes, floods, or war. We must allow time and space for doctors, humanitarian agencies, and concerned citizens to go into Iraq to assess the situation and to provide essential services and supplies to those in danger of dying. The world needs a report on the human cost of the Gulf War and the ensuing sanctions.

Do we want to look back years from now and know that we were guilty by our silence?

By Pauline Cantwell,
Convenor of the Peace Caucus of the United Nations.

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NGOs Meet with European Union

On Wednesday afternoon, NGOs held their first meeting of the session with the European Union to share their thoughts on the Co-Chairs' text and the EU statements made during the first few days of talks.

The meeting was chaired by Sheila McCabe, of the UK Government on behalf of the European Union, and Felix Dodds, the Northern Co-Facilitator of the CSD NGO Steering Committee on behalf of the NGOs.

Most questions addressed what NGOs felt were the gaps in the papers. Lyn Billman-Golemme, of the Citizens Network for Sustainable Development, led with a reaffirmation of the need to have an integrated watershed management approach and followed with a clear call for references to gender equity to be strengthened in the document. Minu Hemmati of UNED-UK called for recognition that good water management must assign appropriate priority to the issue of gender differences and the specific roles responsibilities and burdens of women. Freshwater is a women's issue, as it is women who often ensure their families' supply of freshwater, particularly in developing countries.

A call for the promotion of the outcomes from CSD 98 at a local level through the Local Agenda 21 process was supported by the EU.

Chris Tydeman, of WWF, raised the point that ecosystems seemed to be an add-on, and hoped that the EU would make it a central part of the text with the amendments they would put forward.

An NGO questioned the emphasis in the text on human health and provision of services. The EU said that this was a tactical decision-to show that the CSD was concerned about the interests of the widest number of countries. Environmental NGOs might not like it, but it was necessary as a practical matter.

In reply to a question about the MAI, the meeting's Co-Chair said that the EU is extremely worried about the environmental safeguards of the MAI, and is looking to have them strengthened.

Glen Gilpin, of the Pan African Movement, raised the issue of whether there would be new and additional funds to see the outcome from CSD 98 enacted. No

commitment to extra funds was made, but there seemed to be an acceptance that if countries did start producing National Plans it would encourage funding agencies to have to allocate additional funds.

Doug Hunt, the North American representative on the CSD Steering Committee, asked if the EU was serious about its commitments, as some countries-no names were mentioned-had expressed doubt. He also inquired about the role of UNEP on freshwater, and said there seemed to be a belief that UNEP's freshwater programme should be developed in a similar way to UNEP's programme on regional seas.

Jim Oatridge, from Severn Trent plc, speaking on behalf of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, asked what the EU meant in its references to voluntary codes. Pieter van der Gaag, of ANPED, added that any effective code would have to adequately prevent corporate misconduct. The European Union stated that there was difficulty obtaining binding international frameworks and placed their hopes on promoting corporate responsibility through voluntary codes of conduct.

Ian Fry, of Pacific Bio Web, brought up climate change and suggested the documents ensure freshwater access for local and indigenous peoples. The EU response was that it agreed on specifying local people, but felt that references to indigenous people could be detrimental given current political controversies.

It was asked how governments could guarantee access to freshwater for people living in poverty in light of suggestions for increased privatization. The EU responded that those suggestions did not actually comprise privatization as it is commonly thought of, but entailed various degrees of industry providing technology, finance and new systems of management. Those resources were important,

but had to be provided within a broader framework of government responsibility.

Finally Felix Dodds raised the issue of institutional follow up and the importance of specific dates being set for specific actions. The initial Co-Chairs' text goes some way towards this, he suggested, but not far enough. He called for the CSD Secretariat to hold a meeting in 1999 on freshwater indicators, and suggested that UNEP should be asked to review the present legally binding agreements on transboundary water courses, with the intent to bring to the UNEP Governing Council meeting in 2001 recommendations on a possible generic approach that countries would be willing to utilize.

By Felix Dodds, Megan Howell and Michael Strauss

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Canada Shares Easily Accessible Know-How on Water Management

The Government of Canada presented on 24 February a new concept for water management systems. The concept of ecosystem management goes far beyond the management of fresh water. It actually includes every aspect of life that is touched and affected by water, energy, carbon and nitrogen cycles.

Ecosystem management involves the transformation of economy, environment and community as competing aspects of society. The Canadian ecosystem approach includes a framework for developing goals, objectives and indicators for ecosystem health which are the basic tools for ecosystem based management. It is a pragmatic approach which perceives environment, economy and community as mutually supportive components of a healthy society.

The framework has five steps of increasing levels of scientific and community participation. The first is to identify and codify all the wide ranging aspects of ecosystem knowledge. This includes all available knowledge of natural resources, renewable energy systems and the interaction of human and social resources with natural resources. The second step involves a process of developing with all relevant stakeholders, a set of overall goals and objectives for ecosystem health. These necessarily arise, from the body of ecosystem knowledge. The third step is to select a number of ecosystem health indicators which follow directly from the goals and objectives. These indicators provide for a fourth step of additional knowledge that must be gathered and research that needs to be undertaken, and a fifth step being informed decision making processes with respect to conservation, protection of the environment, the economy and the community, redemption of detrimental practices and assessment of progress.

This all sounds wonderfully simple and straight forward, but it actually involves a tremendous amount of scientific, technological, social, economic and political research which has been taking place for over thirty years in many small local watersheds, and in relation to huge watersheds such as the Hudson Bay watershed, the Mackenzie River watershed and the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence watershed which together drain half the North American continent. What is both exciting and sobering is that the Canadians have codified all this knowledge, skill and research into a number of publications, including a compendium of best practices experience from hundreds of communities, and they making it all openly available on the internet in the interests of sustainable development.

While many are talking about what a good thing it is to engage in partnership, participation sharing knowledge and transferring technology, the Canadians are quietly doing it. While this kind of sharing is not high profile and charismatic, all Canadians can be justly proud of this contribution to sustainable development, and should be. Canada is one of the countries in the world in which water is abundant. It is easy to believe that this ecosystem approach applies only to water rich countries.

But the Canadians claim that this ecosystem approach to management's applicable to any country or community in the world. Any interested person, government, NGO or company can find it at <http://www.ec.gc.ca/water/index.htm>, or contact the Canadian Mission directly.

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