



Taking ISSUE

The Sustainable Development Issues Network

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A Daily publication of the Sustainable Development Issues Network (SDIN)
at the Twelfth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

WOMAN MINISTER TO CHAIR CSD-13

NGOs at CSD-12 Challenge Male Delegates to think



The past 1,5 week we have been hearing many government delegations and major groups underlining the crucial role that women have in water, sanitation and human settlements. Similarly women's essential role in sustainable development has been clearly recognized in Agenda 21 and in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Rio Principle 20 reads: "The full participation of women in essential to achieve sustainable development." Unaccountable commitments have been made to the need for gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the implementation of the JPOI, MDGs and CSD-work.

The question now is: how much of this is really meant or is it just lip-service. Let's look at some figures here at CSD:

- In its whole dozen years of existence no woman minister ever chaired the Commission of Sustainable Development (CSD).
- The CSD Bureau has always been dominated by a majority of men.
- At this CSD only 15% of the invited

panel experts were women, versus 85% male representation.

- Governments reporting about the implementation of MDG 7 – on environmental sustainability – have until now failed to recognize the role of women and gender aspects of the implementation.

We do not have to show it over and over again: there are numerous examples of successful gender mainstreaming on the ground. And we know that the costs of not including women in decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation weigh particularly heavy on the poorest.

CSD13 will be our policy making year. Policymaking on water, sanitation and human settlements can make a major difference for the world's poor. We need all the leadership of a minister to lead us through that process. It would be big humiliation and a fiasco if we do not succeed in having a WOMAN MINISTER chairing CSD13! The choice is up to you, governments!

In this Issue

1. Woman Chair
2. NGO High Level Statement
4. Indigenous Peoples
6. WFP Final Statement
6. Youth asks for Education
7. Historic recording

Meeting schedule

THURSDAY 29 APRIL, 2004

- 9.00 - 10.00, NGO Organising Partners
- 10.00 - 11.00, NGO Steering Committee
- 11.00 - 12.00, Fresh Water
- 1.00 - 2.00, Indigenous Peoples
- 2.00 - 3.00, Youth
- 3.00 - 4.00, Latin America
- 4.00 - 5.00, Education
- 5.00 - 6.00, Women
- 6.00 - 7.00, Trade Unions
- 6.30 - 8.30, Southern (Church Ctr 11th floor)
- 7.00 - 8.00, Caucus Coordination

All meetings in Conference Room B

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Visit the SDIN morning strategy meetings for reports from working groups, information sharing and strategic discussions. SDIN Morning Meetings are open to all NGOs.

Meetings are held in Conference Room B at the United Nations Building.

Articles reflect the opinions of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SDIN Network

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NGO STATEMENT TO HIGH LEVEL MINISTERIAL SEGMENT OF CSD 12



NGOs are honored to be given this opportunity to share our perspectives on principles for a policy framework, the constraints and obstacles as well as the lessons learned in this thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements.

A. Principles

(1) Rights-based approach

NGOs firmly believe that implementation in the areas of water, sanitation and human settlements must be buttressed upon a rights-based approach (ie a human rights-based rather than a corporate rights-based one) in order to ensure justice and equity for the poor and marginalized. If the CSD integrates this as an overarching framework for all activities under its purview, we would have taken that giant leap towards implementation.

(2) Obligation of States

States have the primary responsibility to protect the rights of all peoples-the poor, vulnerable and especially

indigenous peoples. States must not abdicate this responsibility under any circumstances. Governments must establish effective frameworks that are binding on all service providers-public and private.

(3) Broad based participation

NGOs cannot underscore enough the importance of a broad based participatory approach involving all stake-holders that ensures good communication and coordination among all actors.

B. Obstacles and Constraints

(1) Finance

NGOs agree with several delegations that the biggest constraint to meeting the goals and targets has been the fact that rhetoric has not been reconciled with action on means of implementation. The money has not gone where mouths went in Johannesburg. Foreign direct investment is down and ODA levels have only gone up very marginally.

As far as the MDGs are concerned, Goal 8 has received scant attention and scrutiny at this CSD even though it holds THE key to unlocking the promises of the first seven MDGs.

And so, the factors that perpetuate a hostile global economic environment – trade, aid and debt- continue to stifle poor countries and hamper their ability to raise domestic resources for implementation. The CSD is yet to come to grips with its links to the WTO and BWIs and that coordination role has to be in place if these issues are to be aired and resolved.

(2) Crisis in Governance

The privatization debate

The emphasis we seem to be placing on approaches to governance in water, sanitation and human settlements are not taking us down the path of sustainability.

NGOs remain highly skeptical of the contribution that the transnational private sector can make towards accelerating implementation. This is because there have been several high profile failures and malpractices in the private water industry as evidenced by the painful experiences of residents in Manila, Cochamba, Soweto and Atlanta.

NGOs also caution against the push for privatization through the WTO/ GATS negotiations because that would further restrict the policy space of national governments in these areas.

The role of IFIs

We also call upon the international financial institutions not to serve the interests of the water companies alone. Lending about \$20 billion to water projects over the last decade the World Bank has been the principal financier of privatization and IMF conditionalities similarly constrain national governments.

C. Lessons learned

(1) Strengthening the public sector

NGOs strongly support strengthening the role of the State especially the hands of local authorities so that they can effectively manage and deliver these services to the people.

Making adequate funding available to this level of government that is closest to the people will have the added advantage of helping scale up good community initiatives. Time and again we have shown that what works best on the ground are projects by communities for communities themselves.

(2) Partnerships

NGOs share the concerns expressed during this review session regarding the need for more in-depth and systematic assessments of Type 11

Partnerships. The CSD needs to get a firm handle on these partnerships, monitor them and demand transparency and accountability and inform CSD 13 of the viability or otherwise of some of them as complementary implementation mechanisms including how they are funded and resources.

(3) Enhancing Multilateralism

NGOs wish to see a strengthened multilateral system with the UN playing a central role in global cooperative efforts. However, we note with alarm the disturbing trend towards further corporatization of the UN as reflected in the composition and terms of reference of the SGs Advisory Panel on Water and Sanitation. Placing representatives of global water corporations strategically at top levels of UN decision- influencing structures is a recipe for disaster and does not bode well for the UN's own credibility.

(4) Gender Mainstreaming

It is time we stopped the lip service to mainstreaming gender issues and start to actually show results by reporting with firm data and disaggregated statistics on women's role and contributions. Those most affected by problems in these areas are women while those deciding on solutions tend to be men. That aspect must change if implementation is to be sustainable.

D. Specific Issues.

- Any discussion about improving access to freshwater must embrace an eco-systems based approach and start at the source: wetlands, river basins and groundwater aquifers, all of which perform ecosystem services such as gathering, storing and purifying water for nature and human use.
- Ecosystem conservation must also be an integral part of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRMs) plans, PRSPs and other national development plans.

- Developing countries must be assured financial, capacity building and technical assistance in establishing and enforcing such strategies.
- The prioritization of sanitation in national plans and budgets is also of great significance in addressing these concerns and securing the redirection of resources towards the provision of sanitation facilities.
- Improving education for sustainable development and in particular in hygiene and health issues also deserves all our support.
- The human settlements issue has not received the due attention it deserves in this session and hopefully this can be rectified during CSD-13.
- NGOs would support programs that ensure security of tenure to increase the 'bankability' of the poor and improve their access to credit.
- The importance of conservation measures, low cost options, waste water collection, treatment and reuse, eco-sanitation and other simple practical measures are also worthy of strong encouragement from all sectors.
- Finally what is most important is to view this thematic cluster in a balanced way through the lens of economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development as well as link these issues to all other cross sectorally identified priorities.

E. Conclusion

We have the means and the technology to address these issues. The rewards are huge if we deliver on our commitments in the area of water, sanitation and human settlements. The costs, if we fail, are unimaginable for us and for future generations.

Indigenous Peoples and Issues of Self-determination, Participation and Privatization

By Tom Goldtooth - *Indigenous Environmental Network and Chair, CSD 12 Indigenous Peoples Caucus*

It is unfortunate that in some countries, the efforts of Indigenous peoples to achieve self-determination, land rights and the securing of their customary water rights has created serious disputes between States and Indigenous peoples. This situation could be one factor contributing to the lack of some States to prioritize the water, sanitation, and human settlement needs in Indigenous communities.

The recognition of self-determination and the collective rights of Indigenous communities has been a struggle within national States and within the UN system. Governmental delegates within the CSD 12 High-Level Segment must take into consideration the following points in recognition of Indigenous peoples:

1. Chapter 26 of Agenda 21 addresses Indigenous peoples and defines objectives, activities and means of implementation for ***“Recognizing and strengthening the role of indigenous peoples and their communities”***. The objectives and measures outlined in Chapter 26, to be fulfilled by governments and intergovernmental organizations in full partnership with indigenous peoples include, *inter alia*:

- Recognition of the rights and self-determination of indigenous peoples, values, traditional knowledge and resource management practices;
- Adoption of appropriate policies at national level;
- Arrangement for capacity-building and strengthening of active indigenous participation in policies and strategies for conservation and sustainable development.

2. Within the Johannesburg Political Declaration, the governments of the world further acknowledged the collective rights of Indigenous peoples, with the “s” on people through the adoption of Paragraph 25 that reads, ***“We reaffirm the vital role of the indigenous peoples in sustainable development.”*** From Agenda 21 to the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development,

the use of the “s” on people has been a victory in the States recognizing the collective rights of Indigenous peoples.

The Indigenous Peoples Caucus at the CSD 12 call upon consistency within all CSD documents and reports to use the term ***“Indigenous peoples”*** as opposed to indigenous communities or indigenous populations.

The Indigenous Peoples’ Caucus of CSD 12 has offered three recommendations to the State delegates within the interactive dialogues. These are:

1. Local, national, regional and international goals must be developed for realistic targets for improved sanitation and hygiene services, adopting community-



based, low-cost and intermediate technological approaches, bearing in mind the human right to clean, safe water and sanitation services.

2. Developing and developed countries must develop and strengthen clear policies, targets and institutional frameworks to improve sanitation, assure safe and adequate water supply, as well as access to hygiene services for the Indigenous peoples who live within their boundaries.

3. Water and sanitation services must remain in the public sector. All governments must commit to public sector delivery of water and sanitation services. Indigenous peoples have serious concerns with a market-based approach to water, sanitation services and management. There must be assurance that adequate financial resources are made available and that there is the provision for local capacity-building. In areas with Indigenous communities, mechanisms for the option for Indigenous peoples to control and manage their own water and sanitation systems must be provided.

Economic globalization constitutes one of the main obstacles for both the recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the protection of water resources. Transnational corporations and industrialized countries are imposing their global agenda on the negotiations and agreements of the United Nation system; the World Bank and other financial institutions; and the World Trade Organization and other free trade bodies; which reduce the rights enshrined in national constitutions, international conventions and agreements. Water is now being viewed as an economic commodity, and no longer a basic human right. This viewpoint is what underpins programs on water privatization and full-cost recovery, which is increasing mass poverty instead of reducing it. This makes the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals more elusive each day.

Review of models of privatization of water and sanitation systems demonstrates that transnational corporations, regardless of how responsibility they try to carry out their business, are simply not designed to provide public services to all people on an equitable basis.

Indigenous peoples feel that water and sanitation services must be provided by the public, with full and effective participation of our Indigenous peoples and local communities. An increase of innovative public financing mechanisms are needed. Experience demonstrates that water services provided by the private sector is not working.

Indigenous peoples are concerned that once water and sanitation services are privatized, the essence of life itself, which is the sacredness of water, would be determined and defined by the market system. Under the mechanism of privatization, the delivery of water services is then based on the 'ability to pay', which means that poor communities frequently end up without adequate services. Indigenous Peoples are concerned with this, since globally we are the poorest of the poor. An economic market-based system is not designed to conserve natural resources such as water. Maximizing profits means encouraging increased consumption. Water must be maintained as a public trust.





FINAL STATEMENT OF THE WFFP TO THE CSD

It is the bountain duty of every government in the world to see that every citizen get drinking water, sanitary needs, shelter, education, health, and food, and they should be bound by the Constitution of the respective country. It is the fundamental right of every citizen to have these basic needs met. These should be justiceable. These should be achieved in collaboration with the national governments, provincial, state and Municipal governments, NGOs, Trade Unions, Aboriginal Community, Fishing Communities, Farmers Communities, Women, Youth, and all the major groups, and the

International Community. And this is the fundamental right of every citizen, whether one is URBAN OR RURAL. "We have enough resources for the need of all, but we do not have enough resources for the greed of all". Mahatma Gandhi. "The life of the Planet and the dependent health and welfare of the humanity cannot be sacrificed to the Greed of a few in the World" Joseph Garland.

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YOUTH ASKS FOR EDUCATION

Letter from the Youth Caucus Regarding Education for Sustainable Development 12th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

We appreciate that so many of you have highlighted education as an essential component of sustainable development. As you have pointed out these past two weeks, and in past international agreements, education is an essential tool for shaping our future into a sustainable one. The Decade for Education for Sustainable Development is an especially important establishment in this regard. We urge government delegates to take this message home with them.



We call upon nations represented here to further formulate concrete plans for integrating the goals of sustainable development into their national education programs. To make education for sustainable development a reality, we need to scale up plans with specific deadlines, measurable indicators, accountable actors, and adequate funding.

Many commendable initiatives have already been undertaken. For example, The United

Nations Economic Commission for Europe has designed a strategy for education for sustainable development. Rescue Mission Planet Earth Mexico, in partnership with UNEP, has established a sustainable development education program for school children in Mexico City. The Brazilian ministries of environment and education have

begun to partner on education for sustainable development. There are approximately 10,000 Eco-Schools in 27 countries in Europe, Africa and South America. These and numerous other initiatives give us hope that education efforts can be successful. However, these are not enough. We ask governments to take the lead to incorporate sustainable development into their own educational programs.

We also encourage nations to support youth peer to peer education programs wherever appropriate. As youth, we are genuinely invested in the goals of sustainable development. We want to learn how to make our nations' futures sustainable, and we want to help our peers to learn the same. Please help us to make this possible.

Sincerely,
Youth Caucus

HISTORIC RECORDING OR USEFUL REPORT?

As was expected, reactions to the Chairs report from the New CSD were many and varied. Somewhat exhausted after marathon reading, several of the major groups expressed disappointment. What follows are some reflections from the NGOs and their reactions and responses to the Chair's Summary.

199 paragraphs embedded in 37 pages, this was the Chairs report having tried to record 7 days of discussion at the new CSD. Reading it was in many ways nothing but an arduous task. Quite ironically the biggest problem with the summary was that it was just a rendering of the discussion. Delegates and major groups remained divided over the Chair's summary. Some said the content is actually what we gave him through our discussions. Others maintained that in the eagerness to capture nearly every intervention the Chair sacrificed a valuable opportunity to prioritise key issues in the thematic cluster. That was one of the CSD 11 assigned tasks to CSD 12. NGOs also pointed to the long-winded report and said here was a woeful absence of any assessment or analysis of the content of deliberations.

A Chair's report with shortcomings Interestingly many delegations were also aware of serious shortcomings. As pointed out by one delegation, the wide divergences on certain issues that were expressed on the floor seem to have dissipated in the rambling record of statements. For example, the summary did not capture the differences in approach that

characterized references to commercialisation and privatisation of resources. Many claimed that it was vital that such opposing viewpoints were duly reflected. To regard water as a commodity open to market values was but one perspective. From a rights-based perspective water in its essential modes of functioning is more than a

**Water is
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"Indigenous
peoples" is
agreed language**

commodity. Water is fundamental to life itself. Despite the fact that many interventions carried this message, this vital message had not found its way to the chairs report – despite 199 paragraphs.

A political blunder of major proportions. The biggest surprise came from reading the references to the Indigenous Peoples. The reference was either as indigenous people or as indigenous communities. "Indigenous Peoples" written in this way, is the only correct and proper reference to this major group.

The discussion on this wording had taken place both at Rio plus 5 in 1997 and at Bali in 2002. "Indigenous Peoples" was finally the agreed language and is found in the JPOI. Few understood why Norway which took the lead on this issue in 1997 at the Plus 5 allowed this to happen. This is a deplorable mistake with grave political consequences. It has to be rectified before the final report is adopted, even though the Chair claimed this was his report and not subject to negotiation.

Interactions to be replicated
On the question whether the Summary reflects the changed dynamics within the CSD work program, NGOs are of two minds. The elaborate attempt to record all statements reflects in no way the robust exchanges on the floor. While NGOs favour this experimentation with "interaction" NGOs would rather withhold judgement on whether it should be replicated to all other Commissions.

The final grouse from the NGO community is that it did not take on board some of the important comments made at the interactive session with particular regard to gender issues.

Water, Peace, and Sustainable Development Implementing Johannesburg to Prevent and Resolve Conflicts

Date: Thursday, April 29, 2004 Time: 6.15pm - 7.45pm
Location: UN Headquarters Conference Room 6

OPENING REMARKS

Adnan Amin, UNEP New York Office
Sascha Müller-Kraenner, Heinrich Böll Foundation
Geoff Dabelko, Woodrow Wilson Center

Central America Water Cooperation:

Alexander López, *National University of Costa Rica and Mesoamerican Center for Sustainable Development of Drylands*

KEYNOTE SPEECH

KLAUS TÖPFER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNEP (invited)

Water and Human Security: Adil Najam, *Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy*

Linkages and Mutual Reinforcement of Sustainable Development and Security in Water:

Aaron Wolf, Oregon State University

Moderator: Geoff Dabelko, *Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars*

Cases and the Role of the CSD, The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and Partnerships:

Organized by:

Stakeholder Participation and Transboundary Waters: Patricia Kameri-Mbote, *International Environmental Law Research Centre*

UNEP
Heinrich Böll Foundation
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

SERIOUSLY



THEY WILL BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES AND THEIR SPEARS INTO PRUNING SHEARS. NATION WILL NOT LIFT UP SWORD AGAINST NATION, NEITHER WILL THEY LEARN WAR ANYMORE."—ISAIAH 2:4.

COME ON!
ARE YOU GONNA
STRIKE IT OR WHAT!



Mwangi '04

Contribute to Taking Issue

To publish articles in this newsletter, please submit your text before 5.00 p.m. to one of the SDIN facilitating organisations' staff.

SDIN Facilitating Organisations:

ANPED, The Northern Alliance for Sustainability

TWN, Third World Network

ELCI, Environment Liaison Centre International

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