

Everything Under the Sun The WSSD Multi-stakeholder Dialogues

Alongside the "business-as-usual" connected to international preparatory meetings, something not so usual is happening during the WSSD-process. Further acknowledging the role of the 9 Major Groups identified in Agenda 21, a series of so called Multistakeholder Dialogues takes place, where participants from all Major Groups discusses – well, everything related to Agenda 21 and beyond. That is, everything under the sun.



Is this good or bad? Ask any NGO and you will have any answer. Yes, it is good because it offers a supplementary avenue of lobbying, and travelling that avenue you can refine your points of view inspired by other actors experiences. No, it is not good, because it confines the Major Groups into a separate slot of the meeting, effectively preventing them from lobbying the real negotiations in full force.

The last is the danger, the first is the promise. The pitfalls need to be acknowledged, but the efforts could be rewarding. Small as the references are, the Chairman's paper concluding PrepCom 2 included wordings related to corporate responsibility and accountability, which is a result of the strong push by most Major Groups during the dialogue at the PrepCom. All Major Groups acknowledged the importance to discuss the matter further, but anything less than that would have been strange in light of the Enron-scandal hanging over the PrepCom as a reminder of what could be regarded as too little regulation.

During PrepCom 4 in Bali, May 27 - June 7, the second WSSD MSD will take place. To prepare it the Major Groups facilitators have initiated a new round of preparations for a written input to be published by the WSSD Secretariat. By April 12th all Major Groups are asked to deliver a short paper highlighting

"Priorities and Commitments for Sustainable Development". Each Major Group is also asked to contribute a list of names of the core group of people to take the floor during the MSD. Deadline for this is April 26.

How about the format for the next dialogue? Will we have another round of clarifying positions, will there be a more real dialogue, or will the format introduce a direct discussion amongst the Major Groups to try to formulate a common major group position? A position that could create a common pressure on governments?

And what about the themes to guide the dialogue?

As you read this Thursday morning, neither the format nor the content has been decided. A variety of issues have been tabled; for themes guiding the "ordinary" dialogue, NGOs have suggested "Governance" and "Financing", and themes for the part of the dialogue suggested to formulate a common Major Group position includes "A Major Group platform of Priorities" and "Framework for Partnerships". If part of the dialogue will include identifying a common position, the second theme makes sense; during the first part of Prep-

Com 3, speakers again and again have asked for a clear set of guidelines for identifying a partnership.

The format and the themes will be the focus of a meeting amongst all Major Group facilitators this morning, and during the afternoon the NGOs will continue this discussion.

Exciting as it is, what is important is that the dialogues (and the partnerships) does not substitute a strong intergovernmental commitment, where the states takes on their clear responsibility to commit all of us to the necessary steps to save the world and its inhabitants. Dialogues and partnerships will merely be complimentary to this.

Torleif Jonasson, The Danish '92 Group

Contents	
Prep Comm IV Dialogues	1
Education & Youth	2
Trade Unions	3
Women & Water	4
Environment & Development	5
Diary Dates	6

Education for Our Common Future

Vital to this process is the role that learning plays in the work surrounding the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It is more that just a theme of the process and as a means for implementation, learning expressed through education for sustainable development is a core component of the framework. It can provide access to knowledge, building skills and grappling with value issues, in order to create an informed political forum and informed civil society that can participate and act their knowledge regarding sustainable development.

The people behind this process of learning is the body of the educators in the widest possible sense, they comprise of the delegates themselves, the NGOs, communities, formal education systems, representatives from business and industry and the list could go on. However many of these 'educators' do not see themselves as being such, even though they are playing a valuable role in the process. Education was given the enormous challenge in Agenda 21, as it was mentioned second to governments throughout the whole document. The wider education community needs to meet this challenge.

Coming out of PrepCom II, there was a broad and strong support for education among delegations, all of the major groups in the multi stakeholder dialogue session who identified sustainable development education, which incorporates traditional knowledge and information, as the major priority issue; caucus' and other related groups. However do we know what needs to be done to incorporate this need into this process?

Education for sustainable development needs to be recognised as a major component of the process, not just in the means of implementation but through out all other areas of the text as it stands, especially to educate to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns. The most important way to do this is to reorient education towards sustainable development process, alongside incorporating education into national strategies and action plans for sustainable development. For much of this to happen there needs to be a recognition that education is important and therefore needs more investments.

However what is crucial to these policy ideas is the networks and systems that are needed to connect and link these intergovernmental commitments, intergovernmental organisations, governments, and the wider educators, so they can share their initiatives and partnerships to help implement the areas we are looking at. In UNESCO's (the Task Manager of Education, public awareness and training) position paper for this PrepCom, they also agree that

'Education for Sustainable Development should be one of the major themes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development' as the outcomes of PrepCom II did not reflect the great needs for Education for Sustainable Development worldwide and in relation to all the themes of WSSD as well as providing an holistic approach

to integrating ESD policies, strategy and action within the process and the six Education for All goals.

They advocate creating partnerships, and framework to bring together different disciplines and actors. Their commitment to programmes, projects, and activities is further strengthened through greater role given to civil society in reinforcing existing networking teams. As well as reinforcing partnership mechanisms to strengthen international and regional alliances, associations, networks and training institutions and professional bodies, NGOs and civil society at large.

What now needs to be developed is how we can proceed in accomplishing these partnerships and networks in time to be launched and presented in Johannesburg. In the long term the concept of a 10th Major Group of educators, suggested yesterday on the floor by Canada, would assist the educators are involved in the process. However we as educators can now start to great the 'broad alliance' that is needed, to share initiatives and stories, to help understand what is going on, provide access to information to facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available (as advocated in Principle 10 of Agenda 21, which is getting recognition through the debates on governance this week). This would help to clarify the meaning of environmental education, sustainable development education and education for sustainable development.

Rio was the largest educational event for sustainable development, as learning exchanges were developed and people became publicly aware of the issues, however now is the time to articulate on what is actually going on and to bring this wider education community together.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this or have comments please contact Anna Birney abirny@earthsummit2002.org.

Youth at the 3rd PrepCom

At the second PrepCom, the input by different youth groups from all over the world was very constructive. They suggested different agenda items, for example the importance of the role education in sustainability. In the paper produced by the Chairman this subject was not mentioned, however, and even the word 'youth' could not be found. Whilst youth is the world of the future! No sustainable world without youth that has been educated about their footprint, and no hope without youth that have had the possibility to go to school.

The youth caucus decided to write a letter to the Chair, expressing these concerns and suggesting text amendments. In this very week, when the national governments are discussing the Chair's paper, some of the amendments are still worth being mentioned and the youth caucus is thoroughly going through the texts to try and find openings for these views!

For example, the youth caucus thinks the SPAC chapter lacks a

clear statement about the role of "education to raise awareness on sustainable development and to change unsustainable patterns of consumption" and it doesn't tackle the impact of advertising on lifestyles. (Would youth feel uncomfortable with their freedom and they would like more governmental influence on their lifestyles!?) In the Implementation chapter, youth would like the educational community to be accepted as a fundamental force in implementing sustainable development. Besides, comprehensive youth empowerment programs in the educational, vocational, and political sectors should be supported, particularly at local and national levels. Concerning access to information, a clear paragraph on access to the Internet is missing, and so is concern for the digital divide.

The youth caucus does its best to raise these issues whenever possible, but they are already preparing for the 4th PrepCom in Bali. As a major group, they can produce an official youth statement and this statement should be made on behalf of youth groups worldwide, southern as well as northern. At this very moment, one hundred other young people are gathering in Denmark to prepare for the world summit and to explore what could be submitted to the secretariat. A difficult process for a group that consists mainly of part-time volunteers!

Frank Mulder (Dutch National Youth Council)

Trade Union Pursue Working Partnerships

Trade unions came to Prepcom III determined to establish direct contact with every country delegation, and avoid the side discussions and rooms where delegates are seldom encountered. Not only does it make sense to focus on the people who actually make the decisions; it has provided them with perspectives, ideas and problems that had not been considered before.

In meeting with country delegates trade unionists attending Prepcom III found that many delegates feel the same – that the time has come to move beyond text, and into action. Many have made it clear that they have no difficulty supporting the trade union positions but were not always clear how to incorporate these into text. Trade union literature on mobile phones, for example, aroused a great deal of interest, and they saw the concrete actions that trade unions are taking to implement sustainable development.

Likewise, delegates agreed with the trade union focus on the social dimension. They only want to know how it can be effectively reflected in text – and more importantly, in practice.

For this reason, trade unions strongly encourage delegates to attend the side event that will take place on the 8th Floor of the Church Center between 1:15 – 2:45 PM today. "Strengthening the Social Pillar: Employment, Social Dialogue & Sustainable Development" is being hosted by the International Labour Office, and will focus on concrete ways of moving the social agenda into prac-

tice.

The key lies in working partnerships, and trade unions have a long history in this area. In a sense, each of our 2.2 million collective agreements signifies a 'workplace partnership', where employer and union work closely together to achieve common goals that are negotiated, verifiable, and contain the internal means for enforcement, constant renewal and innovative approaches to new problems.

Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development provide trade unions and employers with a new reason for partnerships, ones that go beyond the workplace to include NGO's and other major groups in civil society, and including groups that have never been included before.

Concrete, innovative partnerships are the best way to prove that aspects or 'dimensions' of sustainable development can indeed be integrated in practice. To be truly effective, however, these must include governments, laws, regulatory frameworks and other instruments of public policy, which the WSSD can promote and strengthen.

Trade unions are particularly excited about the potential that exists in the eco-label, as we believe it can be one of the most potent tools for linking consumption and production. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions is exploring ways of introducing a comprehensive labeling system that would signify to the whole world that a particular product or service was produced and intended for use in a sustainable workplace.

Such a label would be modeled on the TCO eco-label, and would signify: full verifiability and accountability, active promotion of ILO core labour standards (including health and safety), a link between production and consumption, the workplace and domestic life, and most of all, support from the community partners – trade unions, business, NGO's and others. It would be promoted through the network of the international trade union movement, which has over 155 million members on 2 million worksites.

Trade unions have listened to country delegates, and intend to respond directly to their concerns. Based on our reading of the text to be introduced for Prepcom III, we will produce a list of amendments that can be introduced directly into the discussion.

Lucien Royer. ICFTU

Women's Caucuses

Tuesday 26th and Wednesday 27th

These two meetings have been an illuminating insight into the co-operative ways of working by women. Yesterday's meeting focused on Partnerships (Type 2s), and today's on Governance.

Yesterday, particular concern was voiced about increasing militarism and its effects on the possibility of bringing about sustainable development – that while peace was being squeezed on all fronts, the threat to human life and to being 'humane' were constantly under threat. A speaker from Norway asked for WSSD to initiate a survey into the effects of military consumption, and the consequent threat to sustainable development. There was a strong demand for

peace and reduction in military activity.

The principal outcome of the meeting, however, was the development of a process to prepare a statement for the Partnerships meeting which was held yesterday afternoon. A group of women volunteered to draft the statement. During the course of the day, a number of amendments were made, and the statement delivered at the meeting – it prompted a round of applause.

In summary:

- National governments are and should still be held accountable to Agenda 21;
- The current process of defining partnerships is not clear, well understood or defined;
- The Women's Caucus at the WSSD does not want to be part of partnerships which are not well-defined. Similarly, the Caucus does not endorse any partnership between the UN and TNCs;
- Women say that they are impoverished by the policies of globalisation. Partnerships with the Bretton Woods organisations are not possible until they can demonstrate commitment to the objectives of sustainable development.

To be welcomed are principles such as:

- Gender balance and gender justice in decision-making at all levels and in all areas of economic, social, environment and development policies;
- Partnerships must be based on and be respectful of the human rights framework;
- Genuine consultation and dialogue must be established with civil society;
- The necessary financial and other resources must be provided if partnerships are to be properly constructed;
- There should be a gender audit of the partnership process.

* we were reminded not to use 'bullet' points in our documents, hence the 'ticks' above.

Wednesday's meeting focused on Governance. Once again, a participatory process was established with a group of women volunteering to work on a statement, to be fed into the PrepCom process. We need to beware of the implication that all governance in the north is 'good', and that in the south is 'bad'. And also that 'good' (as defined by the north) governance in the south is the way to attract aid. Governance as a concept needs to be clearly defined.

The concept of 'gender justice' needs to be into the next version of the Chairman's paper. Women do a great deal of very effective 'self governance' all over the world. Their role in environmental 'governance' is an example of good practice which does not receive the respect it deserves. Women need to be involved in decision making at all levels.

A synthesis of the outputs of all the Caucuses is taking place. We were reminded that gender issues are noticeable by their absence from the Chairman's current paper – that needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Catherine Budgett-Meakin, Stakeholder Forum

A Bonn Keys Gender Perspective

The Bonn Keys reflect in a nutshell the discussions and agreements reached at the International Conference on Freshwater last December. If you were present and participated in the Bonn discussions the keys reflect a very small nut. It is not an easy job summarising so much that was said but then again who cares about the texts, when the actions mean the most!

One good example is the gender perspective mentioned in the keys. The keys are strong in that it highlights the poor, the shared decision-making of governments and communities, shared responsibilities, accountability, coalition building and cooperation – all elements that point towards equal sharing of burdens and benefits between women and men, rich and poor, young and old – the gender approach. Yet there is so much more to it, especially if one tries to put the gender approach into practise.

During Bonn conference, the German Government took a bold move in organising a plenary session on gender and water right in the middle of the conference schedule, with no side sessions to distract delegations. The discussion was the first ever (at least the first that I have experienced) where delegates shared successes and failures they have had in mainstreaming a gender perspective across the board from policymaking, institutionalisation to implementation of projects. It was fully agreed by everyone present and made crystal clear that poverty eradication is crucial to the future of the world, and a key element of sustainable development and that a gender-sensitive approach is one crucial part of that change. By understanding the different roles of women and men in water management, it is necessary to change the power balance so that women and men, at all levels of society can participate equally in the management of water. A gender-sensitive approach is not limited to the development of an appropriate policy, but to its implementation through a concrete strategy. Such a strategy has a number of facets, a key one of which is training and capacity building. Other elements include facilitating the equal participation of women and men; setting clear targets and indicators of success; and setting up conflict resolution mechanisms. Above all, such a strategy requires those with technical expertise to learn to listen, to especially poor men and to poor women who have important expertise and understanding of their own experience to bring to the table.

Looking back at the keys now, the whole issue of gender is more complex than one may think. And though it may be implicit for all of us to have the balance of women and men, rich and poor in the back of our minds when we speak and write about "people" and "communities" managing water for our future, getting down to actual business of changing the inequalities that still exist in power and decision making is the real challenge. I suppose no keys can actually guarantee this.

Jennifer Francis, Gender and Water Alliance

Environment and Development are mutually supportive

“Sound and equitable environmental management is a requisite for poverty eradication” was the core statement from a side event presented by a unique collaborative initiative of UNDP, World Bank, UK Department for International Development, and DG Development of the EU. The meeting presented the initial findings of a draft report called “Linking Poverty reduction and Environmental Management: Policy Challenges and Opportunities” which aims to contribute to WSSD.

The report is set in the context of aiming to encourage the poor to invest in environmental protection and see how to use the environment as a means by which to get people out of poverty. It is set in the context of meeting the principle Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on poverty, health, environment, child and maternal mortality, Environmental integrity, gender equity, tackling HIV and malaria. These targets, the report suggests, should not be looked at in isolation but seen as part of a whole approach to improving livelihoods and sustainable development. Once you look at the statistics the correlations become clearer. For example, between environment and health, in developing countries 20% of mortality is directly linked to environmental problems, such as poor water quality, indoor and outdoor air quality, use of agrochemicals. This relationship is shockingly 4 times the level of association for developed countries and in Asia and Africa the level of associated deaths is increasing. The key recommendations to take a holistic approach include:

- Cross sectoral engagement of organisations for better integration
- Seeing the environment not as a constraint but as part of the solution to tackling poverty
- Improving governance, integrating the environment into poverty strategies, including the poor into the decision making process, tackling corruption, creating better signals of the linkages for the public –through national resource accounting and household surveys.

The report advocates that the environment is an asset that needs to be better provided for the benefit of the poor, through clearer land tenure, natural resources management at the local level, increasing the role of women to address environmental issues, and enabling the vulnerable to assess and mitigate for environmental risks. This approach is directly tied to the reports emphasis on not only growth (development) for its own sake but enhancing the quality of growth. “Growth is a necessary but not sufficient condition for poverty eradication. The quality of growth is what matters both in terms of promoting pro-poor growth and in terms of reducing impacts on the environment.

This approach, the report proposes, is also be tied to international policies, including those which enhance access of developing countries to OECD economies. This would include the elimination of perverse subsidies, reduction of trade barriers in developed countries, but also to building capacity in developing countries for environmental standards. The report also identifies the need for responsibility of the developed world to take responsibility to protect global public goods “such as the world’s climate and biodiversity – that benefit us all, but which are often crucial to the survival of the poor”. This responsibility includes better integration by donor of environment into poverty approaches, as well new and additional financing to provide GPGs. In the initial conclusions, they found that there is a win-win situation to be found between improving the lives of poor and enhancing the environment. Where trade offs may occur they can be resolved through participation and clear analysis of the options.

Whilst the findings of the report are not anything particularly new or surprising, what is positive however is the fact that this group of development institutions have worked together and reached a form of consensus on the relationship between these two broad issues.

The report process welcomes further involvement across all sectors into the debate through online e-dialogue but also to contributions via alternative means up until June 30th. For further info see: <http://vx.worldbank.org/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?enter=env-rio-10> or

Contact: join-env-rio-10@lists.worldbank.org.

State Of Readiness Presentation by South Africa

The Johannesburg World Summit Company (JOWSCO) and the Civil Society Secretariat, will make a joint State of Readiness presentation covering the operational and logistical preparations that have been put in place for the Johannesburg Summit and the Civil Society NGO Global Forum which will be held from the 26th August – 4th September 2002.

DATE : 28TH MARCH 2002

VENUE: DAG HAMMARSKJOLD LIBRARY

AUDITORIUM

TIME : 15h30 – 17h30

Events Diary

Thursday 1.15 - 2.45	Legal Rules, Common Future 2002: Principals and Best Practice of International Sustainable Development Law. Centre for International Sustainable Development Law. Conf. Room 1
1.15 - 2.45	New Partnerships for Africa's Development. South African Mission. Conference Room 4
1.15 - 2.45	Contributions of Industry to Sustainable Development. UNIDO. Conference Room 6
1.15 - 2.45	Global Governance Made Simple. LEAD. Conference Room B
3.30 - 5.30	Briefing for Delegates Organised by JOWSCO/South African Organising Committee. Dag Hammarskjold Library Auditorium.
6.15 - 7.45	Forging Partnerships for Sustainable Development for Water. National Resources Defence Council. Conference Room B
Monday 1.15 - 2.45	Integrating a Human Rights Framework for Sustainable Development. Peoples Movement for Human Rights Education. Conference Room 4
1.15 - 2.45	Promoting Health Through Sustainable Development. Physicians for Social Responsibility. Conference Room 6
1.15 - 2.45	Ecovillage Visions. Indigenous Peoples & Sustainable Development. Global Ecovillage Network. Conference Room B
1.15 - 2.45	Water & Gender Issues. Government of the Netherlands. Delegates Dinning Room
6.15 - 2.45	Integrated Mechanism for Implementing Sustainable Development. Earth Council Conference Room 4
6.15 - 2.45	Nuclear Applications for Sustainable Development. International Atomic Energy Agency. Conference Room 6
6.15 - 2.45	Subtracting Sulphur from Diesel: The Next Step in Cleaning the World's Fuel Supply. Natural Resources Defence Council. Conference Room B

Diary of a DSD Special Advisor

I'm starting to lose faith in the official process. Yesterday we tried to get governments to table their thoughts in session and then to submit their text amendments by email after. We were a little concerned when we hadn't received any by tea-time, until we got a call from the UNiversal office furniture department. It turns out people were sending things to chair@un.org

So many people interested in type twos that Conference Room 5 reminded me of the a trade fair. I think I lost a stone in weight. Who said the UN doesn't have an on-site sauna. Perhaps we can sell the CSD post Johannesburg as an annual trade fair and an opportunity to lose those pounds put on over Xmas.

Frustration must be seeping in as I find myself sitting behind the co-Chair in Room 4 typing a ditty:

Type one, type two or type three
 Hype one hype two hype three
 Commitments are won
 Commitments are gone
 Sustainability
 Oh where art thee

Today the `Russian` came back from a meeting with the Conference Services and it seems that he has managed to do a deal (I have no idea how he does it). Not only are they prepared to allow us to meet over the weekend but he has secured crate of vodka for the Secretariat.

