

OUTREACH 2002



Issue V

Working Towards Earth Summit 2002

Wednesday 6th February 2002

Prep. Comm. II



What's in OUTREACH...

- Top of the Agenda
- Freshwater
- Finance
- Fun
- Diary Dates

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Implementation: A Modest Proposal

"Let us do a little logical analysis of what sustainable development means. Sustainable development means, of course it means environment, but it also means a more equitable outcome. It also means efficiency of resources... Social, environmental and economic. But it also means empowerment. It also means dignity. It also means a different kind of life in which each one of us has something that we can aspire to. It also means education,...enterprise... choices. Choices by people - reflecting their realities, their aspirations, their dreams"

Ashok Khosla

All international processes are manic-depressives. They have violent mood swings. First, elation. Anything and everything can be attempted. Then, despair. Nothing can be done. Nothing will ever change. This Prep Com is no exception.

The dialogues sessions last week and all the other inputs have produced a cornucopia of ideas and proposals for discussion this week. 206 separate items are listed in the secretariat's

note under eleven separate heads. This week delegates appear to be struggling with a severe case of indigestion as they try to put some order and priority into this outpouring of ideas.

The Secretary General's proposal for two types of outcome provides one helpful way through this forest. The main negotiations could concentrate on a few key issues where substantial effort needs to be put into new thinking and substantive negotiation, or where new resources and new commitments need to be mobilised on a substantial scale to achieve new breakthroughs on a global scale. Many of the other ideas do not need to be discarded, but may be able to be carried forward on a regional or sub regional basis and in a variety of partnerships involving many different stakeholders as well as governments. These do not need to be negotiated.

Suppose that at the end of this week, the Prep-Com had identified a few key issues on which substantial implementation programmes for sustainable development could be built. Minister Pronk already gave some helpful signals about the themes which are resonating most strongly in the capitals of the world. Recognising that action programmes cannot be built effectively in full session suppose that the Secretary General were to be asked to establish small task forces for each of these key areas, or to build on existing implementation groups where they exist.

These areas might be built around the poverty eradication the Millennium Targets and new targets for key areas:

- Access to water and sanitation
- Access to food security
- Access to energy
- Access to good health
- Access to employment (including access to education and training)
- Access to housing

These are after all the basic elements of addressing poverty eradication with cross cutting issues such as gender, globalisation and governance being addressed by all.

Each might then be addressed with a full and detailed work programme around a similar model to Agenda 21:

- Introduction to the issue
- Programme area
- Basis for Action
- Objectives
- Activities (at all levels)
- Means of Implementation – including capacity building, technology sharing, education and training)
- Roles of stakeholders
- Financial resources
- Timetable and Targets
- Indicators

The task forces might be charged to consult on the PrepComs behalf with the main implementing agencies and to come forward at the next Prep Com with outlines for a series of specific action programmes for consideration and approval in time for commitments then to be made at Johannesburg. The task forces should be small but well balanced. They might include representatives from the different regional groupings, financial and implementing agencies, and stakeholders. Perhaps the model of the Habitat II informals might be one to follow.

Take water for example. The need to bring drinking water to all and to improve sanitation has long been recognised as one of the key objectives for sustainable development. It unites the poverty agenda, the environment agenda and the health agenda. Goals, targets, principles and guidelines have long been established and agreed. Many programmes already exist. But they are proceeding too slowly to deliver the results that everyone wants in the next fifteen years.

A task force could take stock of all the previous work and meetings, culminating in the recent Bonn meeting. It could look at existing programmes that are helping to bring water and sanitation where they are most needed. It could look at existing means for mobilising financial and human resources and building capacity in those programmes. It could identify what would be involved in a significant augmentation of those programmes. It could produce an outline action programme for water which which Heads of Government and leaders of major institutions and corporations could commit their authority and pledge resources at Johannesburg.

What could be done for water could be done for the other areas as well?

If work directed towards reinforcing or creating practical implementation programmes on the ground could be handled in this way then the mass of other material in the Secretary General's report might prove much easier to handle. In many of the areas it may be simply a question of noting and encouraging further progress to be made in other organisations elsewhere. Some issues may be better advanced in smaller groupings or partnerships or at regional or sub regional levels. Some may best be taken up in the future. Many may involve recognising and supporting the work of other stakeholders besides government.

What we are all looking for is a clear structure and focus of issues that we can really try and make a significant difference to the direction we are going in. If Johannesburg is to be a success then we need to all be prepared to work together. Perhaps the setting up of informal working groups can help build trusts between all of us and help us together to build a strong and visionary programme for Johannesburg.

Ending with another quote from Ashok Khosla's Chip Lindner's Memorial Lecture last year:

"Sustainable development is about the meeting of basic needs. I told you it was very simple: sustainable production, sustainable consumption... And we need to get that message across to our decision makers. Once everybody's basic needs are met you can do what you like. I'd love to have a Ferrari to zoom up and down the coast of Florida. We can't until the basic needs are met. So we've got to figure out a way to meet the basic needs and then all of us can have a terrific time. Now what are these basic needs? Of course everybody knows about the usual ones: food, shelter, water, that kind of stuff. But there are other ones, and clean environment is certainly one, and so is dignity and meaning of life. But I believe there are new, rather suddenly emerging basic needs, that we also have to now meet...including knowledge... So I hope, my dream is that Johannesburg is going to be about how we accelerate the process of achieving these for all... How do we evaluate and learn from what we haven't been able to do and how do we introduce new ways to quickly allow people to take charge of their own lives? Not everyone is waiting out there with their hands out for a hand-out. People want a chance to make their own lives. And we've got to create a world in which everyone can do that..."

Derek Osborn, Chair,
Stakeholder Forum

Aid on the Increase!

After almost a decade of declining aid flows, the late '90's saw a slight resurgence. However, this looked like being a short lived trend, with some OECD countries allowing their contributions to fall in-line with a weakening global economy.

However, yesterday saw the US Bush Administration submit for approval a budget to congress for 2003 which sees an almost 6% increase for International Assistance. For Sustainable Development hacks, though, it was not all good news as EPA saw its 2003 budget cut by a similar margin, down 5.7%.

Nevertheless, we can only hope that OECD governments including Germany, France and Japan will follow the standard set by the US and reverse their declining aid flows.

Use the Preparations Well: Water - A Call to Action

The big question is whether the Johannesburg Summit can produce a global breakthrough in our struggle for a better world. Agenda 21 and the Millennium Declaration targets light the way but the challenges implicit in the process are bewildering and frustrating. Bonn Freshwater Conference Dialogue Co-ordinator, Danielle Morely, looks at the freshwater outlook.

Bottom-up national consultations and regional preparatory meetings that filter into participatory global preparations look good on paper, but are they being reflected in New York? The German government hosted the International Conference on Freshwater in December 2001 (Bonn), as a genuine effort to form a basis for preparing WSSD recommendations to meet the Millennium Declaration targets on access to water and management of water resources. Water is one of the priority issues for Johannesburg, so why are we hearing so little of substance from a meeting held only eight weeks ago? Why did 2000 committed individuals, organisations and government delegates, including 46 Ministers, spend precious time, energy and money on making that event such a success if only to be effectively sidelined here in New York?

Unusually for an inter-governmental process, the Bonn Recommendations for Action, while not nearly as progressive as they should be, are pretty good. Stakeholder participation was integrated in the Conference though the Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues. The participating stakeholders were well prepared and the Dialogues proved to be focussed, constructive and interactive with a rich exchange of ideas on key areas between governments and civil society. Accrediting several delegates from each Major Group to participate with governments in the subsequent working groups further strengthened the participatory process. As a result the Bonn Recommendations reflect a broader range of informed views than usually evident at the inter-governmental level.

The views of the Mediterranean NGO

A group of Mediterranean NGOs met last month to contribute their ideas and areas of priority on WSSD. These areas reflect many of the issues that have come out of the first week of discussions however the place a stronger mention on participatory models, education as a tool for implementation and trade creating poverty. There are 22 countries in this region, which has made a numerous progress in the implementation in Agenda 21 since Rio. Many countries, regions and local authorities have taken on local agenda 21 in various ways including science and capacity building. A major success from this 10 year process is the stabilisation of marine pollution, however some problems have prevailed such as the widening income gaps, increase pressures on space and resources, uncontrolled urbanisation and consumption and marginal use of renewable energies.

Reflecting much of the process so far good governance came out

The Bonn Recommendations, negotiated in plenary with approximately 115 government delegations and Major Group delegations, are focussed on implementation; governance, management and partnerships; mobilising financial resources; capacity building and knowledge sharing. This fits with the call to action for Johannesburg and by focussing on the cross-cutting issues, the Bonn Recommendations can easily slot into WSSD text if there is enough awareness and political will to tackle the urgency of water for all.

The conference betrayed some relevant markers for the Johannesburg negotiations. Although rich countries are considering a new flexibility in their relations with the developing world, the business as usual attitude was still evident. Governments refused to acknowledge access to water as a human right, despite the fact that without water we die within three days. The precautionary principle was rejected by New Zealand as a possible barrier to free trade. Rich world delegates did not welcome evidence that current policies based on community and country self-sufficiency would not be able to eradicate the backlog in numbers of people without access to safe water. An international programme of action on water is needed. It was agreed that development assistance should be increased but USA and Japan avoided any new commitments. The corruption challenge was raised, but fudged.

The challenge of managing multinationals market power and problems of competition in a rapidly consolidating industry were raised but not answered. On the positive side, it was agreed that reform and support is urgently needed for public water delivery systems from community to national level; that cost recovery should not be a barrier to poor people's access to water and sanitation and efforts to recover costs should focus on those who consume the most water; sanitation was put firmly on the agenda and it was agreed that privatisation of water services should not be imposed on developing countries as a conditionality for funding.

as the priority to achieving sustainable development, which ties in to the need to provide access to information and participation in decision-making. Using this participatory model adopt in the Mediterranean they recommend all countries set up a National Commission for Sustainable Development, alongside giving equal rights to developing countries in decision making.

Following much of what has been said here in New York they see poverty eradication as a issue that needs to be at the centre of this process. Placing emphasis on aid policies, links to environmental damage and access to employment, an issue not full discussed. They made two strong measures in addressing the problems of unfair trade.

- removing trade distorting subsidies and improving access of products and services to developing countries
- And assisting developing countries to fully integrate into the world trade system.

Cont. on P.5

No goals without means: The importance of finance

The text may get imaginative, partnerships may emerge. Who knows, we may even get some high-level political will? But until adequate money is put on the table, the agreements are unlikely to see the light of day. ANPED's Sander van Bannekom reports on exactly what is needed to make Johannesburg more than just another talk shop.

Few politicians have the experience of Special envoy of the UN Secretary General Jan Pronk. His passionate presentation of his encounters with national governments in the run up to Prepcom II on Monday morning showed there is ample enthusiasm for the summit in Johannesburg. But there also is a substantial number of loopholes, especially in the area of finance. The point should be made over and over again, we need 'deliverables' on finance in order to make a success of the WSSD. Deliverables that respect commitments of the past, while taking into account the changes in the global economy of the last ten years. Hence, a substantial outcome of the UN Finance for Development conference in Monterey in March is imperative for a successful Johannesburg Summit.

Now what should these 'deliverables' consist of? A couple of issues:

Official Development Assistance. During the special Session of the UNGA in 1997, commonly known as Rio plus five, the declining flows of ODA hung as a dark cloud over the negotiations. The promise from industrialized nations to reserve 0.7% of their GDP for development assistance is kept by only a handful of nations. Since 1997, figures dropped even further to an average level of approx. 0.24. Many negotiators fail to understand the importance of this broken promise. It is no surprise that new plans and commitments beyond Agenda 21 often receive an icy response from developing countries. If industrialized countries fail to keep one of the most important commitments of Agenda 21, why should developing accept commitments even beyond Agenda 21?

There are also widespread concerns about the effectiveness of ODA. The tying of aid flows to corporations of donor nations often serves the need of those corporations more than the needs of the poor. Besides, lack of participation of civil society and corruption are serious obstacles for more effective ODA. Both donor countries and recipient countries are to blame for this and it clearly requires a diplomatic breakthrough. Unfortunately, the gap between diplomacy and the real world has become very wide. Instead of taking responsibility and forcing a breakthrough, diplomats weasel their way out like schoolchildren: I do not complain about you if you do not complain about me! So the stalemate continues.

Subsidies

For years, countries are committing themselves to abolish environmentally harmful subsidies, especially subsidized exports. But

progress in this abolition has been extremely limited. Corporations claim to be the champions of free trade, but refuse to give up on export subsidies. It shows the hypocrisy of corporations in their attitude toward free trade (and it is not the only one!). Corporations want to be able to *define* the terms of trade, which is something completely different than *liberalizing* terms of trade.

Export Credit Agencies (ECAs)

Export credits are among the largest - and most destructive - trade distorting subsidies. Approximately US \$ 100 billion is annually guaranteed through these agencies to support both export and outward investment, which is twice as much as the global aid flows! Tax payers run the financial risk, but they have little to say about the way these funds operate. The secrecy of ECAs means they violate the most basic rights to information of tax payers about the spending of public funds. Since ECA-support is mostly given to fossil fuel projects, nuclear power plants and large infrastructural projects, ECA-reform should be high on the list of all people concerned with sustainability.

New issues

The global economy has witnessed significant changes since UNCED. Foreign investment has become the key issue in economic growth, whereas the word investment is hardly mentioned in Agenda 21. Many organisations and agreements deal with the issue of investment, but nobody covers the big picture. This presents an opportunity for the WSSD. Recommendations from the General Assembly and other UN institutions, especially the UNCTAD all highlight the potential and the risks associated with increased investment, but it is difficult to formulate clear policy goals. This presents a clear opportunity for the WSSD. The concept of sustainability has the potential to provide a framework for foreign investment, but the prepcom should than take a much more proactive approach. Financial stability, an international framework for speculative capital and sustainability assessments for investment agreements are just some of the contributions that the WSSD could make to ensure compatibility between investment and sustainable development.

Concluding, all parties involved in the WSSD should pressurize their governments to make sure that the Financing for Development conference will bring the necessary deliverables for the WSSD. A reverse in the declining trend of ODA is imperative, but negotiators should also respect the more recent changes in the global economy. We need a commitment to an increase in financial resources and a way to ensure that international investors will respect the premises of sustainability. Without that, it is hard to foresee a successful outcome of the WSSD.

Sander van Bennekom

- Johannesburg Whines -

Picks up where Rio Grinds left off...

Because nobody said sustainable development would be fair!

Anything you read in Outreach in bold is not a title, just an idea...

There was a strange reaction to Monday's suggestion by the chair for governments to come up with ideas. Silence ensued except for the sound of the wind blowing, the saloon bar doors slamming on their hinges whilst tumbleweed rolled up the isles.

Their was positive response to the chair's Monday night call for governments not to negotiate text, word by word. The next delegate to take the floor agreed INSERT COMA to, inter alia, (*follow with the chair's suggestion*) and would continue, ad nauseam, in the spirit of the, I'm sorry I've forgotten why I am here!

Q. What's the difference between a tri-partite approach and a multi-stakeholder approach?
A. One's a threesome, the other's an orgy..... of decision making



Strengthening & Democratizing Global Governance for the Environment & Sustainable Development

A discussion of the future of the CSD, UNEP's process looking at international environmental governance, MEAs, financing, the impact of the WTO's Doha Declaration & other relevant issues.

Wednesday, February 6
1:15 - 2:45pm
Conference Room B

Confirmed speakers include:

- Hilary French of the Worldwatch Institute
- Adnan Amin, Executive Director of UNEP's New York office
- Meeting Chaired by William Pace of the World Federalist Movement (WFM)
- other speakers yet to be confirmed...

For further information telephone (212) 687-2863, ext. 25 email: wfm1@igc.org

They pushed for the ODA target of 0.7% GNP to be finally reached, debt swaps for SD should be encouraged as well as the abolition of customs duties and international taxes to increase financial resources.

Something the region places emphasis on a fundamental to achieving SD was education and awareness raising. This is not reflected in the same way form last weeks summary, which placed it alongside capacity building and science. They mentioned the importance of technology transfer through the generation, enhancement and exchange of inter-disciplinary scientific knowledge and know how, of modern and traditional technology.

They went on to promote the precautionary principle, sustainable agricultural practice and integrated water resources management as steps towards equal access to natural resources to achieve sustainable consumption and production. Many of the points reflected form the regions into the document we are working form this week however with the call from the floor to go back and look at the areas missed out from the regional meetings perhaps some of this ideas need to be taken on?

A. Birney

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT ON IMPLEMENTING AGENDA 21: A HUMAN RIGHTS CRITIQUE

The Human Rights Caucus and the General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church invite you to a panel discussion

TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 5, 2002
BOSS ROOM, 8TH FLOOR
CHURCH CENTER FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

Panelists:

MAIN PRESENTATION

Dr. Clarence Dias

President, International Center for Law and Development

REGIONAL and COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

Rev. Marta Benavides (El Salvador/Latin America)

International Institute for Cooperation Amongst People

Mr. Henry Shillingford (Dominica/Caribbean)

Lawyer, Caribbean Rastafari Organization

Larisa N. Skuratovskaia, MD, PhD (Russia)

Member, International Federation of Health and Human Rights

Member, Russian Academy of Medical Sciences

Mr. Siphon Mtetwas (South Africa/Africa)

Program Coordinator, Environmental Justice Program

South African Council of Churches

Dr. Prawate Khid-arn (Thailand/Asia)

Executive Secretary for Justice, International Affairs and Development

Christian Conference of Asia

Ms. Gloria Bletter (USA/North America)

Lawyer and Member, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Diary Dates

Wednesday 6th 9-10am	Sustainable Development Issues Network - Conference Room B
1.15-2.45pm	'Strengthening & Democratising Global Governance for Environment & SD'. - Conference Room B
1.15-2.45pm	'Japanese Government NGO briefing'. Conference Room C
6.15-7.45pm	'Arctic Connections: Local/Global Linkage for Sust. Dev.'. Canadian Gov. - Delegates Dinning Room
Thursday 7th 9-10am	Sustainable Development Issues Network - Conference Room B
1.15-2.45pm	'Briefing to Major Groups on Preparations for the Global Forum'. WSSD Civil Soc. Net. - Conf. Room 1
1.15-2.45pm	'Stay Alive HIV/AIDS Prevention Education'. United Families International - Conference Room B
6.15-7.45pm	'Industry and Sustainable Development'. UNIDO - Conference Room 1
6.15-7.45pm	'International Environmental Governance'. Third World Network - Conference Room 6
Friday 8th 9-10am	'Sustainable Development Issues Network - Conference Room B

Sustainable Development Issue Network Morning Meeting Thematic Issues

- **Wednesday, February 6 - Energy, Climate change and Biodiversity**
- **Thursday, February 7 - Gender**
- **Friday, February 8 - Wrap Up**