



Special Report on Selected Side Events at WSSD PC-IV
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Events convened on Wednesday, 5 June 2002

Communities make the difference

Presented by UNDP and the Equator Initiative

Alvaro Umaña, UNDP, introduced this event, which presented community perspectives on sustainable development, with a focus on partnerships and community action. He stressed the need to work with communities to realize global, national and local policies, and announced the upcoming launch of UNDP's Capacity 2015, a platform to assist communities in building local capacity.

Princess Basma Bint Talal of Jordan, Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development, highlighted major challenges for the WSSD in: strengthening linkages between global and local action; ensuring commitment to sustainable development by all stakeholders; enhancing the understanding of biodiversity issues and linkages between biological and cultural diversity; decentralizing resource management; recognizing the ethical dimensions of sustainable development; and fully addressing poverty and the rights of marginalized people.

Prema Gopalan, Swayam Shikshan Prayog, described an innovative programme that works with women's self-help groups in India to mobilize communities in water and sanitation planning and management. She said the approach of strengthening local infrastructure rather than operating on a regional level yields tremendous benefits to the community, and noted that the programme can be scaled up throughout India.

Susan McDade, UNDP, emphasized that energy service provision is not a new challenge, noting that the current reality of two billion people today closely resembles daily life without electricity in many developed countries two generations ago. She outlined UNDP energy projects and the costs of energy poverty, and called for new financing mechanisms to support energy objectives.

Edward Owango, Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, presented the Promoting Farmer Innovation initiative undertaken by UNDP and other partners in eastern Africa. He said the programme's strengths lie in empowering local farmers, especially women, to test their own innovative ideas for improved soil, water and environmental management, harnessing community enthusiasm and peer-led knowledge diffusion.

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Tebtebba Foundation, described the efforts of her indigenous community in the Philippines to protect its ecosystem and biodiversity while confronted with attempts to introduce mining activities. She called for recognition of indigenous communities' decision-making power, and for the protection of traditional knowledge and cultural and biological diversity.

Discussion: Participants discussed, *inter alia*: difficulties in accessing UNDP programme information at the national level and in aligning project needs to funding cycles; problems with the introduction of non-native seeds; means of promoting the Earth Charter; and "community-to-community" information exchange.



Princess Basma Bint Talal of Jordan suggests that mechanisms to address sustainable development require stronger involvement of local communities in decision-making processes and the integration of sustainable development concepts into government and private sector institutional arrangements.

More information:

<http://www.eurocom.org/eurocom/jordan/jett/cat/johud.htm>
<http://www.sspindia.org>
<http://www.undp.org/seed/unso/concepts.htm>
<http://www.tebtebba.org>

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Integrated coastal zone management: Issues, technologies and partnerships

Presented by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and UNESCO



Godwin Obasi, Secretary-General of the WMO, highlights WMO's activities to improve weather forecasting and warning capabilities in order to help protect coastal zones from the devastating impacts of natural disasters.

More information:

<http://www.iaea.org/worldatom>

<http://www.wmo.ch>

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Werner Burkart, IAEA, highlighted IAEA's work on nuclear and isotopic techniques to address coastal zone management problems, including efforts to develop models to predict and remediate harmful algal blooms, sterile insect techniques to control insect pests, and isotope hydrology to manage submarine groundwater discharges.

Godwin Obasi, WMO, outlined WMO's key role in coordinating international activities and assisting national agencies in the fields of meteorology, oceanography, climatology, and hydrology. He highlighted WMO's activities and cooperation with other institutions to improve atmospheric research, weather forecasting and warning capabilities, and enhance coastal areas' capabilities for the observation of oceanographic data and services.

Walter Erdelen, UNESCO, highlighted cooperation between UNESCO and IAEA on the development of isotopic methodologies to enable member States to better understand ecological problems such as harmful algal blooms and to improve resource management.

William Padolina, International Rice Research Institute, discussed the application of nuclear techniques to address harmful algal blooms. He stressed the need for: long-term monitoring at the regional and local levels; improved understanding of temporal patterns at local and regional scales; regional collaborative research on sediment and cyst behavior; and management of interventions to handle harmful algal blooms, including early warning systems.

V. Selvam, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, presented a case study of the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve in India, where biodiversity and bio-resources have been severely degraded due to pollution from a coal-based thermal power station. He stressed that clean and appropriate atomic energy-based technologies should be an integral part of coastal zone management, in order to minimize adverse effects of development and ensure the ecological and livelihood security of local communities.

Virtual Exhibition: Showcasing sustainable development initiatives around the world

Presented by Business Action for Sustainable Development (BASD)

Mark Moody-Stuart, BASD, introduced the Virtual Exhibition, a multi-media showcase of sustainable development initiatives. The Virtual Exhibition, a joint project of BASD and UNDP, profiles measurable, replicable and innovative sustainable development projects, and will provide a worldwide webcast of proceedings during the WSSD and enable online interaction between delegates and the wider world, as well as between the media and actors implementing projects on the ground.

Eric Davies, UNDP, said that the Virtual Exhibition's online discussion forum helped to identify the drivers and challenges of engaging stakeholders in partnerships, *inter alia*: the need for adequate capacities to engage; access to information; enabling institutional frameworks; understanding of and commitment to the benefits of partnerships; and global telecommunications for networking. He noted that an e-conference in July will follow up on these issues, and that the discussion on the website will continue after the WSSD.

Gerry Morvell, on behalf of Nitin Desai, Secretary-General of the WSSD, said that the Virtual Exhibition would not only bring the world to the Summit, but it would also bring the Summit to the world. He said Desai fully supports this interaction, and called on all UN agencies and other organizations facilitating work on sustainable development on the ground to contribute to the Virtual Exhibition.

Kalman Mizsei, UNDP, stressed that the Virtual Exhibition should reach beyond the WSSD and create a capacity-building platform for communications between all development professionals and actors striving to implement Agenda 21.

Ando Takayuki, Japan International Cooperation Agency, gave a concrete example of a partnership on capacity building and sustainable development in Indonesia, where the private sector actively provides technical and financial assistance, including on cleaner production, as well as education for sustainable development.



Mark Moody-Stuart, BASD, explains that the Virtual Exhibition's projects, which will be interactive during the WSSD, will be selected by an independent panel, and promises that everyone can get a taste of the developments in Johannesburg or in the wider world via the Virtual Exhibition's webcast.

More information:

<http://www.virtualexhibit.net>

<http://www.basd-action.net>

<http://www.iccwbo.org>

<http://www.undp.org>

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Partnerships and outcomes for the WSSD

Presented by the US Government

Anthony Rock, US Department of State, highlighted the US' vision statement for the WSSD, which states that the US will focus on concrete actions through partnerships in the areas of water, energy, health, food security, education, oceans, and forests. He said the goal for the WSSD is to "put fire into" the way the international community moves the UNCED agenda forward. He emphasized that the US is not advocating repackaging existing bilateral activities, but is willing to pool with other stakeholders to determine where greater efforts are needed, and to seek balance and coherence in how these areas are addressed. He said the process of developing partnerships requires that the principal stakeholders: examine the priorities and guidelines that have governed activities to date; engage in dialogue with recipients; and employ criteria that define previous and ongoing actions as well as existing and future needs, and determine how to close the gap between them. He acknowledged the need for concrete action, as well as assurance that countries are assuming responsibilities in their own right, including implementing reforms to foster openness, rule of law and transparency; supporting entrepreneurship; investing in their own populations; and creating more predictable enabling environments.

Paula Dobriansky, US Under-Secretary of State for Global Affairs, noted that the US is engaged in discussions on the *Draft Plan of Implementation for the WSSD* and has embraced the Millennium Development Goals, which lay the foundation for ongoing work. She emphasized the importance of trade liberalization and open markets as agreed at the WTO Ministerial meeting in Doha, and of good governance, economic freedom, and domestic measures as affirmed in the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development. She stressed the need to focus on action, and highlighted the significant contributions of public-private partnerships with the active involvement of NGOs and the private sector to this end.

Discussion: In the ensuing discussion, participants highlighted, *inter alia*: concerns regarding the lack of clarity on the relationship between Type I and Type II outcomes; the need for coordination among Type II initiatives; the importance of partnership arrangements other than public-private partnerships; and the need for a process of multi-stakeholder consultation on developing partnerships between PrepCom IV and the WSSD.



Paula Dobriansky, US Under-Secretary of State for Global Affairs, highlights several discussions on partnerships seeking to breathe life into sustainable development and existing commitments, and stresses the importance of moving forward to implementation.

More information:

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2002/10442.htm>

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Mining, indigenous peoples, land rights and sustainable development

Presented by the Tebtebba Foundation



Naomi Manantu, indigenous peoples of South Sulawesi, Indonesia, describes how indigenous peoples of South Sulawesi became victims of nickel mining by the Inco Corporation, which violated the community's rights and converted its land, settlements, sacred burial sites and forest into mining sites, dumps, and a golf course.

This event considered case studies of communities affected by mining operations.

Alberto Saldamando, International Indian Treaty Council, addressed the legal dimensions of indigenous peoples' rights, stressing the need to distinguish between the rights of minorities and those of indigenous peoples, who have the collective right to maintain their spiritual, cultural and historic connection to their land.

Three representatives of Indonesian indigenous peoples described the destruction of their communities' livelihoods and spiritual and cultural lives by transnational corporations (TNCs), and raised issues of: land ownership rights; prior informed consent for mining operations; TNCs' responsibilities for rehabilitation and sharing of benefits from mining operations; disposal of mining waste; militarization and violence; and marginalization of local communities associated with mining operations.

Lucy Mullenke, African Indigenous Women's Organization, outlined the effects of mining on nomad and hunting communities in Africa, including land destruction, pollution, militarization, and forced relocation. She expressed disappointment with the agreed text on mining, minerals and metals in the *Draft Plan of Implementation for the WSSD*, and stressed the need for local communities to understand how to defend their rights.

Continued on page 4

Millennium Ecosystem Assessment: strengthening capacity to manage ecosystems sustainably for human well-being

Presented by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), World Resources Institute, Meridian Institute, the World Fish Center (ICLARM), and the United Nations University



Left to right: Esther Camac, Asociación Ixacavaa de Desarrollo e Información Indígena (Ixacavaa Association for Indigenous Development and Information); Peter Johan Schei, Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management; A. H. Zakri, MA; and Delmar Blasco, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

A. H. Zakri, MA, introduced this event, which discussed the role of the MA and its progress to date. He described how the MA is modeled on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as a multi-scale, interdisciplinary assessment to meet the scientific needs of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention to Combat Desertification.

Nicolas Lucas, MA, outlined the status of the MA as it completes its first year of operation.

Peter Johan Schei, Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management, described a pilot assessment carried out at the national level in Norway through the MA framework entitled *Nature's Values and Services: An Assessment of Norwegian Nature at the Millennium*. He described how the pilot assessment, completed on a low budget in a short timeframe, serves as a framework to, *inter alia*: foster inter-sectoral dialogue and cooperation; identify trade-offs between uses for natural resources; forge commitment for a full-scale study; establish the need for new methodologies to evaluate the uses and services of natural resources for inclusion in the national economy; and develop ideas on how to effectively use the global MA.

Delmar Blasco, Secretary-General of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, expressed hope that the MA would: provide a global overview of the wetlands situation, particularly with regard to the integration of natural and social science components; generate greater awareness of human dependency on wetlands and how human activities will affect our future; and clarify the strong linkages between biodiversity, wetlands and desertification, bringing the three conventions on these issues into closer collaboration.

Esther Camac, Asociación Ixacavaa de Desarrollo e Información Indígena (Ixacavaa Association for Indigenous Development and Information), explained the role of indigenous communities in the MA in sharing traditional knowledge about the identification and maintenance of resources and values. She identified a challenge in establishing traditional and scientific knowledge on equal footings in the MA.

Discussion: In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed, *inter alia*: complementarities between the MA and the biodiversity assessments being completed for the CBD; the added value of incorporating socioeconomic principles into the MA; the balance between assessment and policy prescription that is struck through scenario development; and the importance of local action in effecting change.

More information:

<http://www.millenniumassessment.org>

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Mining, indigenous peoples, land rights and sustainable development

(Continued from page 3)

Alfredo Vitery, CONAIE Ecuador, described the economic, cultural and environmental degradation in Ecuador resulting from oil and gas exploration by TNCs. He highlighted how TNCs and corrupt governments abuse the concepts of partnerships and consultation with local communities. He said sustainable mining will remain an illusion unless means are developed to monitor and assess the cultural, social and health impacts of the activities of mining companies, and called for an international corporate accountability mechanism.

Discussion: In the ensuing discussion, participants highlighted, *inter alia*, inconsistencies between the agreed text on mining and principles of sustainable development, and the urgent need for international tribunals to try mining corporations in their countries of origin for crimes committed in foreign countries.

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<http://www.tebtebba.org>

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