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CSD HIGHLIGHTS WEDNESDAY, 12 APRIL 1995

REVIEW OF THE SECTORAL CLUSTER

Sir Martin Holdgate, Chair of the intersessional *ad hoc* working group on sectoral issues, highlighted recommendations in the Working Group's report on integrated land management, forests, desertification, sustainable mountain development, sustainable agriculture and rural development, and biodiversity.

Bo Kjellén, Chair of the INC for the Convention to Combat Desertification, noted that the Convention now has 103 signatures. The Convention rests on four pillars: the bottom-up approach; improved coordination between donors and governments of affected countries; the integrated approach; and strengthened scientific efforts. He asked the CSD for continued political support.

Ivy Dumont, President of the first Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, noted that 117 Parties have ratified the Convention. The COP's statement to the CSD focuses on the need to strengthen coordination, avoid overlap of activities and establish effective collaborative arrangements.

PANEL DISCUSSION ON SECTORAL ISSUES

Franz Fischler, European Commissioner for Agriculture, said that forestry, agriculture and sustainable development are funding priorities for the EU. The EU endorses the establishment of a forestry panel to: prepare a worldwide consensus on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management; develop a framework for certification of forest products; and examine the feasibility of a legally-binding instrument.

Graham Blight, President of IFAP, said: farmers are major stakeholders in land use and management; there are success stories in sustainable rural and agricultural development; voluntary action is effective; capacity and institution building in farmers' organizations to ensure representation and partnership with governments are essential; continued research is essential; a focus on agriculture is necessary to ensure economic viability; and coherence in policy orientation is essential.

David Harcharick, Assistant Director-General of FAO, said that land-use strategies will be more effective if they are carried out with the participation of the land users. As population pressures grow and land degradation continues, land-use related conflicts will become more widespread. Food security, which is the most vital of human needs, is often a prerequisite for development. On forests, he called for close collaboration between the UN system, institutions and NGOs. He highlighted the importance of the cross-sectoral nature of the forestry issue.

John Falloon, Minister of Forestry of New Zealand and Chair of the FAO Ministerial Meeting on Forestry, highlighted the six points of agreement at the March Ministerial Meeting: the cross-sectoral relationship between biodiversity, agricultural sustainability and trade; the need for the development of sustainability indicators; the need for financial and technical assistance; the importance of recognizing the benefits of forestry to nations and communities; the need for a voluntary process for certification of forest products; and trade access.

Elizabeth Dowdeswell, UNEP Executive Director, highlighted several key messages from the Climate Change Convention Conference of the Parties in Berlin: scientific research is now sufficiently convincing to invoke the precautionary principle; commitments must be kept; creative and effective mechanisms are needed to ensure successful implementation; and the range of constituencies must be expanded.

In the discussion that followed, the President of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (**Peru**) presented the report of the workshop on criteria and indicators for sustainability of the Amazonian Forests, which took place in Tarapoto, Peru, in February 1995. **The NGO Working Group on Forests** called on the CSD to: address the underlying macroeconomic causes of deforestation; review timber over-consumption patterns; address the undue influence of the timber industry; eliminate destructive forestry practices; and ensure that UN agency policies do not promote unsustainable forestry.

Other issues raised in the discussion include: the development of global scientific indicators; the need to set priorities for the forestry panel; how changes in production and consumption patterns can promote sustainable forest management; the links between the biodiversity and desertification conventions; ordinary and dryland afforestation in mitigating climate change and improving biodiversity; the linkages between water and land management; the relationship between land use and urbanization; and education.

GENERAL DISCUSSION ON PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21

Carlos Fortin (UNCTAD) introduced E/CN.17/1995/12 (Trade, Environment and Sustainable Development). **Jyoti Singh** (UNFPA) introduced E/CN.17/1995/15 (Demographic Dynamics and Sustainability). **Joke Waller-Hunter**, Director, Division for Sustainable Development, introduced documents E/CN.17/1995/13 (Changing Consumption and Production Patterns) and E/CN.17/1995/14 (Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development).

The floor was then opened for discussion. **Norway** introduced the report of the Oslo Roundtable and highlighted the need for:

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green tax reform and increased use of economic instruments; green buying policies; green liability rules; full access to environmental information on products; and the development of environmental indicators. **Bangladesh** noted the linkages between poverty eradication and environmental degradation. **France**, on behalf of the EU, said that developed countries have a special responsibility to reduce unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

Brazil noted the importance of trade liberalization in promoting an environmentally supportive international economic system. The **European Commission** noted the potential "normative" role of the Committee on Trade and the Environment of the WTO. UNEP could provide input on: the environmental impact of trade policies; internalization of environmental costs; and the polluter-pays principle. **Canada** said liberalized trade must be accompanied by poverty alleviation measures including debt relief and improved access to economic resources for women.

The **US** called for a balanced approach on trade and environment. He defended the role of trade policies in pursuing environmental objectives. **Japan** said the CSD should play a proactive role in helping the international community accelerate work on Agenda 21. The **Republic of Korea** supported strengthening international cooperation to enhance the mutually supportive relationship between trade and environment. **Australia** called on the CSD to play a coordinating role on trade and environment policies, including poverty and consumption issues.

The **Philippines** called for eco-labeling to be tied to technology transfer. **Switzerland** noted the value of similar questions being raised in different fora as a way of generating diverse perspectives. **Algeria** noted the importance of the CSD's political visibility on mobilizing financial resources, technology transfer, and production and consumption patterns. **Morocco** said that environmental concerns should not serve as a pretext for hindering developing countries' access to markets. **Friends of the Earth** explained the concepts of environmental space and equity in its programme on sustainable development.

The Women's Caucus said transition to sustainability requires a reversal in patterns of inequality, displacement and monoculture. The UN system's failure to accommodate the perspectives and vision of women threatens its integrity. **Consumers International Environment** said projected energy increases highlight the responsibility of developed countries to go beyond palliative measures to address consumption and production patterns. **Malaysia** stressed improved market access and expressed concern about human rights and environmental conditionalities that restrict trade.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISMS AND THE CROSS-SECTORAL CLUSTER

The Philippines, on behalf of the G-77 and China, said the debate on financial resources should focus on increasing ODA, improving market access, more favorable terms of trade, a solution to the debt problem, and foreign direct investment. **Chile** presented the results of the working group under the Montreal Process aimed at establishing criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests. **China** said that the rational development of forest resources should reflect each country's economic and social needs.

Canada said the proposed panel on forests should operate in an open and inclusive manner and coordinate initiatives on priority issues. **Malaysia** called on developed countries to increase ODA levels. The CSD should also take steps to promote innovative financial mechanisms and assess the effectiveness of the policy instruments in the matrix. The terms of reference for the forestry panel should include: assessment of actions taken; enhancement of all types of forests; identification of cross-sectoral factors; and promotion of open and free trade in forest products. **Brazil** said the panel on forests could consider: broadening scientific knowledge;

understanding factors affecting trade in forest products; and the feasibility of developing an agreed set of criteria and indicators.

India said that integrated watershed management with strong community involvement is the key to realizing sustainable agriculture. **Bangladesh** recommended more coordination between the Bretton Woods institutions and the CSD. **Australia** called on the CSD to do more work on economic instruments, but questioned the viability of taking up the debt issue in light of the work done by the Social Summit. She encouraged the forest panel to focus on indicators, labeling, institutional roles and analysis of the underlying causes of deforestation.

Iceland called for reductions in the use of agro-chemicals and support for integrated pest management. He also called for a more significant role for farmers. **Mexico** said the forest panel should develop criteria and indicators, encourage participation of relevant UN bodies and submit a preliminary report in 1996. The **US** said that the forest panel should be guided by the FAO Ministers' statement. He expressed skepticism about a single solution to the debt problem and air transport taxes. He supported a pilot project on tradeable CO₂ permits.

Switzerland supported the creation of a forestry panel and welcomed the NGO initiatives on the mountain agenda. **France**, on behalf of the EU, welcomed debates involving the World Bank and the IMF and noted the EU's commitment to developing sustainable forestry principles. **Uganda** noted the omission of early warning systems on drought and indicators to predict desertification from the Secretary-General's report, and called for consideration of forestry within the framework of the Biodiversity Convention.

The **Republic of Korea** said technology transfers and new resources are the prerequisites for comprehensive CSD action. **Indonesia** supported time-bound targets for the introduction of integrated land management programmes by 2000 and a more holistic approach to currently fragmented management approaches. **Hungary** said an international exchange of information between foresters and policy-makers is needed. **Iran** said there is an urgent need for financial and technical assistance to help developing countries with low forest cover and to combat desertification and drought. **Japan** noted that the loss of forests is associated with global socio-economic and cultural consequences and supported the proposed forestry panel and the development of indicators.

Algeria said mobilization of new and additional financial resources and resolution of the debt problem is essential. The issue of economic instruments should be left to governments.

ESCAP has undertaken a number of activities to implement Agenda 21, including addressing urbanization and integrated land management, and combating desertification. **Brazil** expressed concern about decreasing ODA levels. The role of private capital flows in promoting sustainable development is essential, but it should not replace ODA. **The Philippines** recommended studying the feasibility of adopting economic instruments and encouraged developed countries to encourage private sector investment in developing countries. **Greenpeace** endorsed the need for a comprehensive debt strategy and more widespread foreign direct investment.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The CSD is scheduled to continue discussion on Agenda Item 3, the general discussion on progress in the implementation of Agenda 21, focusing on: decision making (Chapters 8 and 40); the role of major groups (Chapters 23-32); national information; and the progress in the implementation of the 1994 decisions of the CSD.

WORKSHOP ON BIOTECHNOLOGY: Third World Network is sponsoring a "Workshop on Biotechnology: Ecological, Safety and Social Issues" at the Church Center (777 UN Plaza) from 9:30 am -5:30 pm.