

CSD-12 Briefing  
UN Headquarters  
Friday, 3 October 2003

By Pamela Chasek  
Editor, Earth Negotiations Bulletin  
[pam@iisd.org](mailto:pam@iisd.org)

The Chair of the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, Norwegian Environment Minister Børge Brende, gave a briefing on preparations for CSD-12 at UN headquarters on Friday afternoon, 3 October 2003 at 3:45 pm. The briefing followed the second meeting of the CSD-12 Bureau.

In his introductory remarks, Minister Brende explained that he is working hard to ensure that many ministers of different portfolios, representatives of UN agencies and other stakeholders and NGOs are involved in the preparations for CSD-12, especially those who are involved in CSD-12's three major topics: water, sanitation and human settlements. He wants CSD-12 to be a forum where for review of implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) and the Millennium Development Goals. He stressed that CSD-12 is a review year and there will be no negotiations at the meeting, currently scheduled from 19-30 April 2004. He described some of meetings he has had with UN agency officials and other experts to plan thematic events, panels and presentations that coincide with the topics for this two-year cycle of the CSD.

At the Bureau's meeting that morning, the Bureau agreed that the high-level segment of CSD-12 will take place at the end of the meeting (28-30 April). They also proposed an organization of work for the session (soon to be posted on the CSD www site <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev>).

The documents distributed included:

- Note of the Bureau of the Twelfth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its Second Meeting
- CSD-12: An Illustration of Framework for the Organisation of Work
- CSD-12 Proposed Organisation of Work
- Ambitions and Priorities of the Chair

Delegates then had the opportunity to ask questions, to which Minister Brende and Joanne DiSano, the Director of the Division for Sustainable Development, responded.

With regard to the Secretary-General's reports for CSD-12, DiSano said that there will be an overview report on the implementation of the JPOI, as well as specific reports on water, sanitation and human settlements and the relationship between these three issues. The Secretariat is working with the relevant UN agencies to put the reports together and it is hoped that advanced, unedited copies of the reports (in English) will be available before Christmas. She added that a number of other reports were requested by CSD-11,

including on national reporting, indicators and partnerships, and that the Secretariat is working on these as well.

With regard to the regional meetings, the UN Regional Economic Commissions have agreed to hold these meetings in conjunction with meetings that are already on the Commissions' calendars, but have adjusted the focus to review the thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements. The CSD does not yet have full funding for regional meetings since the current session of the General Assembly has to agree to reallocate funds for the CSD Intersessional Working Groups to regional meetings. This is a transition year until the General Assembly takes a decision on this matter. The outcomes of the regional meetings will be submitted to CSD-12. Some of the outcomes will be incorporated into the Secretary-General's reports, but some of the regional meetings will be held too late for this (due to funding constraints). However, the Commissions have raw data that the Secretariat will be able to use in the Secretary-General's reports.

On the issue of major group participation, DiSano responded that major groups will participate in all discussions at CSD-12, instead of only a multi-stakeholder dialogue.

In response to a question about the outcomes of CSD-12, the Chair reiterated that there will be no negotiations. The Chair will produce a summary of what happened at the meeting. This summary will be forwarded as is to CSD-13.

Before concluding, the Chair stressed the importance of an integrated consideration of the three major thematic topics during CSD-12.

The briefing concluded at 4:30 pm.