



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the  
Second Round of 'Informal-Informal' Negotiations on the zero draft of  
outcome document of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development  
(UNCSD or Rio+20)

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## Events convened on Thursday, 26 April 2012

### Initiative for a Global Goal on Water

Organized by the Permanent Missions of Hungary, Finland and Tajikistan to the UN, the Danish Ministry of the Environment, and the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture, Sea, Environment and Spatial Planning



Ida Auken, Danish Minister for the Environment, called the social, economic, and environmental dimensions, the DNA of sustainable development.

This event, moderated by Kerstin Stendahl, Finnish Ministry of the Environment, addressed current stresses on water resources and how to improve global action to tackle the diverse challenges.

Ida Auken, Danish Minister for the Environment, underscored the importance of setting water goals, and suggested a new global goal on water that will ensure universal access to drinking water and basic sanitation, and guarantee sustainable water use through integrated water resource management and increased resource efficiency.

Paula Caballero, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Colombia, warned against dismissing the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as purely environmental, stressing that water represents one of its building blocks.

Ambassador Csaba Körösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the UN, listed the outcomes of good water stewardship, *inter alia*: access to safe drinking water and sanitation; improved water recycling practices; improvement of sanitation and waste water treatment infrastructure; integrated water use practices; participatory decision making processes; and well-regulated transboundary water management.

Selim Jahan, UN Development Programme, stressed the importance of content, context and continuity when developing water management goals and urged using the lessons learnt from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a framework.

Participants also discussed: the launch of other water initiatives; the linkages and trade-offs with energy and food security; water use reduction in other sectors; and the lack of water quality monitoring.

#### More information:

<http://www.finlandun.org/>  
<http://missions.itu.int/~hungary/>

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# Healthy Oceans: Charting a new course

Organized by UN Department of Public Information, the Pew Environment Group and TARA Expeditions

Moderated by Lisa Speer, National Resources Defence Council, this event discussed the most pressing issues that are endangering oceans, and addressed methods to implement potential solutions.

Julian Barbieri, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), cited ocean acidification as an important issue to address when protecting the future of oceans and seas. Lamenting the paucity of scientific assessments of ocean acidification, he stressed the need to improve knowledge and science.

Carrie Brownstein, Whole Foods Market, highlighted Whole Foods Market's move to retailing in a more sustainable manner, including: selling products from Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries; selling fish that is rated as sustainable by institutions such as the Monterey Bay Aquarium through its Seafood Watch Programme; and the establishment of criteria and requirements for aquaculture farms within its supply chain.

Fabien Cousteau, Filmmaker and Oceanographic Explorer, stressed the urgency to reverse the decline of the ocean ecosystem. Noting that 70% of global food intake is directly or indirectly from oceans, he emphasized that through collaboration using both top-down and bottom-up approaches, progress can be made.

Paul Greenberg, Author of "Four Fish: The Future of the Last Wild Food," lamenting the vulnerability of high seas to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, called for improved monitoring and governance of catches, for both near-shore and high seas fishing, to ensure that catches are legal.

Mark Kurlansky, Author of "Cod" and "The World without Fish," said the quantity and quality of fish is getting worse. Noting that the entire marine ecosystem is under threat, he cautioned that if one species is lost, it places the rest of the ecosystem at risk.

Ray Menell, Fisherman, said that to ensure the success of marine protected areas, fishermen need to be involved in their establishment and be considered as part of the solution. He emphasized the importance of education to ensure the future of marine ecosystems.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed: coastal erosion; coastal ecosystem resilience; ecotourism and ecofarming; engaging local communities in resilience and other projects; pesticides and other wastes; the role of wetlands in ocean conservation; fish waste in a retail environment; and the use of exotic species in aquaculture.



L-R: Ray Menell, Fisherman; Carrie Brownstein, Whole Foods Market; Mark Kurlansky, Author of "Cod" and "The World without Fish"; Lisa Speer, National Resources Defence Council; Paul Greenberg, Author of "Four Fish: The Future of the Last Wild Food"; Fabien Cousteau, Filmmaker and Oceanographic Explorer; Julian Barbieri, UNESCO-IOC.



Paul Greenberg, Author of "Four Fish: The Future of the Last Wild Food," urged developing sustainable models of aquaculture.



Ray Menell, Fisherman, lamented the decrease in near-shore fish species.



Julian Barbieri, UNESCO-IOC, noted the large economic impacts that the loss of coral reefs and other ocean life will have.

## More information:

<http://www.nrdc.org/oceans/default.asp/>  
<http://ioc-unesco.org/>  
[http://arctic.taraexpeditions.org/en/index.php?id\\_page=1/](http://arctic.taraexpeditions.org/en/index.php?id_page=1/)

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# Blue Carbon as a Tool to Mitigate Climate Change and Preserve Key Marine and Coastal Ecosystems

Organized by UNESCO-IOC, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Conservation International (CI)

This side event addressed the Blue Carbon Policy Framework, discussing a number of innovative tools to protect and emphasize the importance of protecting marine and coastal ecosystems.

Ambassador Eduardo Ulibarri, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the UN, moderating the side event, highlighted raising awareness on the mitigating value of blue carbon, and urged including blue carbon in the climate change negotiations.

Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General, IUCN, called for actions to conserve coastal ecosystems, lamenting its rapid destruction due to the lack of understanding of the impacts of humans. She underlined the role of salt marshes, mangroves and tidal marshes in carbon sequestration, noting their carbon capacity exceeds that of many other terrestrial habitats.

Emily Pidgeon, CI, explained the importance of marine and coastal ecosystems as both sinks and sources of carbon. She presented the Blue Carbon Initiative, which aims to increase conservation, restoration and sustainable management of coastal blue carbon ecosystems.

Speaking on the science of blue carbon, Miguel Cifuentes, CATIE, Costa Rica, warned of the significant amounts of carbon emissions released through the destruction of coastal habitats, land use conversions and upstream disruptions, saying that coastal ecosystems maintain 75% of all tropical commercial fish species through its role as nurseries.

David Gordon, Duke University, spoke on the economics of blue carbon, warning that the benefits are not easy to monetize. He said that to ensure the future of blue carbon economies, they need to be incorporated into existing voluntary markets and included in future mitigation activities.

Julian Barbieri, UNESCO-IOC, outlined the policy aspects of blue carbon and highlighted activities that have taken place under the Blue Carbon Initiative, including: awareness raising; consultations with stakeholders and policy makers; and developing a Blue Carbon Policy Framework.

During the discussions, participants deliberated on, *inter alia*: the co-benefits of disaster risk reduction connected to coastal ecosystem protection; coastal ecosystems' carbon value; and the difficulty of establishing carbon inventories for coastal ecosystems.



Emily Pidgeon, CI, said the globe's coastal habitats sequester substantial amounts of carbon.



Amb. Eduardo Ulibarri, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the UN, shared Costa Rica's experiences in coastal protected areas.



Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General, IUCN, called for policy mechanisms to protect coastal ecosystems.



L-R: Emily Pidgeon, CI; Amb. Eduardo Ulibarri, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the UN; Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General, IUCN; Julian Barbieri, UNESCO-IOC.

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## International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Services (IISD RS) Knowledge Management Resources

IISD RS, publisher of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, also maintains online knowledgebases that are updated daily with information regarding meetings, publications and other activities related to international sustainable development policy and its implementation.

Each knowledgebase project consists of several integrated resources, to help the sustainable development policy and practice communities assess trends and activities at the international level. These resources are:

- Daily news reports researched and written by our own experts and organized in a **freely accessible, searchable on-line knowledgebase**;
- A **comprehensive calendar of upcoming events** related to international sustainable development policy, which can be downloaded to your own online calendar;
- And a **community listserve**, which exclusively delivers email updates of the most recent additions to our knowledgebases, as well as announcements by listserve members regarding their organizations' sustainable development activities.

Each knowledgebase focuses on a specific environmental challenge or region, as noted below:



**Sustainable Development Policy & Practice**  
<http://uncsd.iisd.org/>



**Climate Change Policy & Practice**  
<http://climate-l.iisd.org/>



**SIDS Policy & Practice**  
<http://sids-l.iisd.org/>



**Biodiversity Policy & Practice**  
<http://biodiversity-l.iisd.org/>



**Sustainable Energy Policy & Practice**  
<http://energy-l.iisd.org/>



**Latin America & Caribbean Regional Coverage**  
<http://larc.iisd.org/>



**African Regional Coverage**  
<http://africasd.iisd.org/>