

inside:

Intergovernmental Global
Sustainability Panel

Global Sustainability Panel reports
its vision for Rio

a multi-stakeholder
magazine on
climate change
and sustainable
development

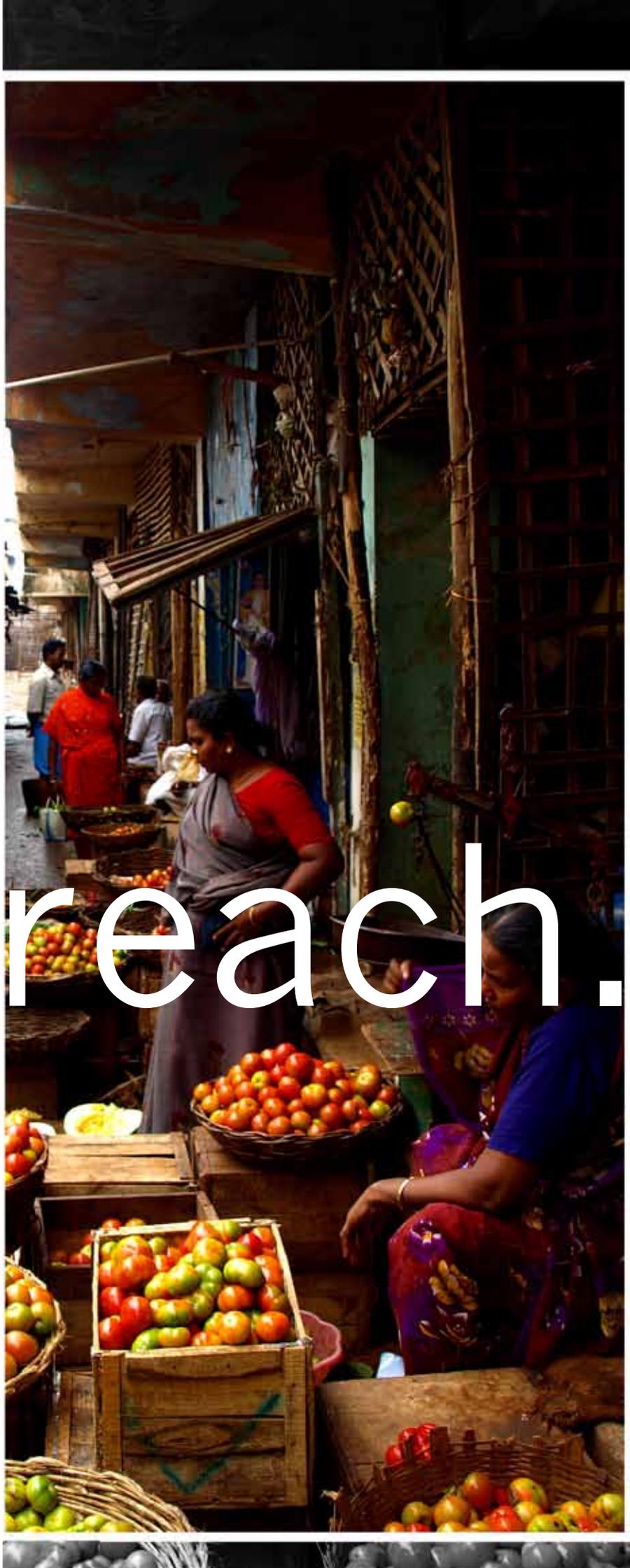
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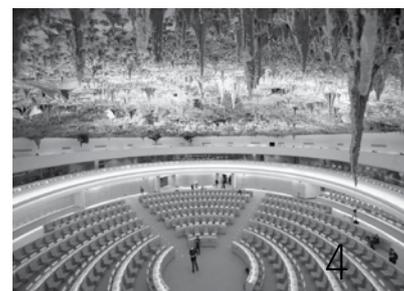


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About Stakeholder Forum

Stakeholder Forum is an international organisation working to advance sustainable development and promote democracy at a global level. Our work aims to enhance open, accountable and participatory international decision-making on sustainable development through enhancing the involvement of stakeholders in intergovernmental processes. For more information, visit: www.stakeholderforum.org

Outreach is a multi-stakeholder publication on climate change and sustainable development. Outreach is the longest continually produced stakeholder magazine in the sustainable development arena and has been produced at international meetings on the environment, including the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and at COP15 and COP16. Published as a daily edition, in both print and web form, Outreach provides a vehicle for critical analysis on key thematic topics in the sustainability arena as well as a voice of regional and local governments, women, indigenous peoples, trade unions, industry, youth and NGOs. To fully ensure a multi-stakeholder perspective, we aim to engage a wide range of stakeholders for article contributions and project funding.

If you are interested in contributing to Outreach, please contact the team (gmacdonald@stakeholderforum.org) You can also follow us on Twitter: @OutreachLive

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News from the negotiations - Day One



Kirsty Schneeberger
Stakeholder Forum



The first meeting of 2012 on Rio +20 - the informal discussions on the initial Zero Draft text - has commenced. The ball is rolling and in no time at all we will find ourselves at 20th June reaching agreement on the finer details of the Outcome Document, which has the potential to be one of the most defining moments of this generation.

Many articles in this edition of Outreach refer to the Brundtland Commission and the vision that was shown in its report that had (and remains to have) a powerful impact on the way in which we view sustainability. 25 years down the track we have embarked on a process that could bring about the shift in our collective consciousness that can redefine the relationship we have with our economies, our environment, and one another. So far it seems like there is certainly an intention, a hope, that we could achieve this. Let us continue to hope that this intention develops into purposeful action.

Major Groups briefing in the morning

A briefing was offered to the Major Groups in the morning to set the scene for the days ahead. It was also an opportunity for representatives from the various organisations to network, share ideas, and discuss their plans for the informal talks.

- Brazil has announced that 30 Heads of State have committed to attending Rio, including China, Germany, and India. This is a very positive step towards raising the ambition that can be achieved at Rio and it is hoped that all other Heads of State and Government soon announce their intention to attend;

- So far there have been 17 submissions made by Member States and Political Groups that contain comments on Sections 1 and 2 of the Zero Draft. These submissions are set to be published on the UNCSO website where all the other information on the Zero Draft is contained; and

- The NGO Major Group agreed the text of its formal intervention which focusses on vision and urgency, participation, accountability, and implementation.

In Plenary

- There is a clear tension between brevity and specificity. Resolving this tension is a major balancing act for the Bureau and Secretariat because whilst the Outcome Document must be focussed, it must also have enough detail to ensure that aspirations will be matched with actions;

- Means of implementation and action on Sustainable Development on the ground was strongly emphasised;

- The G77 proposed that the 17th February deadline for country positions be pushed back to a later date, and there are murmurings in the corridors that many support this proposal;

- Overwhelmingly Member States were calling for the text to be more ambitious – that the initial draft offered a very good platform to build upon, and importantly to build ambition into, but that more certainly needs to be done to ensure this happens. It is very encouraging to have Member States calling on themselves to pick up the pace and move into a higher gear. At the very least it demonstrates the intention to agree to an ambitious outcome in Rio;

- Reaffirming the Rio Principles was a priority for many, particularly the Principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR). Such reaffirmation of the previously agreed Rio Principles as well as Agenda 21 will lay the ground for reaching agreement this June. As our review of the Rio Principles has shown, many have been translated from soft to hard law at the international and national levels; however there are still many gaps in implementation

As the day finished there were still nearly 20 delegates hoping to speak, and they will have the chance first thing in the morning to articulate their views. Clearly Rio +20 is an important moment for all who are participating here. In order to progress in the positive direction that we would like to see, cooperation and collaboration will be vital to ensuring that the process lives up to the potential of being such an important milestone of 2012.

Not only will delegates do themselves and their countries proud, but through safeguarding the future, they will do their posterity proud for generations to come. ■

Global Sustainability Panel reports its vision for Rio

Georgios Kostakos

Acting Deputy Executive Secretary and Senior Advisor in the Secretariat of the Global Sustainability Panel

Seventeen months after its launch by the UN Secretary-General in August 2010, the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability (GSP) is ready to issue its report. It took six meetings of the panel members, and many more discussions between their sherpas and advisers to get to this point.

A large number of organisations and individuals, beyond the Panel and the Secretariat that supported it, were consulted and offered inputs during this period, including civil society, directly or through UN-NGLS. Was it worth the effort?

It is up to each person to judge that, once the report is out. Time will tell whether the Panel's recommendations will have a lasting effect on Rio+20 and beyond. This brief article aspires to provide some insights on the thinking of the Panel as it advanced in its work and to indicate focus areas of its recommendations, without spoiling the excitement of their publication in the next few days.

To start with, the Panel was given an almost impossible task by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to "reflect on and formulate a new vision for sustainable growth and prosperity, along with mechanisms for achieving it". Some twenty-five years after publication of the Brundtland Report, and twenty after Rio, could any Panel, no matter how distinguished and knowledgeable, solve the problems of sustainable development that had not been solved over all of these years? The Panel members agreed early enough with Dr. Brundtland, physically present and fully engaged as a member herself, that there was no need to reinvent the wheel. There is a sustainable development paradigm, which identifies the three dimensions or pillars of sustainability as economic, social, and environmental. The problem over the years has been the lack of implementation, in an integrated way, due to the lack of political will, and a silo approach that emphasises individual issues and not their interconnections.

If there is no need for a new paradigm of sustainable development, what can be done to strengthen and implement the old one? The Panel phrased its vision of what needs to be achieved as follows: "To eradicate poverty and reduce inequality, make growth inclusive, and production and consumption more sustainable while combating climate change and respecting a range of other planetary boundaries."

To take the world closer to this vision, the Panel identified the need for concrete actions in three areas: empowering people to make sustainable choices, moving towards a



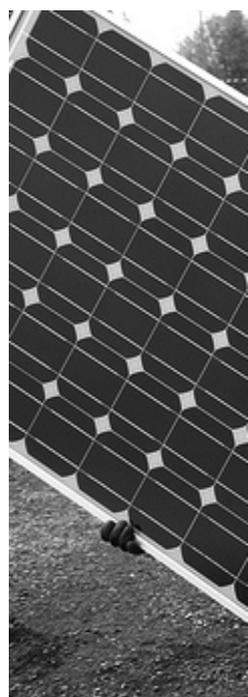
sustainable economy, and strengthening institutional governance.

Empowering individuals entails, among other things, delivering on the fundamentals of development, such as eradicating poverty, promoting gender equality, advancing education and building skills that enable all of society to address today's challenges and capitalise on opportunities. It also encompasses creating employment opportunities, especially for women and youth, and building resilience through universal access to the basics like food, water and energy, as well as safety nets, disaster risk reduction and adaptation planning.

Achieving sustainability requires a transformation of the global economy. That means incorporating social and environmental costs in the pricing of goods and services, as well as addressing market failures; providing incentives based on sustainable development criteria in investment and financial transactions; increasing finance for sustainable development from public and private sources, as well as partnerships; and changing the way we measure progress and growth.

Finally, an effective framework of institutions and decision-making processes should support efforts to deliver sustainable development at the local, national, regional, and global level. Improving coherence and accountability would mean going beyond the fragmented institutions established around single-issue silos at all levels. A set of universal goals covering all three dimensions of sustainable development, as well as their interconnections would galvanise individual and collective action, and could be coupled with a new commitment to revitalise and reform the international institutional framework, including discontinuing existing bodies and creating new ones, as necessary.

These are some of the considerations that guided the deliberations of the Panel. The Panel's concrete recommendations will become available at the time of the launch of its report, currently scheduled to take place on 30 January 2012 in Addis Ababa. Hoping for a positive reception, what is most important is putting all this into practice afterwards. That is where civil society can make a big difference, by encouraging and holding accountable governments and businesses, but also by taking direct action at a collective and individual level. Sustainable development will only become a reality when each one of us internalises and expresses it through private choices and public deeds ■



SDGs: a new generation of development goals?

Neva Frencheville

International Development Policy Advisor, WWF

One of this generation's greatest tragedies - and oncoming catastrophes - is the failure to stem the accelerating rate of biodiversity loss. Biodiversity underpins the ecosystem goods and services on which humanity depends, and its loss represents a betrayal for the world's poor as progress towards development is undermined.

As Rio +20 approaches, it now seems that the post-MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) agenda risks focusing on the environmental at the expense of the social. The end of the MDGs is now in sight and, despite significant progress in some areas, there is still a way to go to meet targets, particularly for the most vulnerable communities.

Lessons have been learnt from the Millennium Development Goals. Admirable in intent, they focus too strongly on sectoral challenges and fail to make the most of opportunities for cross-cutting gains. Arguably, they also fail to address the politically tricky drivers of social injustice, inequality and environmental degradation, which fundamentally benefit the powerful nations of the world. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an opportunity for a world where people and nature can thrive.

Four principles must form the foundation of the post-2015 development framework:



Universal

There must be measurable targets and indicators for all countries, both in the developed and developing world.

Holistic

The goals must be holistic and capitalise on synergies across sectors, acknowledging and best managing trade-offs.

Equitable

The framework must target inequality both within and between countries, and respond to the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised communities.

Inclusive

The goals must be formed through an open, transparent, and accountable process. Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development identifies that access to information and decision-making is the foundation of good environmental governance. A series of national consultations of vulnerable communities and people impacted by poverty are being run through 2012 - 2013 and the results must be carefully considered in the formation of the SDGs.

Recognition of the urgent need for sustainable consumption and production patterns is welcomed and the developed world has taken responsibility for its impact on the planet - but the Zero Draft as yet lacks the ambition or strategy to enable this change at an international level.

Not all MDG targets will be met by 2015, but a shared global framework for development enabled the world to come together with a common vision for the new millennium. The MDGs remain a valid set of objectives in their own right and it is essential that the post-2015 development framework is both integrated and complementary to their attainment. The absence of the social indicators central to the MDGs, primarily health, education and gender equity, is worrying. The environmental must be part and parcel of the social, supported by indicators for a green economy. Government, the private sector, and civil society all have a role to play in this. Sustainable Development Goals which respond solely to environmental issues risk both being sidelined and losing progress made, particularly for women and children.

Leaders must show ambition and political commitment in the run-up to Rio. But it is also important that they don't get ahead of themselves, and in looking for an outcome that can be sold as a success, attempt to finalise the goals. This is the time to start an open and inclusive process, based on the core principles that will enable a smooth transition to the post-2015 development framework.



Intergovernmental Global Sustainability Panel

Owen Gaffney

Director of Communications at the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme

Could an Intergovernmental Panel on Global Sustainability provide the scientific leadership, coordination and infrastructure the UN needs?

Without urgent action many societies can expect prolonged droughts, spreading dust-bowls, sea level rise, and extreme events.

We are taking the Earth system close to thresholds. Increasingly, this will affect economic and political stability, whilst raising the cost of improving human wellbeing.

It has been questioned whether the UN is fit to address these challenges. One recognised failure of the institution is the fragmented and often weak international science-policy interface. It is striking that no independent, impartial scientific assessment of global sustainability exists. A strong science-policy interface that has the freedom and flexibility to connect the dots, propose solutions and sound alarm bells on emerging issues is required.

Despite political rhetoric and two decades of international agreements, genuine sustainable development remains as elusive as ever.

Gro Harlem Brundtland's commission defined sustainable development as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." From this foundation the 1992 Rio Earth Summit erected three pillars: economic, social, and environmental. Unwittingly, this model has served to sever the global environment from other developmental concerns contributing to environmental policy failures.

Rio+20 provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to significantly improve coordination and coherence of the science-policy interface at the international level. Concrete proposals, however, remain thin on the ground.

Global challenges, from poverty eradication and fisheries depletion to climate change and the financial crisis, are interconnected and interdependent. Two decades of research has highlighted the tight coupling between the Earth system and the socio-economic system. Indeed, there is ample evidence that the global socio-economic system is now the major driver of change at the planetary level. Humanity has the strength and power of geological forces such as ice ages or a meteorite impact, leading scientists to argue we have entered a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene.

One possible solution for combatting fragmentation is an Intergovernmental Panel on Global Sustainability. Such a panel would focus on risks and solutions and produce a state-of-the-planet assessment that includes social, economic, and political dimensions. A new panel on global sustainability could be complemented by the appointment of a Chief Scientific Advisor to the UN working directly beneath the Secretary General. This package would create the scientific leadership, vision, and infrastructure the UN desperately needs.

“It is striking that no independent, impartial scientific assessment of global sustainability exists.”

It would be a mistake to ghettoise such a sustainability panel by parking it beneath an environmental arm of the UN system. A new panel must truly work across the entire UN. To be successful it must have a broad sponsor base that includes international financial institutions (IMF, World Trade Organization, and World Bank). A natural home could be the newly-proposed UN Sustainable Development Council. It is important that the panel adopts the term 'global sustainability' rather than 'sustainable development' to indicate the problem is not restricted to developing nations: all nations have a duty to work towards global sustainability.

A serious consideration is the number of existing assessments. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has set the gold standard. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment is highly-regarded. The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) was launched recently. Now there are further calls for





marine and nitrogen assessments.

But is assessment proliferation useful? It risks further fragmenting the science precisely at a time scientists are arguing for coherency. An Intergovernmental Panel on Global Sustainability will not compete or negate existing assessments. On the contrary it will bind them together maximising their effectiveness.

If the motivation can be found for such a panel, then the timing is good. Indeed, we may see history repeat itself. In 1988, Swedish academic Bert Bolin and colleagues set up the IPCC to assess climate. It

followed naturally from two influential international research programmes initiated in the seventies and eighties by the far-sighted Bolin: the World Climate Research Programme and the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme. Bolin argued that a distinction between the science and the science-policy was essential. These programmes were set up to do the science; IPCC assessed it.

Now a consortium of leading international organisations is pushing for a realignment of the four large international research programmes (WCRP, IGBP, DIVERSITAS, International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change). The consortium wants to steer these programmes towards a ten-year focus on Earth-system sustainability, entitled Future Earth. 2012 will see the launch of Future Earth. If this is to be as successful as its predecessors, it will need an international policy focus to bring together the new knowledge generated. A new panel could provide this focus ■



profile. Chantel Line Carpentier

How did you get the role you are in today and what advice would you give to aspiring earth champions?

I applied online! My advice to anyone is to do what you love, because then you will do it well and in the end feel like you are being paid for something you would do anyway.

Nationality: Canadian

Country of residence: USA

Current Position:
Sustainable Development Officer, UN DESA - Coordinator Major groups, focal points for sustainable agriculture and sustainable consumption and production.

What prompted your early interest in the environment?

I grew up on a self-subsistence farm in upstate Quebec, and when the high school counselor tested me I was best at agriculture and science. When I started my degree the policy links to environmental, social, and trade issues were so preeminent that in my first year of college I became a sustainable development advocate.

Describe your first attempt to 'save the planet':

In college I worked for the city of Montreal to distribute the first recycling bins (1986). While doing my undergrad at McGill, I was part of a group that set up a project with CIDA to go to Chile and stay with sustainability-engaged Chileans in Santiago and with indigenous communities close to Val Paraiso.

What do you believe should be achieved at Rio+20?

Change in built-in incentives and governance system so that straight after June 22, and the end of the

conference, we can focus on achieving sustainable development for all citizens and ecosystems. To do this we must quip ourselves with measures and policies to set our planet on a sustainable path.

What is your role in this process?

As Major Group coordinator, we facilitate the engagement of Major Groups and other stakeholders into the preparatory process and the conference itself. With funding from the EU we are offering capacity building workshops to non-governmental actors. It is very rewarding.

How important is the Rio+20 process?

As the Secretary General himself has said himself, Rio+20 will be one of the most important global meetings on sustainable development in our time. Already it's taking the allure of a summit and has, with the committed work of major groups and other stakeholders, the potential to change the way we do things. Rio+20 is one of the best opportunities we have to address the deficits that have been identified in implementation, integration, and coherence of sustainable development through an action-oriented outcome. This requires alleviating poverty, increasing economic and environmental resilience, and addressing growing social inequalities ■

What about armed conflict?

An eighth critical issue for Rio+20

Hudson McFann
SustainUS

Natural disasters, identified as one of seven critical issues in the Zero Draft, are receiving priority attention in the Rio+20 process. This move is both encouraging and consistent with the 2002 pledge in the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) 'to place particular focus on, and give priority attention to, the fight against the worldwide conditions that pose severe threats to the sustainable development of our people' (paragraph 19).

However, also named among the severe threats in the Johannesburg Declaration is armed conflict, which is not once mentioned in the Zero Draft. This must change. Armed conflict is a critical issue for sustainable development and should be a critical issue for Rio+20.

The need for action is rendered particularly vivid when considering the unique vulnerability of children to the various adverse economic, social and environmental consequences of armed conflict. In 2008, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called the protection of children affected by conflict 'a moral call that deserves to be placed above politics and requires innovative and fearless engagement by all stakeholders.'

Rio+20 presents a crucial opportunity to answer the Secretary-General's call for action and to fulfill the WSSD pledge with bold commitments to address the manifold and enduring ways in which armed conflict is, as Rio Principle 24 reminds us, 'inherently destructive of sustainable development.'

In her landmark report on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children (1996), Graça Machel highlighted myriad threats to children, including landmines and unexploded ordnance, which remain deadly long after the conflicts in which they were deployed. These weapons also hinder post-conflict reconstruction and development. Agricultural



land contaminated with mines and unexploded ordnance cannot be cultivated. Mines scattered along transportation routes prevent the safe return of refugee and displaced children, and impede the flow of goods and services. So long as these hazards persist, sustainable development on a truly global and just scale is not possible.

Detailed reports developed by UNEP's Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch further demonstrate the severity and pervasiveness of armed conflict's impacts, making it an imperative for sustained and purposeful action towards sustainable development. An example can be seen in UNEP's 2003 study in Iraq, which indicated that with the onset of armed conflict, the collection of medical waste from Baghdad's hospitals stopped and incinerators could not function due to insufficient resources, such as fuel. UNEP noted that between 12th and 22nd June in 2003 alone, almost 1,400 cubic meters of medical waste was removed, with support from the WHO, from Baghdad's hospitals. In Afghanistan, UNEP found similar challenges, with medical wastes often being disposed of in the streets of Kabul.

From ensuring the safe and environmentally sound management of medical wastes, to the cleanup of hazardous chemicals and debris, the international community can and must play an active role in mitigating the immediate effects and lasting legacies of armed conflict—with particular emphasis on the protection of children.

Machel insists in a personal note from her 1996 report that 'protecting children from the impact of armed conflict is everyone's responsibility—governments, international organisations and every element of civil society.' We must work together to fulfill this responsibility and embrace an ambitious vision for Rio+20, committing ourselves to bold action on an eighth and eminently critical issue: armed conflict ■

Business views: The Future We Want

Louise Kantrow

Permanent Representative of the International Chamber of Commerce to the United Nations

Business Action for Sustainable Development (BASD2012), the official United Nations coordinator of the Business and Industry Major Group at the upcoming Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) is a temporary coalition of business organisations that will ensure the voice of business is heard at the conference and during the preparatory process. This initiative is convened by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), and has been expanded with the addition of ten sectoral international business organisations as partners. This broad partnership and group of networks enables us to consult with thousands of businesses from the Small Medium Enterprise (SME) to the Multi-National Enterprise (MNE) in every region of the world.

Business hopes the Rio+20 outcome will focus on the following key deliverables to catalyse private sector action towards a green economy:

Take stock of progress since the 1992 Earth Summit, and develop policies and approaches that address new and existing challenges, recognising the economic, social, and environment pillars of sustainable development as essential components of recommended policies and solutions.

Strengthen poverty alleviation commitments with greater emphasis being placed on the need to accelerate progress on fundamental issues such as water and sanitation, access to energy, food security and the nexus that links them.

Encourage widespread adoption and uptake of sustainability principles by businesses of all sizes, sectors and regions.

Provide the enabling environment necessary to accelerate and intensify the practice of corporate sustainability so that business can fully contribute to sustainable development. Combating corruption and ensuring peace and security will be critical to diffuse corporate sustainability practices. The private sector is committed to work collaboratively with the public sector and civil society to create incentives and remove barriers to achieve green economies.

Embed the 'green economy' concept in the broader sustainable development concept. The business community believes that the term 'green economy' is embedded in sustainable development. While business would rather speak about greener economies, to acknowledge the many opportunities and risks for its sectors, value chains, and different national contexts, for the purpose of the Rio+20 Conference, we acknowledge the term green economy and view it as a unifying theme to articulate the sustainable development direction in which all global economies need to move, albeit within the existing tensions and global economic turmoil.

Recognise that in order to move forward, it is crucial to green all sectors in all countries and advance resource efficiency and life cycle approaches. We consider improvements of existing processes (manufacturing technologies, jobs, logistics, research, etc.) to be as important as launching new products and technologies. Both approaches should be pursued simultaneously for a step change. It should be noted that business operates across global supply and value chains and greening all stages along the life cycle of its products and services is becoming a guiding principle for many leading companies and sectors. The actions needed to transition towards a green economy vary from sector to sector, value chain, and from country-to-country, depending on national circumstances, for example near term priorities may differ significantly, especially for least developed countries.

Recognise that collaboration and collective action is needed to operationalise and mainstream the concept of a green economy. The transition towards a green economy is a shared responsibility by all actors in society. No one stakeholder group, whether business and industry, governments or society, can do this on their own. Collaboration and collective action on innovation and technology development and their appropriate deployment via sustainable production and consumption (SCP) concepts are at the heart of greening economies. It should also be noted that education is the cornerstone of any strong and competitive green economy and a skilled workforce is a prerequisite. Stepping up education efforts will foster the mindsets and behavioral changes needed to drive the required innovations into the direction of a green economy. Public private partnerships can play a major role in building the essential knowledge and skills required for the transition to a green economy.

Business stands ready to support, build, scale up and accelerate cooperative initiatives in Rio+20 and beyond to achieve the objectives of sustainable development.





Corporate Sustainability Leadership: Framework for Action at Rio+20 and Beyond

Georg Kell

Executive Director of the UN Global Compact

Rio+20 will convene Governments to build consensus on a more sustainable course for our world, in the environmental, social and economic spheres. Business plays a crucial role in this endeavour through corporate sustainability, defined as the delivery of long-term value in financial, social, environmental and ethical terms.

To spur private sector action in support of sustainability, a Rio+20 Corporate Sustainability Forum will be held on 15-18 June in Rio.

Business must be part of the solution

Companies around the world are increasingly putting sustainability on their agendas; promising and progressive work is underway. For example, through the UN Global Compact over 6,000 companies in 140 countries – representing approximately 50 million employees – have committed to respect and support human rights, ensure decent workplace conditions, safeguard and restore the environment and enact good corporate governance and are reporting publicly on their progress. Business is also moving into innovation and new opportunity spaces that drive corporate and investor success while delivering societal value, such as helping to lift people out of poverty through social enterprise or developing green products and processes. As a result, transformative solutions by business exist, with the ability to have profound impacts on areas including energy and climate, water, biodiversity, agriculture and food, corruption and gender equality.

Despite positive developments and shifting trends, corporate sustainability as practiced today remains insufficient – a quantum leap is needed. To reach full scale, economic incentive structures must be realigned so that sustainability is valued and profitable.

Government actions to support corporate sustainability

With the right incentives, enabling environment and means of implementation, the private sector can make significant contributions to the sustainable development agenda. Therefore, at the Rio+20 Conference, the UN Global Compact recommends that Governments:

- *Recognise* that corporate sustainability – defined as delivery of long-term value in financial, social, environmental and ethical terms – is a fundamental contribution to sustainable

development and encourage businesses everywhere to adopt universally accepted sustainability principles.

- *Encourage* companies to enhance accountability and transparency through monitoring, measuring and disclosing sustainability practices and commit to developing a global policy framework for business to annually disclose sustainability information following uniform parameters in their annual financial reports or other reports.
- *Recognise* that partnerships between business, the public sector and civil society contribute important solutions for development goals, for example in the areas of energy, water, food and good governance, and commit to support the development of transformational partnerships which address systemic issues, involve all relevant stakeholders, leverage core competencies of all partners, and have in-built capacity for scale.

Further, Governments are asked to take actions to support greater scale and quality of corporate sustainability, in the following areas:

- *Building effective* policy frameworks to support corporate sustainability, specifically related to: peace, stability and human rights; an open, rule-based and non-discriminatory policy environment; good governance and corruption; and effective regulatory frameworks and incentives for markets.
- *Strengthening modalities* for corporate sustainability implementation, including: sustainable finance and responsible investment; corporate disclosure; transformational partnership models and corporate commitments; national sustainability hubs; and responsible management education.
- *Advancing sustainability* issues through private sector practices, innovation and collaboration, in areas including: sustainable jobs and decent work; energy and climate; water; biodiversity; empowering women; anti-corruption; and hybrid business models.

Details on each of these recommendations can be found in Corporate Sustainability Leadership: A Framework for Action at Rio+20 and Beyond, the UN Global Compact Office’s submission to the preparatory process of the Rio+20 outcome document.

Rio+20 Corporate Sustainability Forum

To strengthen the business contribution to sustainable development globally, the Rio+20 Corporate Sustainability Forum: Innovation & Collaboration for the Future We Want will take place in the days leading up to Rio+20. Over 2,000 participants are expected, representing business as well as investors, governments, local authorities, civil society and UN entities. The Forum will be a launching ground for widespread action – showcasing innovative public-private partnerships, business contributions and new commitments.

Rio+20 provides a unique and powerful platform to advance innovation and collaboration by business to support sustainability goals. Collaborative, serious and solutions-oriented engagement by and with the private sector in Rio will be critical ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION
<http://www.unglobalcompact.org>

Peoples' Sustainability Treaties for Rio+20

Uchita de Zoysa

Peoples' Sustainability Treaties for Rio+20

Many voices from the South have already condemned the Zero Draft outcome document as a misrepresentation of the aspiration of the global civil society and their representative public. The course of action towards Rio+20 has been characterised by a process in which stakeholder vision and participation has been low, engagement difficult and the challenge for civil society organisations (CSOs) to ensure a representative outcome at Rio+20 harder than ever.

The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties for Rio+20 have emerged to provide a common platform for voices from civil society. The objective is to facilitate the organisation of civil society actors, generate a collective vision that is representative of the global peoples' aspirations and create an open platform to voice these visions. The treaties also aim to agree on a pathway for sustainable futures and create collective civil agreement on a way forward through principled action.

Through joint civil society efforts, the Treaties call for the realisation of an alternative outcome at Rio+20. The rationale of this complementary civil society engagement is to produce a declaration and action plan, which demonstrate the collective visions of the global people and help advance a global movement forging sustainable futures for all.

Participating, facilitating and partner organisations, in collaboration with organising entities such as the Treatise Circles (TS), International Advisory Board (IAB), Editorial Review Committee (ERC), Media & Advocacy Group (MAG) and the Secretariat, will have the opportunity to collaborate towards a collective outcome.

CSOs worldwide are invited to initiate and facilitate treaties on topics to be addressed at Rio+20 and beyond. Non-profit and non-governmental CSOs are invited to participate as full partners in formulating a treaty. Individuals from any walk of life can participate as contributors, while any person, body or institution can endorse and commit to a treaty.

A treaty on any relevant theme can be convened and facilitated by a joint alliance represented by minimum of one organisation from the South and North, respectively. Facilitating organisations are expected to organise an



outreach programme to create an open-ended treaty circle, online discussions, public hearings and treaty dialogues during Rio+20.

Treaties circles will be created and treaties drafted by April 2012, to be finalised during May 2012. They will then be released at the end of May 2012, allowing time for lobbying prior to the Rio+20 Summit. Finally, from 1st June 2012 the treaties will be open to the public for endorsement and adoption.

Accepting the Challenge and Demonstrating Proactive Leadership

Failure at Rio+20 cannot be accepted and failure of the official process should not become an obstacle towards a global sustainable transition. CSOs cannot repeat the mistake of being reactive to a weak international agenda on sustainable development; instead they need to provide the vision, leadership and commitment towards reinforcing a strong strategy. The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties is open to all CSOs to come together and develop an independent, collective outcome for Rio+20, and to plan their actions towards a sustainable future for all.

Event: 1st International Dialogue on the Peoples Sustainability Treaties will be held on the 26th January 2012 from 5-8pm at the The New Economics Institute Conference Room, 437 Madison Avenue floor 37, New York, NY 10022.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://sustainabilitytreaties.wordpress.com/>

If this is the Future we Want, we need stronger actions

Ben Vanpeperstraete and Olimar Maisonet-Guzman
 UNCSD Major Group of Children and Youth



Although the first version of the Zero Draft tries to capture a diversity of views from Members States and civil society, it falls short in the proposal of solutions and a plan of action for the sustainability challenges that we face.

The document diagnoses existing problems, rather than putting forward concrete solutions for overcoming them. For example, most of the language for the governance section proposes either to continue with the current governance structure, or select from a series of conservative reforms.

Although the Zero Draft seeks to address the multiple challenges of energy, water, food and other critical issues, the Framework for Action still fails to propose integrated solutions. By addressing each sector individually, we will not facilitate the transition to a green economy. With equal importance, Member States should guarantee that young people are key players in the green economy, by providing them the necessary education and specialized training.

The Major Group of Children and Youth has called for the upgrade of UNEP because the current design is unable to deliver results and supervise sustainability initiatives. The Zero Draft expresses the need for implementing this change, however the language should be strengthened to emphasise the need for a specialised UN agency

that goes beyond a requirement for universal membership.

The problem is encountered once again when discussing the establishment of an Ombudsperson for Future Generations. This language proposes only the consideration of the idea, rather than the development of a roadmap to achieve the creation of the office. Will it be left to future generations to establish this ombudsperson?

Another aspect that is not embedded in the governance section is related to stakeholder participation. Although the document recognises the importance of including Major Groups in the deliberation process, it fails to mention how the proposed structure will help improve their participation. Additionally, the document does not consider the possibility that some groups may not be captured in the current Major Group design, and therefore further study is needed on how to upgrade the structure to facilitate their participation.

We understand that this is only a first draft. Normally, one starts with an ambitious text which decreases in ambition during the process. However, starting with a fairly weak text and building it to a stronger text is rather new to us, and we are eager to see how this develops ■

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