



Special Report on Selected Side Events at WSSD PC-IV  
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Events convened on Monday, 3 June 2002

## Regional implementation of the outcomes of the WSSD

Presented by the UN Regional Commissions

This event discussed means of implementation of WSSD outcomes at the regional level, with an emphasis on partnerships.

Kim Hak-Su, Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), highlighted the role played by the regional commissions in the WSSD preparatory process in focusing attention on critical issues and mobilizing regional and sub-regional stakeholders. He underscored the regional commissions' central role in: strengthening sustainable development governance at the regional level; reviewing national reports on implementation of Agenda 21 to make substantive recommendations to governments; and establishing meaningful partnerships. He advocated that the regional commissions take the lead in coordinating regional dialogues and monitoring efforts, and that regional financing mechanisms, such as regional versions of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), be established.

Nitin Desai, Secretary-General of the WSSD, underscored the importance of the regional commissions in WSSD preparations and follow-up, and said the outputs of the regional preparatory meetings were valuable outcomes in their own right. He discussed whether Type II initiatives should encompass regional cooperation between governments, and stated that regional dialogue can provide an opportunity for candid sharing of experiences and information. Stressing the importance of flexibility in defining regional approaches, he said regional governance structures should be self-defined and supported by the UN system.

**Discussion:** In the ensuing discussion, many participants and government representatives expressed strong support for regional and sub-regional levels of organization. Pakistan said, *inter alia*, that regional bodies should study national reports but should play a facilitating rather than policing role, and advocated regionalizing the GEF and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. South Africa highlighted, *inter alia*: the central role of NEPAD as a regional framework; the importance of South-South cooperation; and the African Union that is to be launched later this year. An Arab NGO questioned how regional agencies can work together efficiently while avoiding competition and conflict. The Asian Development Bank questioned whether regional funding arrangements modeled on the GEF would be appropriate for supporting poverty alleviation efforts.

The Economic Commission for Europe stressed the need for policy convergence in macroeconomic policies as well as in efforts related to poverty eradication, sustainable energy, forests and water. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean highlighted the role of the regional commissions in bringing economic and social expertise to sustainable development issues. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia noted difficulties in capturing the attention of ministers of finance and planning, and ESCAP highlighted the regional commissions' success in building tri-partite partnerships for sustainable development.



Kim Hak-Su, ESCAP, says that global developments can have profound local effects, while local actions can steer the global community toward a sustainable future.

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# Tracking progress: Implementing sustainable consumption policies

Presented by Consumers International (CI), UNEP and the European Union

Louise Sylvan, CI, presented *Tracking Progress*, a joint UNEP-CI survey on government implementation of sustainable consumption and production policies. She said the survey revealed that unsustainable consumption patterns continue to cause ecosystem degradation, pollution and poverty, and stressed the need for political will and commitment from national governments to implement policies to enable more sustainable consumption.

Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel, UNEP, stressed the need for a holistic, life cycle-based approach to addressing consumption and production. She emphasized that consumption is an issue for governments, industry and the public, and highlighted the need for: governments to establish regulatory frameworks, implement economic instruments and build institutions; industry to undertake environmentally and socially responsible procurement and respond to consumer demand for cleaner products; and NGOs to raise awareness.

Fabio Feldman, Brazil, noted that the Brazilian Government enacted a consumers code ten years ago but has no mechanism to ensure its enforcement, and stressed that the greatest challenge is to educate consumers about the impacts of consumption and sustainable alternatives, and provide them with opportunities to make necessary changes.

Jai Ok Kim, Citizens' Alliance for Consumer Protection of Korea (CACPK), outlined CACPK's work to promote energy conservation and efficiency in Korea. She underscored the importance of government action, and called on UNEP to implement a training programme for governments on sustainable production and consumption.

Yin Shao Loong, Third World Network, highlighted the critical equity issues underlying production and consumption debates, as well as the links between consumption and climate change. Recalling the emphasis in *Tracking Progress* on action by national governments, he said efforts in the WTO to require national treatment for foreign companies could hinder national efforts by developing countries to build capacity for sustainable production in domestic industry.

Pernille Sørensen, Denmark, highlighted the EU's proposal for a ten-year global work programme on sustainable production and consumption as an outcome of the WSSD, which would constitute a framework to build on existing sustainable production and consumption efforts by creating a more focused approach and enhancing synergies to accelerate their implementation. She underscored the EU's commitment to reversing unsustainable production and consumption patterns by decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation.



Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel, UNEP, stresses that sustainable consumption is about consuming differently and creating space for consumption for all, particularly for those in need.

#### More information:

<http://www.consumersinternational.org>  
<http://www.uneptie.org>  
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# Can we achieve sustainability without a common ethical framework? The promise of the Earth Charter

Presented by the Earth Council

Cielito Habito, Manila University, introduced this event, which addressed the importance of the spiritual dimension of sustainable development, and emphasized the need for the WSSD to endorse the Earth Charter.

Kamla Chowdhry, Earth Charter, stressed the need to emphasize spirituality as a means to achieve sustainable development. She recommended inviting religious and spiritual leaders to participate in the WSSD process in order to meet the challenges of reconciling the economic and spiritual aspects of development and rediscovering compassion.

Alvaro Umaña, UNDP, called for a shift from current economic approaches that fail to recognize the rights of future generations toward an approach based on an ethical sustainability framework. He recommended promoting the Earth Charter in the form of clear and easily understood messages.

Jan Pronk, UN Special Envoy for the WSSD, noted that changes that have occurred since UNCED indicate a shift toward a new sustainable development paradigm based on human rights and responsibilities for the common good and for the future, and said the Earth Charter forms a basis for further acceptance of this paradigm.



Alvaro Umaña, UNDP, stresses the need to complement "the principles of economic man" striving to satisfy wants and needs with "the principles of ecological woman" to ensure that human needs are met with the minimum impact on the environment and future generations.

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# The New Partnership for Africa's Development

Presented by the South African Government

Valli Moosa, South African Minister of Environment and Tourism, introduced the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as an initiative for the socio-economic development of Africa that is critical to its sustainable development.

Imeh Okopido, Nigerian Minister of State for Environment, spoke on the African process for the protection of coasts and the marine environment, describing how a series of targeted, bankable initiatives are being developed and harmonized into an integrated project portfolio.

Amb. Papa Louis Fall, Senegal, addressed the cross-cutting issues of health, trade and technology transfer encompassed in NEPAD's draft programme of action, and the six priority areas of: land degradation, drought and desertification; wetlands; alien species invasions; coastal and marine resources; commitments and priorities associated with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol; and cross-border conservation and management of natural resources.

Felix Mutati, Zambian Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Development, discussed the upcoming launch of the African Union, stating that it establishes an institutional and political framework to complement action through NEPAD.

Smunda Mokoena, NEPAD, presented aspects of NEPAD's programme of action, which aims to create favorable conditions for sustainable development by prioritizing the issues of peace and security, governance for sustainable development, capacity building, and resource mobilization.

R. Ruganda, Ugandan Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment, spoke on the upcoming African Ministerial Conference on Environment. He said individual national environmental outlook papers are being consolidated into an African Environment Outlook, which will be launched at the Conference.

**Discussion:** In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed: the lack of civil society involvement and transparency in NEPAD; plans for financing the implementation of NEPAD; the need to translate NEPAD into national legislation; and the incorporation of gender aspects into NEPAD initiatives.



Imeh Okopido, Nigerian Minister of State for Environment, and Valli Moosa, South African Minister of Environment and Tourism.

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## New partnership initiatives toward Johannesburg and beyond: Creating a new regional network for sustainable development

Presented by the Ministry of Environment of Japan and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

Hironori Hamanaka, Vice-Minister of Environment of Japan, introduced this event, which presented the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED) and the Asia-Pacific Environmental Innovation Strategy (APEIS).

Akio Morishima, IGES, highlighted APFED's message to the WSSD, which presents recommendations on freshwater, renewable energy, trade, finance, urbanization, good governance, and capacity building, and commits to launching Type II partnership initiatives to: collect and analyze best policy practices; create a research network for developing policy recommendations; and establish and disseminate an inventory of capacity-building programmes in the region.

Masataka Watanabe, National Institute for Environmental Studies, explained that the objectives of the APEIS Type II initiative are to develop scientific knowledge-based tools and innovative strategy options, promote environmental cooperation and capacity building, and propose a model of regional initiatives for sustainable development. Its expected results include the development of: monitoring and early warning systems for natural resource changes and disasters; a set of models to assess and predict environmental emissions and natural resource trends and resulting impacts; and a strategic database and innovative strategy options for policy makers to enable informed decision making.

APFED-affiliated panelists highlighted: the importance of implementing the Earth Charter in the Asia-Pacific region; APFED recommendations to employ an integrated approach and strengthen local initiatives in managing urbanization; and APFED's role in fostering the development of methodological approaches to operationalize the three pillars of sustainable development in the region.

Shafqat Kakakhel, UNEP Deputy Executive Director, commended APFED's message to the WSSD as a priority agenda for the Asia-Pacific region. He stressed the need for a mechanism to bring together the strengths of regional institutions to promote synergies and avoid duplication.



Akio Morishima, IGES, explains that APFED was established in 2001 to propose a new and long-term development framework for equitability and sustainability in the Asia-Pacific region.

#### More information:

<http://www.iges.or.jp/apfed-message>

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# Partnerships for water, sanitation and hygiene: Keys to sustainable development

Presented by the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)



Minister R. Kasrils

Dr. Hans

Ronnie Kasrils, South African Ministry of Water Affairs and Forestry, explains that although South Africa has already reached the goal of halving the number of people lacking access to safe drinking water, a recent epidemic indicated that the government must assign priority not only to water access but also to sanitation and health problems.

#### More information:

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Manuel Dengo, DESA, described Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH), a campaign to ensure access to water and sanitation through enhanced collaboration and concerted action, and stressed the need for international targets on sanitation.

Hans-Peter Schipulle, German Ministry of Development Cooperation, outlined outcomes of the recent International Freshwater Conference in Bonn, including recognition of the need for: an internationally agreed development target on sanitation; increased financial resources; education; research; improved information management; water institutions; knowledge sharing; gender-equitable water policies; and participatory water management.

Ronnie Kasrils, South African Ministry of Water Affairs and Forestry, said integrated efforts based on strategic partnerships will help his country reach the goal of clean water for all by 2008 and sanitation for all by 2015. He stated that targets, concrete strategies and equal partnerships are the keys to realizing the Millennium Development Goals internationally.

Maria Lubega Mutagamba, Ugandan Ministry for Water, Lands and the Environment, said African governments are committed to the goals of access to sanitation and water, and described Uganda's efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals. She stressed that the WSSD should result in partnerships for water involving development agencies, NGOs, the private sector and governments in Africa.

Jafrul Islam Chowdhury, State Minister for Environment and Forests of Bangladesh, described how his government involves civil society in efforts to provide access to water and sanitation, and called for renewed commitment to achieving the goal of poverty eradication through partnerships.

Lilia Ramos, Appro-Tech Asia, highlighted a pilot project in the Philippines, which demonstrated how the WASH campaign can be translated into practical action through local community involvement, training of community coordinators, health and education programmes, and the provision of sanitation and rainwater catchment technologies.

Anne Peterson, USAID, presented an example of a successful partnership to promote handwashing for diarrhoeal disease prevention in Central America, which, *inter alia*, leveraged significant resources and sustained private sector involvement in social programmes through advertisements and education.

Budiman Arif, Indonesia, expressed hope that Indonesia would join the WASH campaign in order to better address its pressing water supply and sanitation problems.

## Can we achieve sustainability without a common ethical framework? The promise of the Earth Charter

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**Discussion:** Participants highlighted, *inter alia*: that the Romanian Government endorsed, and several other governments support the Charter, but that political debate on ethical issues is lacking in the WSSD process; the need for government as well as public commitment to the Charter; the potential role of the Charter in Type II partnerships; and the need for action to ensure that the Charter is endorsed by the WSSD.

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