



Special Report on Selected Side Events at WSSD PC-III
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Events convened on Tuesday, 26 March 2002

Essential elements of good governance

Presented by the Environmental Law Institute

Elena Petkova, World Resources Institute, outlined common elements of national systems for public participation, which are being proposed as guidelines for adoption at the WSSD. She highlighted progress in implementation of national laws, institutional infrastructure and practices for public access to environmental information, though requirements for reporting and disclosure of information about facility performance are still lacking in some countries. She noted more limited progress on procedures to enable participation in decision making affecting the environment. Progress is most needed to facilitate access to justice and remedy in environmental decision making, particularly in ensuring affordable and timely legal services and building the capacity of both the public and governments on participation and environmental rights.

Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental, described the Inter-American Strategy for Public Participation, which focuses on, *inter alia*: establishment of legal frameworks to ensure public access to information, decision making and justice; promotion of institutional structures, policies and procedures to expand public participation; education and training; and dedication of funding for public participation in decision making.

Mas Achmad Santosa, Indonesian Center for Environmental Law, discussed how to ensure access to information in countries that are in transition to democracy. He emphasized the importance of: recognition of access rights in national legal systems; institutions and mechanisms to implement rights; and international cooperation. He highlighted significant gaps in ensuring public access to information and participation, including inadequate information management and consequent limitations on access, and a lack of awareness by both the public and governments of the value of environmental information.

Carl Bruch, Environmental Law Institute, outlined provisions and mechanisms to promote public participation and access to information and administrative and judicial remedy in North American and European regional agreements.

Nathalie Bernasconi, Center for International Environmental Law, stressed the importance of public access to international policy-making procedures. She suggested that the proposed guidelines could help improve governance structures at both national and international levels, as well as access to decision making, and could promote the use of stronger, more rules-based judicial mechanisms by international institutions.



Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, Sociedad Peruana de Derecho Ambiental, stresses that effective public participation requires recognition of the need for strong democracy, as well as measures to address corruption.

More information:

<http://www.accessinitiative.org>
<http://www.wri.org>
<http://www.spda.org.pe>
<http://www.icel.or.id>
<http://www.eli.org>
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Left to right: Clayton Thomas-Muller, Indigenous Youth; Tom Goldtooth, Indigenous Environmental Network; Wilfredo V. Alanguí, Tebtebba Foundation; and Sebastio Haji Manchineri, Indigenous Peoples of Latin America.

Indigenous peoples' proposals for the WSSD

Presented by Tebtebba Foundation

Participants discussed the priorities of indigenous peoples' agenda for the WSSD.

Tom Goldtooth, Indigenous Environmental Network, recommended: the adoption of the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; recognition of indigenous food-related knowledge and practices; involvement of spiritual practitioners in decision making; non-violation of indigenous peoples' rights by governments; and prompt ratification of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

Sebastio Haji Manchineri, Indigenous Peoples of Latin America, presented the priorities of indigenous peoples for the WSSD, including sustainable development, rights, natural resources, and organizational strengthening. He highlighted initiatives for: a general diagnosis of the indigenous situation since Rio; consensus building among stakeholders; and WSSD proposals and their implementation.

Sayo':kla Kindness, International Environmental Network, called for stricter legislation on and removal of subsidies for mining activities as an unsustainable form of development. She said the rights of indigenous people are often ignored due to lack of land ownership.

Lucy Mullenkei, African Indigenous Women's Organization, presented indigenous women's concerns, including a lack of participation and recognition of women as key players, pollution, poverty, AIDS, and a lack of awareness of high-level decision making among indigenous women.

Clayton Thomas-Muller, Indigenous Youth, highlighted challenges facing young indigenous people, including: practicing sustainable lifestyles; preserving cultural identity; participating in decision making; obtaining rights to intellectual property; and resisting systematic racism and criminalization.

Joji Cariño, Tebtebba Foundation, outlined difficulties in lobbying for indigenous peoples' rights in intergovernmental negotiations. She called for promotion of the right to self-determination, and noted the struggle for indigenous peoples' prior informed consent to the use of traditional lands.

More information:

<http://www.moles.org>
<http://www.alpacdc.com/ien>
<http://www.tebtebba.org>
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Development for life? HIV/AIDS renders development unsustainable

Presented by the Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic and the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers

Desmond Johns, UNAIDS, described the recent transformation of HIV/AIDS from a health issue to a development crisis, citing household-level impacts of the epidemic in developing countries such as financial difficulties and reduced agricultural output.

Bibiana Bunuan, Maryknoll Sisters, discussed the implications of globalization on Filipino social culture. Underlining growing problems of homelessness, migrant labor and school absenteeism that correlate with elevated vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, Bunuan called for economic policies that address the needs of poor people.

Daniel Leyva, Latino Commission on AIDS, focused on the stigma experienced by HIV-positive individuals in many parts of Latin America and the Caribbean. Noting that treatment and education are hampered by widespread persecution, he said that prevention campaigns and expanded treatment options can only succeed if those in need are free to access such programmes.

Discussion: A lively exchange addressed the potential and limitations of traditional remedies in AIDS treatment, circumstantial variations in individual risk assessment, the roles of men and gender stereotypes in treatment and remediation, the global focus on HIV/AIDS in Africa, medication pricing, and the interaction of moral and ethical viewpoints with social policy.



Daniel Leyva, Latino Commission on AIDS; and Bibiana Bunuan, Maryknoll Sisters, with a quilt made by a woman living with AIDS.

More information:

<http://www.unaids.org>
<http://www.remedios.com.ph>
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White water to blue water: A cross-cutting approach to regional oceans and coastal ecosystem management

Presented by the US delegation



Amb. Mary Beth West, US, presents a proposal for a Type II initiative.

Amb. Mary Beth West, US, presented a proposal for a Type II initiative on a cross-cutting approach to regional oceans and coastal ecosystem management in the Caribbean. Its objectives would be to: increase coastal State and regional capacity for cross-sectoral approaches to management of watersheds and marine ecosystems; develop a framework for regional management programmes to promote efficient use of programme resources and address the entire scope of watershed and marine ecosystem management; and reverse the downward trend in fisheries. The initiative would begin with a stakeholder conference in 2003 to identify ways to strengthen efforts underway, promote new coordination and implementation mechanisms, and develop new programmes as necessary. A regional website database listing national, bilateral and multilateral cross-sectoral projects would also be developed. West stated that this could be a pilot programme to be replicated in other regions, and representatives from other regional programmes would be actively involved. She said the US was exploring possibilities for securing partners in the initiative.

Veerle Vanderweerd, UNEP/GPA, endorsed the proposed regional approach and its focus on the link between freshwater and oceans, highlighting the potential for synergies and for catalyzing programmes in other regions.

Amb. Neroni Slade, Samoa, expressed support for the proposed initiative and interest in playing a contributory role. Highlighting existing regional projects related to this proposal, he underscored the importance of effective coordination. He emphasized the need for a full range of capacity building efforts in such programmes, and for efforts to ensure that the information collected is retained and shared with experts in the region.

Representatives of the UK, IUCN, the Netherlands, Australia, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and others welcomed the proposed initiative. Support was expressed for its integrated approach, linking of freshwater and oceans, synergies with other programmes, replicability, and involvement of other regional programme representatives. Others stressed the need to address social aspects of sustainable development, institutional strengthening and capacity building in developing countries, and priority-setting by countries within the region.

More information:

<http://www.state.gov/g/oes>

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World Development Report 2002-2003: Sustainable development in a dynamic economy

Presented by the World Bank



Zmarak Shalizi, World Bank, outlines the World Bank's forthcoming World Development Report for 2002-2003.

More information:

<http://www.econ.worldbank.org/wdr>

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Zmarak Shalizi <zshalizi@worldbank.org>

Zmarak Shalizi, World Bank, outlined the World Bank's forthcoming World Development Report for 2002-2003, which presents existing assets and institutional frameworks for addressing sustainability, analysis of sustainable development problems in inhabited areas, and steps for future dialogue and action.

Shalizi highlighted problems stemming from projected population increases and existing conditions of extreme poverty. He noted current social challenges, including international income gaps and widespread conflict in many of the poorest countries, and environmental issues such as freshwater scarcity and the depletion of fisheries, and promoted development analysis that is based on long time horizons. Distinguishing between environmentally fragile rural areas, rural areas with commercial crop potential, and urban environments, Shalizi also discussed, *inter alia*: public goods and externalities; institutional failures; and trends in urbanization.

Outlining recommendations contained in the Report, Shalizi highlighted areas for future work, including capacity building, involvement of local groups in data collection, use of market mechanisms, and potential roles for traditional institutions.

Discussion: Several participants suggested additional issues for incorporation into the final Report, including desertification, the ecosystem approach, use of poverty reduction strategy papers in planning processes, non-commodity measures of well-being, and economic valuations of non-monetary assets. Others called for a greater focus on concrete action items, in light of the Report's potential contributions to the WSSD process.

Precarious balance between environment and development: Search for an integrated approach

Presented by the International Research Foundation for Development (IRFD)

Irini Nike Sarlis, Society for Ecological Sensibility, chaired a discussion on how to find balance between environment and development.

Hossein Moeini, Iran, shared experiences on implementation of the Kuwait Regional Convention for Cooperation on Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution, and stressed the need for cooperation among stakeholders as a pre-condition for sustainable development.

William Pace, World Federalist Movement, said that decompartmentalization and democracy in intergovernmental processes are central challenges for sustainable development. He called for assessment of the successes and failures of ECOSOC, the UN General Assembly, UNEP and the CSD, and for educational efforts to focus stakeholder attention on the issue of international governance.

Cleusa Canales Cevallos, IRFD, presented a case study on a small city in Brazil that demonstrated how efforts to meet the basic needs of underprivileged people and apply a democracy approach can help to ensure sustainable development.

Chang-Erh Chou, IRFD, explained how economic development in Taiwan enabled response to environmental problems and resulted in more sustainable policies. She concluded that sustainable development must be achieved gradually in continuous consultation with all stakeholders.

Nishantha Arachchige Don, IRFD, stressed that sustainable energy production, distribution and consumption methods play an important role in achieving necessary levels of economic growth while ensuring sustainability.



William Pace, World Federalist Movement, stresses the need to address international environmental and sustainable development governance at the WSSD, and cautions against the existing view that these types of governance cancel each other out.

More information:

<http://www.irfd.org>

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