

**Outreach 1997
Countdown to Earth Summit + 5**

**Newsletter
Vol. 1 No. 4
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**OUTREACH '97
CSD NGO Steering Committee**

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OUTREACH 1997

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WELCOME

Dear Friends

This will be the last Outreach before the last Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the first Preparatory Meeting for Earth Summit II.

There have been some interesting developments since the last issue of Outreach which may be of interest to people. The first is that Nitin Desai the Under Secretary General Head of the Department for Policy Co-ordination and Sustainable Development has been reappointed by the new Secretary General. Others were not! Mr Desai has been for many NGOs one of the key thinkers in the UN on sustainable development.

The two Co-Chairs for PrepCom I are now known, they are the Brazilian Ambassador and the Chair of UNED-UK Derek Osborn. We believe that the appointment of an NGO to Co-Chair PrepCom I is another example of the growing partnership that Rio first initiated.

The pre-meeting of NGOs will be over the weekend of the 22/23rd of February at the Church Centre. There will be an open Steering Committee Meeting from 10am -1pm on the 22nd followed at 2pm by the NGO meeting which will go until 6pm and the following day from 11am to 5pm. The meeting will include training on how the UN operates for those that are new. Though most of the time will be spent in discussion, where possible a draft political statement will be produced. This will include input from the groups that have already worked on text and also where there is no initial suggested text as yet. It is hoped that we might be able to have available by Monday a political statement that would have a couple of paragraphs for each of the issues that will be discussed at Prepcom I. This draft will go up onto the web page in the next couple of days.

We are looking forward to seeing you all very soon

Esmeralda Brown & Michael McCoy
Co-Chairs of the CSD NGO Steering Committee

NEWS FROM THE INTERNET

CSD NGO Steering Committee

The Steering Committee has now constructing a web page. This is at

<http://www.igc.apc.org/habitat/csd-97>

There is also a general list server for those interested it is csdgen@undp.org Send email to with the one line message: subscribe csdgen to be added to it.

Useful Web Pages

Secretariat for the Biodiversity Convention <http://www.unep.ch/biodiv.html>

Clearinghouse Mechanism for the Biodiversity Convention <http://www.biodiv.org>

Bionet <http://www.access.digex.net/~bionet/index.html>

Secretariat for the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

<http://www.unfccc.de/>

IEA Greenhouse Gas Research and Development Programme
<http://www.ieagreen.org.uk/>

Secretariat for the Convention on Desertification <http://www.unep.ch/incd>

Ozone Secretariat <http://www.unep.ch/ozone>

Secretariat for the IPF <http://www.un.org/dpcsd/dsd/ipf.htm>

Habitat (post Habitat II information) <http://www.undp.org/un/habitat>

UNEP <http://www.unep.ch/>

DPCSD <http://www.un.org/dpcsd/>

Linkages (*Earth Negotiations Bulletin*) is a multimedia reference tool for environment and development issues. <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages>

UPDATE

Things to look out for in the run up to 1997

In the Coffee Bar

As we approach the first prepcom lots has been happening around the coffee bar.

Great news to hear that the Centre for Human Settlements is proposing extending the membership of the Commission on Human Settlements to include 14 local authorities, 12 NGOs and 8 business and industry representatives. It will be very interesting to see if governments support the proposal in May in Nairobi and how NGOs can agree on 12 representatives!!! A few countries are a little annoyed with Wally N'Dow for releasing the papers for the next meeting to the NGOs before the governments have had them!!! With big bills left over from the Habitat II Conference the May meeting is gearing up for a real humdinger. Of course governments could have funded the event properly in the first place.

We understand that Under Secretary General Jean-Claude Milleron head of the Department of Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA) has left and much of its functioning will fold in to DPCSD under Mr Desai. This will see one of the suggestions NGOs have put forward for this year realised that of the Commission on Population and Development moving under DPCSD. Rumour has it that Mr Ji Chaozhu of China will be moving from heading the Department for Development Support and Management Services to UNDP and DDSM will be merged with another part of the UN. These are just the beginning of the reforms that will be winging our way up to July when the new Secretary General is expected to announce much of his reform package. If you have a view write to Mr Maurice Strong c/o UN Secretary General UN New York.

Chip Lindner the former Executive Director of the Centre for Our Common Future has

been very active in the past few months. He is the new Senior Advisor to the Chairman & Executive Secretary of the 12th Worlds AIDS Conference (1998). Those around the coffee bar understand that he is hoping that the 1998 Conference will bring a deal for the South on the availability of relevant drugs. Way to go Chip!

There has been some concern about how to register for the CSDI and the CSD as the fax machine in the NGO Unit has been stolen. So no one has been able to register for the CSDI. To help the Major Groups Focal Point Zehra Aydin is asking people to fax her. Accredited NGOs wishing to send representatives to the upcoming meetings should on headed note paper send their registration to Ms. Zehra Aydin at the Division for Sustainable Development - (fax: +1 212-963-1267).

The discussions on NGO access to the GA have been getting heated recently. Some people thought that the G77 support for NGOs access was just a bluff. Most of the EU and the US have never supported it. Well now it is firmly on the agenda, governments are having to come clean. Do they want NGOs involved in the GA or do they want to keep it as their club? Watch this space for information on who is jumping which way. Meanwhile a meeting with your Foreign Officers wouldn't be a bad idea.

Conventions

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

Report of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies - 9-18 December

The meetings included: the fifth session of the Ad-Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate (AGMB-5), 9 - 13 December, the fourth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA-4), third session of the Ad-hoc Group on Article 13-3, 16 - 18 December and the fourth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI-4). The Earth Negotiations Bulletin team reported from each of the events. Summaries are below.

AGMB-5 - proposals were considered with regards to strengthening the commitments of Articles 4.2(a) and (b) which relate to the advancement of the implementation of a protocol or other legal instrument. Policies and measures were discussed and AGMB adopted conclusions which requested the Secretariat to produce a 'framework compilation' of proposals for consideration.

SBSTA-4 - issues discussed included co-operation with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); the longer term programme of work; possible revisions to guidelines for non-Annex I countries' communications; national communications from Annex I Parties; activities implemented jointly and technological transfer. Though negotiations were often difficult, future co-operation with the IPCC was confirmed. In addition SBSTA agreed to apply the revised IPCC 1996 guidelines for national greenhouse gas inventories and to further work revisions to the Uniform Reporting Format and methodological issues pertaining to AIJ.

AG13-3 gave consideration to a questionnaire relating to a multilateral consultative process. No conclusion was reached, but further consideration was agreed to at the next meeting. SBI-4 an agreement on the Annex to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Conference of the Parties and the Council of the Global Environmental Facility was reached.

Contact Framework for Climate Change Secretariat

Convention to Combat Desertification

Tenth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee 6 - 17 January 1997

The tenth session of INCD is the last scheduled session before the First Conference of the Parties (COP 1). COP 1 will be held from the 29 September to the 10 October 1997. It was, however, felt necessary in order to address outstanding technical issues relating to the arrangements of COP 1 to hold an interim meeting or resumed session of INCD-10 from the 18 - 22 August 1997, in Geneva.

As was expected the majority of INCD-10 was devoted to preparations for the first COP. Progress was made, but the sense of urgency that should have existed after the coming into force of the Convention on the 26 December 1996 was lacking. Issues left to be dealt with at COP 1 included the functions of the institutions to host the Global Mechanism, the physical location of the Permanent Secretariat, and the size and composition of the COP Bureau.

Contact Convention on Desertification Secretariat

COMING SOON

The Convention on Biological Diversity

1997 and beyond

The International Day for Biological Diversity 29 December 1996 marked the Convention's entry into force three years ago. The Convention's Executive Secretary, Mr Calestous Juma stated that "... 1997 promises to see the Convention make the transition from being a negotiating document to being an active programme that makes itself felt at the local, national, and international levels."

Biodiversity Agenda 1997 - 1998

Biosafety - potential risks posed by living modified organisms produced by modern biotechnology. There are currently no binding international agreements covering transfer of modified organisms across national borders, through trade or by accident.

Next meeting - 12-16 May in Montreal - talks leading to the adoption of a biosafety

protocol.

Agriculture - agriculture and biodiversity are intricately linked. The pressures arising from this are steadily increasing as with population growth, declining agricultural diversity, undermining food security.

Next meeting - May in Montreal, an international meeting of experts.

Forests - it is hoped the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests will approach the issue of sustainable forestry from a more comprehensive stand point, recognising that forests are not just important for timber, but also for other services such as watershed management.

Marine and coastal areas - threats of habitat destruction in these vulnerable areas are best countered by adopting an holistic approach, covering legal, economic, scientific and technical issues. The work programme covers: integrated marine and coastal area management, marine and coastal protected areas, sustainable use of coastal and marine living resources, mariculture (eg fish farming) and alien species.

Next meeting - March in Indonesia, an international meeting of experts.

Indigenous and local knowledge - the important role of indigenous peoples in the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity has been recognised by the Convention.

Next meeting - an intergovernmental workshop will be held late this year to look at practical and legal issues surrounding intellectual property rights and indigenous peoples.

Additional Meetings - experts and government officials will attend the next meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Advice in Montreal from 1 - 5 September 1997. The Fourth Session of the Conference of the Parties will take place in May 1998 in the Slovak Republic and will review the first national reports from governments describing their strategies and actions for promoting the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Further information and documents will be placed on the web at <http://www.biodiv.org> and <http://www.unep.ch>

Contact Mr Michael Williams UNEP's Information Unit for Conventions or Ms Beatriz Torres at the CBD Secretariat.

Fourth Intergovernmental Panel on Forest 11 - 21 February 1997

IPF Consultations in Preparation for IPF-4 UN Headquarters - 17 June

An Informal Briefing note prepared for the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) by Laura Ivers.

Jag Maini, of the DPCSD Secretariat, chaired the informal briefing on matters pertaining to the upcoming meeting of the fourth meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), which will be held in New York from February 11-21. Co-Chairman of the IPF, Martin Holgate (United Kingdom) and Manuel Rodriguez (Columbia) presented a document that they created based upon IPF III and propose to use for negotiation at IPF IV. In his introductory comments, Martin Holgate stated that the main two goals at the upcoming meeting are to agree on the recommendations on legal mechanisms, international organizations and multilateral institutions that will be submitted to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and to agree on the text of the from the work of the whole at the previous three meetings of the IPF. Holgate also reminded delegates of the short amount of time to achieve these goals at the IPF IV and asked delegates to consult the text which they had distributed before the meeting.

The two co-chairs briefly presented the document covering highlights of the text. The meeting was opened for discussion of the document and other concerns regarding IPF IV. Many delegates (China, India, Brazil, Peru, U.S., Russia) found it premature to accept the document as a basis for negotiation because they had only received the document this morning. Ireland, on behalf of the EU, recommended accepting the document for negotiation, citing it as a good synthesis of the wide views from previous meetings of the IPF.

Several delegates inquired as to how IPF IV would be organized. Holgate responded that co-chairs will be available several days before IPF IV to meet with delegates. He said program elements 5 and 5.2 (on the implementation of forest principles) will be the focus of the meeting and recommended that IPF IV start with discussion of those elements so that a report on the substantive discussion could be written and presented for adoption at the end of the meetings. During further discussion on organization, the U.S. recommended having only one working group that would present its work to the plenary. The United Kingdom and Switzerland volunteered extra-budgetary funding for translation if necessary for working groups to facilitate participation of as many countries as possible.

India inquired about scheduling conflicts between IPF IV and other meetings. Holgate verified that there will be overlapping meetings including one on Statistics as well as the Agenda for Development on February 11-21. Several other countries expressed concern for the overlaps. The U.S. recommended that the co-chairs speak with the secretariat with hopes of changing the dates for the Agenda for development as the simultaneous meetings would place considerable stress on delegates to the Second Committee.

Canada opened question of NGO involvement at IPF IV. Jag Maini responded that NGO documents will be available in the conference room, but as the panel is intergovernmental, that will be the extent to which NGOs will participate.

The co-chairs thanked the delegates for their participation at the briefing and commented on the challenges of IPF IV to reduce the document which was presented (if it is accepted) to a twenty page document. They once again encouraged as much preparation and informal meetings prior to IPF IV as possible.

Contact IPF

DIARY - COUNTDOWN'97

10 -21 February

4th Session of the IPF, New York

24 February- 7 March

Intersessional meeting for the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) now recognized as PrepCom I for the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in June, New York

13 - 19 March

Rio Plus 5, Earth Council, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

7 - 25 April

CSD meeting - PrepCom II for the Special Session of the UNGA, New York

30 April - 11 May

May Meeting of the Commission on Human Settlements to review outcomes from Habitat II and agree priorities for implementation of the Habitat Agenda. Nairobi

12-16 May

Open Ended Ad hoc working group on Biosafety (Prov)

23-27 June

Special Session of the UNGA. The Chair of the meeting will be Ambassador Razali of Malaysia.

July

CITES Meeting (details to be confirmed)

December

COP 3 to the FCCC Japan

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