



# Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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## CSD INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP THURSDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 1997

Delegates to the CSD Intersessional Working Group considered cross-sectoral, emerging and institutional issues during morning and afternoon meetings.

### CROSS-SECTORAL ISSUES

Co-Chair Amorim said the CSD could adopt the REPUBLIC OF KOREA's proposal for a feasibility study on publicly owned ESTs. EGYPT called for a study of governments' role in privately owned technologies and property rights. CANADA said the private sector is increasingly responsible for ESTs and that intellectual and other property rights belong to those who develop them. CHINA called for more proactive government action to foster a favorable international environment for technology transfer, ensure compatibility and avoid dumping. The PHILIPPINES, supported by GHANA, proposed a meeting with the private sector. COLOMBIA called for a UN forum to discuss technology transfer. The BUSINESS COUNCIL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (BCSD) emphasized the need for global solutions rather than the use of national targets.

SWEDEN discussed the "Factor 10" concept and eco-efficiency in regard to sustainable production patterns. COLOMBIA called for measures to compensate countries for the effects of changes in production and consumption patterns. The BCSD said business should not pass judgment on how individuals consume.

The EU reminded delegates that the OECD produces reports on OECD countries' ODA levels. The CO-CHAIR suggested creating a sustainable development review mechanism to review all countries' national efforts and their compliance with international commitments. COLOMBIA called for measures to address the speculative trends in private capital flows and a reorientation of FDI. The BCSD rejected the idea of international taxation.

The CO-CHAIR summarized the discussion and, based on delegates' comments, said the draft agreement should: reaffirm Agenda 21 commitments; indicate targets; propose a forum at which governments, financial institutions, the private sector and NGOs would discuss links between FDI and ODA; propose analyses of technology transfer mechanisms; consider consumption, production and trade-related issues; and address social and economic questions such as poverty and the global macroeconomic environment.

### EMERGING PRIORITIES

Delegates commented on Co-Chair Osborn's summary of priority areas emerging from Monday and Tuesday's debate. The summary identifies potential recommendations for UNGASS in the areas of: freshwater; oceans; atmosphere; energy; forests; and major groups.

On freshwater, the US expressed hesitation regarding action at the international level, as drinking water and sanitation issues are best addressed at more localized levels. CANADA supported the examination of freshwater issues and the Global Water Partnership. MEXICO and KAZAKHSTAN noted linkages between freshwater and other issues. AUSTRALIA supported a key role for the CSD on freshwater issues, noting the need to involve all stakeholders and use the best available science.

On oceans, the US supported the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action but did not support the establishment of global or regional-level targets. CANADA supported the elimination of excess fishing capacity and endorsed global targets but said the precautionary approach should be used. JAPAN said regional organizations should establish any measurable targets and the CSD should not consider fisheries. AUSTRALIA suggested that over-capacity of fishing fleets is perhaps the most critical oceans issue.

On atmosphere, CANADA said the gathering of world leaders at UNGASS could propel climate change discussions forward. SWITZERLAND and SWEDEN concurred. SWITZERLAND called for quantified objectives. The US said UNGASS should not identify a range of targets for reducing CO2 emissions. The EU, supported by AUSTRALIA, suggested dropping atmosphere issues from the CSD and UNGASS.

On energy, the US said the CSD should focus on efficiency, environmentally sound transportation systems and less polluting fuels. SWITZERLAND and the US said UNGASS should recommend that energy pricing reflect social and environmental costs and call for increased investment in renewable energy. The US said UNGASS should not set targets for such investment. AUSTRIA supported proposals that the CSD adopt a comprehensive approach to energy, including transport, urban issues and redirecting subsidies and, with SWITZERLAND, supported CSD prioritization of transport. The NGO ENERGY CAUCUS called for a 20% reduction of carbon emissions by 2005 and for the internalization of all fuel consumption costs. EGYPT suggested that energy subsidies be considered with finance issues. The NGO TRANSPORTATION CAUCUS called for examination

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of land-use planning, car-free areas and internalization of transportation costs.

On forests, COLOMBIA said a high-level CSD working group should continue to facilitate intergovernmental dialogue. CANADA suggested that UNGASS reach a conclusion regarding the launch of a forest convention. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION said forest issues should be addressed in a framework separate from the Convention to Combat Desertification. JAPAN said the IFP outcome should be respected.

The US said NGO access should be broadened to the UNGA. He agreed that UNGASS should recommend action for expanding major group participation at the national level.

Delegates made interventions on a number of other issues. On hazardous wastes, COLOMBIA called for more effective interventions in illegal transboundary movements. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA noted the lack of public awareness about the increasing number of accidents and stressed the need to address the handling, transport and disposal of radioactive wastes, including on a regional basis. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA and DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF KOREA each expressed concern regarding the other's pollution and hazardous waste-related activities.

The US emphasized effective education and public awareness strategies. GREECE announced plans to host a conference on environment, society and education with UNESCO. AUSTRIA called for focused work with the media in the run-up to UNGASS to spread the consensus arrived at by the CSD and to publicize the impact of sustainability on real lives.

GERMANY recommended sustainable tourism and soil protection for the CSD's work programme. COLOMBIA called for progress on a biosafety protocol and integrated management of chemicals. SWITZERLAND said sustainable mountain development is linked with other items emerging for consideration such as freshwater and forests. CANADA said the CSD should broaden its examination of fragile ecosystems to include the Arctic and MALAYSIA added Antarctica.

The NGO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CAUCUS stressed the health-related needs of indigenous peoples. The LORETO COMMUNITY called for a ban on the sale and transfer of land-mines and for non-violent conflict resolution training. The CITIZENS' NETWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT called for: a formalized dialogue regarding corporate accountability; greater national government commitment to encourage local Agenda 21s; community-based indicators of sustainable development; and restructured economies with less emphasis on the military.

IRAN reiterated that the CSD should avoid prejudging the conclusions of work being conducted in the COPs of environmental conventions. EGYPT said the UNGA could invite COPs to consider its views as representative of the community of nations. SWEDEN drew a distinction between decisions on existing processes including the FCCC and decisions on developing processes on water and forests, and called on the CSD to find ways to explore the related issues of freshwater, land use, sustainable agriculture, desertification, drought and urbanization.

EGYPT insisted on setting specific targets because continued generalities would provide no yardstick to measure future progress. The US stated that priorities should be defined at the national and local levels and, with AUSTRALIA, opposed setting targets.

NORWAY stressed that poverty and consumption should be used as the context in which other issues are discussed in the CSD. He recommended that the CSD focus on issues where follow-up processes are lacking. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION noted that many issues can be resolved at regional, sub-regional and bilateral levels. The EU and ASSOCIATED COUNTRIES called for wider participation in the CSD by ministers and all stakeholders, notably

local authorities and the private sector, along with partnerships with Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO.

### **INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES AND FORMAT OF THE SPECIAL SESSION**

Delegates who spoke favored renewal of the CSD mandate. The EU and ASSOCIATED COUNTRIES said: UNGASS should reconfirm the CSD as the high-level forum for implementing the overarching principle of sustainable development and the ECOSOC review should take this into account; and UNEP should not compete with operationally-tasked organizations in project implementation. The EU also called for further improvement in UN system-wide coordination mechanisms by the Administrative Committee on Coordination, including high-level decision making. CHINA asked how ECOSOC might take full advantage of the expertise of its functioning commissions. UNEP noted that a clear understanding of the respective roles of UN entities is essential and that the ministers to the high-level segment of the Governing Council invited the Special Session to reconfirm UNEP's role in environmental issues.

BRAZIL said the CSD should not be intrusive in other UN bodies' decisions or set directives for those bodies. MEXICO said the CSD should not be strengthened to the detriment of other UN bodies, particularly UNEP, and the CSD's relationship with COPs should be clarified.

CANADA and CHINA said the CSD should encourage improved international coordination. The EU called for: better integration of the UN Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and Energy for Development and of the Committee on Natural Resources into the CSD's work; CSD emphasis on poverty eradication and sustainable production and consumption patterns; and enhanced cooperation with regional commissions and organizations. MEXICO suggested that the CSD promote the development of uniform and harmonized international law in the field of environment and sustainable development.

CANADA proposed that: the high-level segment be in the form of a roundtable discussion; proposals be drafted more clearly; and national reporting requirements be streamlined and reviewed. BRAZIL recommended that the CSD develop decisions rather than recommendations and that they be operational rather than conceptual. He also supported national reporting that is regular, voluntary and result-oriented. MEXICO suggested strengthening the high-level segment, designating one issue for its consideration and establishing a follow-up mechanism for its decisions.

### **IN THE CORRIDORS**

The question in Co-Chair Osborn's summary of emerging priorities of whether UNGASS should recommend the establishment of targets in a number of areas generated many responses on Thursday. Observers speculate that those who do not support targets at the international level believe that such targets may end up being either too weak or too inflexible and unrealistic. Proponents of targets, on the other hand, stress the need for setting concrete goals to move beyond rhetoric to action in implementing the Rio commitments and to serve as a baseline against which progress toward these goals can be assessed.

### **THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY**

**PLENARY:** Delegates will resume discussion of institutional issues in Conference Room 4 during the morning.

**ACCT:** Countries having the French language in common will discuss their contribution to the Intersessional at a meeting from 1:15-3:00 pm at ACCT, 801 Second Avenue, Suite 605.

**GEF BRIEFING:** The GEF Secretariat will discuss how NGOs can work with the GEF, from 1:15-2:45 pm in Conference Room 6.