

# OUTREACH 2005



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

THURSDAY 29TH

## THE VALUE OF TARGETS & GOALS

### **Interview with Sir Richard Jolly,**

**Former chair of the Collaborative Council on Water & Sanitation and Co-Director of the UN History process**

*O2005: Next year the international community shall review the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and will surely be forced to report little progress on delivery of those on Water and Sanitation. Is there a silver lining to this process and what approach do we need to adapt for the next 10 years.*

RJ: I don't agree with the proposition that the report on Water and Sanitation should be negative. Monitoring should be country and regionally based, not just addressing global averages.

At the country level 60-70 states are on track for the provision of drinking water. One third of these are developing countries. That is far from a failure. If we can promote that these are the facts we can avoid pessimistic views that would remove incentives to act over the next 10 years. The same is true for sanitation, albeit not to the same extent.

Nevertheless, we can't be complacent about the fact that the remaining two thirds of countries are not on track, including most of Africa and large parts of Latin America.

In Africa many countries have not gotten their act in order as well as suffering from conflicts. Aid donors are also not living up to Goal A partnership agreements, by increasing the share of resources to African, specifically sub-Saharan, countries. These nations are also suffering from subsidies for agriculture in the developed world and uneven trading rules still not addressed by the WTO. All these factors slow progress on the delivery of water services.

Returning to the trouble with using of global averages, India and China, who are progressing well on water and have the ability to make significant gains on sanitation also, represent half those averages.

*O2005: In the meantime the CSD will have a policy session on water and sanitation, and UNEP its Governing Council. What contribution can these events make towards the Millennium Development Goal review and their delivery?*

RJ: I think, without overstating things, a lot on water, sanitation and hygiene, and maybe more on the poverty and hunger goals as well as of those concerning Maternal health.



Am I a good thing?

These events can offer a new consensus on what the issues are. These are software, not hardware, issues including: education; media; small scale activities; women in planning and design. The Collaborative Council knows of 20 or 30 WASH actions currently underway for example, including strong action at the regional level in Africa and Latin America.

The simplification of the debate that has occurred over the last 5 years needs to be redressed, and in some cases already has been. There are many different means by

which these issues can be addressed, usually not focussed on big private companies.

*O2005: How has this CSD Session on Review and Partnerships been useful?*

RJ: My impression is that it has underlined the main points of consensus. Internally, the UN is working much more closely, on which all power to the Secretary General for his achievements on reform.

*O2005: In practical terms, how do you think the review and policy sessions of the CSD need to be linked to promote implementation?*

RJ: Sanitation in particular needs to be promoted. People still recognise sanitation as the poor cousin of water, sanitation and hygiene, with hygiene often not mentioned at all. These inevitably leads to a lack of resources, a situation which needs to be changed. I

*(Continued on page 2)*

hope the CSD has helped to reinforce that, this equal status only came back at Johannesburg after all.

*O2005: Are targets and goals useful?*

RJ: My work on UN History to review the UN work social and economic issues shows that the popular view of goals and targets is extremely misinformed.

In 1961 President Kennedy called for a decade on development - the first call for economic growth with a goal on aid. Since then, the UN has set about 50 goals, quantified with time-bound targets.

In contrast to most misinformed, casual impressions, these goals have mostly been set following long and careful consideration. Most of the goals have been achieved in most or a reasonable number of countries.

Only 3 or 4 have been total failures, notably:

- Maternal mortality reduction;
- Adult illiteracy;
- ODA, which has been woeful.

Some goals, on the other hand, have been achieved completely:

- Eradication of small pox;
- Reduction of Polio;
- Iodation of salt;
- Reduction of child mortality, which has decreased to levels only achieved by developed countries in the 1940s.

So you can see, the picture is more positive than most realise. Though not all goals are right, and not all implementable. Water and sanitation targets of the 1980s are good examples. The target to achieve universal access by 1990 was clearly not achieved, which leads many to be cynical. BUT, more people gained access to water services in the 1980s than in any decade before or since.

*O2005: What contribution can the current UN reform process have, particularly in the field of International Environmental Governance?*

RJ: I am one of those who think the UN needs an UN Environment

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## Outreach 2005

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Organisation. Whether this reform process leads to that depends on governments, and I'll be surprised if they will agree.

There is a lot of confusion on UN reform. For Track 1 reforms, those within the power of the Secretary General and UN to implement, the UN has made major advances and delivered many reforms. In contrast, Track 2 reforms, needing the agreement of governments, such as a UNEO or of the Security Council, the reasons for such little action has little to do with the Secretary General and UN, and more to do with the inability of governments to agree or of big powers to oppose.

Unfortunately it suits many governments to 'blame the UN' as a scapegoat for their own failures. One of the big risks is of is that, as a result, the UN continues to be starved of funds as money is shifted to war, security and the Bretton Woods Institutes.

*Interview by Toby Middleton*

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# SIDE EVENT

## NRG4SD

The Network of Regional Government for Sustainable Development (NRG4SD) was set up in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg. The regional governments present realised that they were not recognised as a key stakeholder at the discussion and that there was no global organisation to represent them. At Johannesburg, they forged the 'Gauteng Declaration', a commitment to sustainable development and the founding document of NRG4SD. Thus the network was born with the aim to be a voice for, and the represent regional governments at the global level, promoting sustainable development at the regional level around the world.

Regional governments are defined by the network as the sphere of governance immediately beneath the UN recognised nation state level. Regional governments are known by many different names around the world, including 'States' in the United States of America, many South American countries and Australia, as well as 'Provinces' and so on.

Regional governments are different to the local and municipal spheres of government due to their scale and strategic role, often holding the legal competencies for issues such as education, planning and health. Regional governments are therefore important in the delivery of many international initiatives and are especially important if sustainable development is to be achieved.

Central to the network's aims are the sharing of information and experience about sustainable development policy-making at the regional level of governance, promoting understanding, collaboration and partnerships in sustainable development. The network also seeks greater international recognition of the importance of the contribution of regions to sustainable development. The work programme of the network is framed

around these goals.

In the short time that the network has been established, several milestones have been achieved. The network has already established eight different partnership agreements between the regions of Antofagasta, the Basque Country, Goias, the state of Mexico, Sao Paulo, Valparaiso and West Java. At the partnership fair, the Flemish government presented its newly launched initiative called 'The Flemish Partnership - Water for Development' with the goal of helping six million people in developing countries (the same amount of inhabitants in Flanders) to obtain safe drinking water and adequate sanitation by 2015.

Recently NRG4SD held its 4th international conference in Cardiff, Wales, in March 2004. Regional government representatives from all the five continents were in attendance and at the conference, the NRG4SD approved four policy papers on the issues of water, renewables and sustainable energy, sustainable development strategies, and sustainable tourism. These policy papers represent commitment to action in delivering sustainable development and guidance for regional governments in tackling these key issues.

NRG4SD

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## Demystifying the ecosystem approach: *investing in a sustainable future makes sense and saves money!*

*"The ecosystem approach, striving at restoring water basins to a near natural state, integrates the protection and sustainable use of ecosystems such as wetlands, forests and sustainably managed soils, which capture, filter, store and distribute water."* (UNEP 2003)

Protecting and managing the natural resource base has been recognised as a fundamental cross cutting issue at the CSD. MDG7 focuses on meeting targets through an overarching goal of "environmental sustainability". There are sound practical, financial and sustainable reasons for this – not just because a green and pleasant land is a 'nice one to live in' or because it supports wildlife (important although these area).

The ecosystem approach has been defined by IUCN and the Convention on Biological diversity; it is *simply* about working with nature rather than against it. It is about recognising and valuing natural systems and the goods and services that biodiversity and the wider environment provides. It is about taking them into account in planning and decision making and it is about striving to protect, restore and use natural resources sustainably. It is about appropriate solutions (high tech or low tech and often the latter) that support local needs but work within a wider habitat or catchment framework. It is about ensuring long term, as well as immediate benefit for people and environment.

The financial sense in this is two fold. Firstly, the economic value of nature's services is immense - in 1997 a team of leading economists put it at \$38 trillion/year. More recently WWF (2004) has estimated the annual global value of the world's wetlands to be some \$70 billion. A study coordinated by Cambridge University and the RSPB (*Science*, 2002), further estimates that more than half the total value is lost when nature is converted to unsustainable human use. Secondly, working against nature can be very costly



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## One mighty big ecosystem

indeed! Taking a bold step at a side event on Tuesday, the Swiss Government outlined some of these costs and the price of having to put it right again – literally millions of Euros.

Switzerland has experienced ecosystem destruction and the impacts of this on water. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was a poor developing country, with forest as its main natural resource. To finance its development, Switzerland began massive clear-cutting of its forests: wood for heating, construction, power, transport and cash crops. The effects of this massive deforestation were devastating: floods, erosion and mudslides ravaged valleys and cities. This is not an unfamiliar tale in many developing countries of today's world. Switzerland is hoping that we will learn from their lessons and not make their mistakes, whereby short term gains have been eaten by long term losses. As well as massive reforestation programmes, they are having to undo canalised rivers to address flooding, clean up polluted aquifers and streams... the list goes on. They now have strong environmental legislation in place and plan with people and the environment in mind.

More and more evidence is being seen of the economic sense and environmental imperative for taking an ecosystem approach that addresses the whole watershed or river basin in an integrated way. From the Mississippi to the Danube, flooding problem are worse than ever and set to worsen with climate change. The need to protect upland catchments and forests is well documented. Progressive planners and engineers are working with nature, and reinstating natural flood planes where degraded.

But still destruction and unsustainable practices continue.... 50% of our wetlands worldwide have been destroyed or heavily altered and freshwater ecosystems are amongst the most threatened in the World. Most recently we hear that the mighty Mekong is drying up, and along with it the river's rich harvest. Why? Dams upstream. This is not an unfamiliar tale - the Hadejia Nguru Wetlands of Nigeria area success story but only after many years of proactive participatory stakeholder action and liaison to understand and balance all user needs, including the biodiversity (contact Nigerian Conservation Foundation).

One of the major problems is that ecosystem goods and services are difficult to calculate and values are often long-term and so rarely taken into account in decision making and short term economic programming. For developing countries there is also a short term imperative and economic drive to maximise the natural resource capital for immediate gain. This is particularly true of

forest loss. Although sustainable use is advocated, extensive deforestation continues at an alarming rate. There is a need to ensure livelihoods benefit from protecting ecosystem services, and thus to illustrate the long-term benefits – social, environmental and economic – to which result from natural resource protection.

Internationally, governments need to acknowledge and address that a significant proportion of ecosystem returns are enjoyed by the developed world and wealthy in the developing world. However, these are frequently delivered as a result of burden carrying from often limited management of natural resources by poor rural communities. There is a profound inequity in the burden sharing of global goods and services. To achieve long term environmental security, including the global maintenance of biodiversity and sustainable poverty eradication, new resources and innovative financing are required to overcome these short term drivers that fundamentally threaten the viability of the ecosystem approach, particularly in developing countries. This would contribute significantly to enabling others to learn from Switzerland's lessons.

*Joanna Phillips, RSPB (Joanna.phillips@rspb.org.uk)*

## **Sustainable Human Settlements - An**

# STAKEHOLDER VIEWS

## **Integrated Approach**

Human beings are a social species, and naturally cluster in communities of various sizes from extended families to megacities. These human settlements are not simply physical concentrations of people engaged in various material and economic activities, they have significant social, cultural and even spiritual functions that must be considered in any programme for human settlements.

At the heart of any community must be some unity of purpose, and this unity results from applying some basic principles of community life. Consultation and participation allow everyone to express their needs and desires. Respect for all components of the community, including its minorities, and encouragement for the expression of a diversity of perspectives, provides a broad foundation for united action.

The community is the most appropriate unit for implementing principles of solidarity and concern for the poor and handicapped. The Bahá'í concept of community includes a democratically elected administrative council, a regular town meeting where everyone can express their views, and a financial mechanism supported by various revenues, including a graduated income tax after basic needs are met, providing social services so that no one is left in poverty, and so that farmers, for instance, have their costs covered even in bad years. Everyone should receive the education and training necessary to contribute to society, and the community

must give everyone the opportunity to use those skills in service to the whole.

The spiritual dimension of human settlements planning cannot be neglected. Coming together to worship is as important to community life as coming together to buy and sell. Just as a temple, church or mosque has often been a traditional centre of community activity, so Bahá'ís see the community of the future as having a place of worship in the centre where those of every faith can gather for prayer before going about their daily occupations. Around this will be various institutions of social service: schools and university, hospice, hospital, home for the aged, orphanage, etc. The material form of the community would thus reflect its spiritual and social realities.

A major issue for human settlements is the appropriate scale of human concentration. Over-crowding at high density is known to produce behavioural abnormalities. Many aspects of healthy community life operate best at a smaller, more "human" scale, as expressed in the natural formation of neighbourhoods in large cities when the infrastructure permits. Now that information and communications technologies have provided new mechanisms for human organization, it is time to rethink the optimal size of human settlements in the light of their social and cultural as well as economic functions. The distributed nature of many renewable energy resources, for instance, might suggest a more distributed and decentralized pattern of human settlements as well.

The future of human settlements that succeed in meeting the economic, social, cultural and religious needs of their inhabitants must lie in achieving a better balance between the material and spiritual in their physical design and political and social organization. Only then will the settlements be transformed into truly sustainable communities.

*International Environment Forum*

I wrote yesterday of my concern about the lack of Fair Trade

# DIARY OF A CSD VIRGIN

coffee here at the UN. Assuming that I was surely not the first person to have voiced that concern, I googled it. Happily, I found an article on Yahoo Finance saying that the UN actually started serving Fair Trade on April 13th.

Although I haven't actually seen it, that is perfect timing for discussions on sustainable development, because I have noticed gaps between the problems we've been discussing and the solutions we support. For example, I've heard from the veterans that there has never been this much discussion about the particular problems that women face and the need to listen to grassroots solutions. So why hasn't there been more support for grassroots people, particularly women, to contribute their voices in person?

And why don't they serve organic food in the cafeteria?  
*Deanna Fowler*

# CDI DASHBOARD

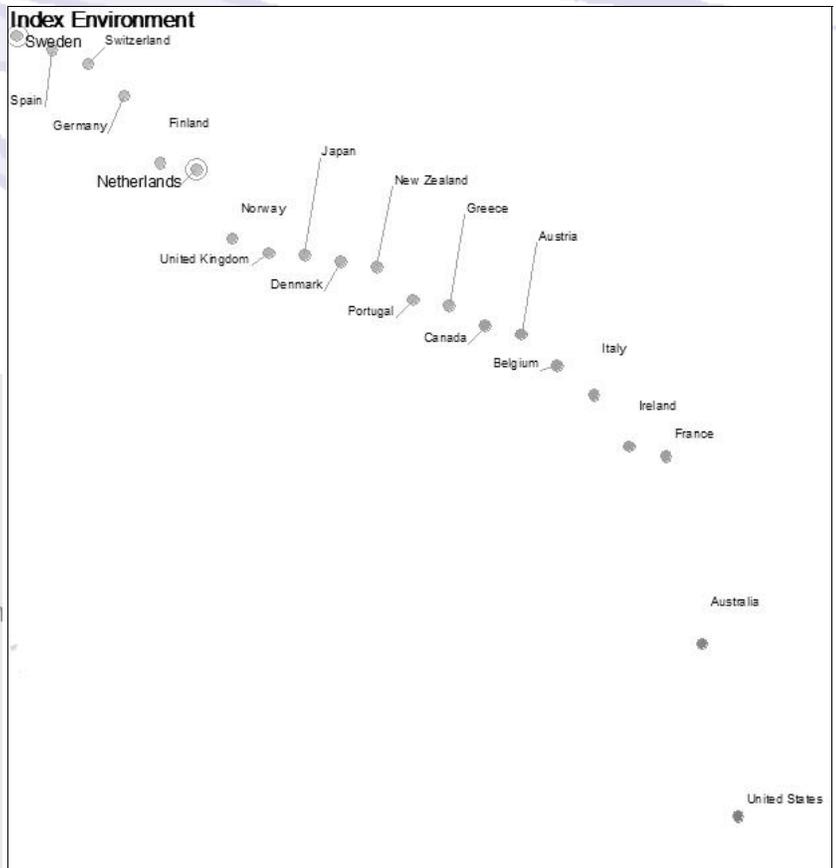
## Commitment to Development Index Environment Indicators

The CDI Dashboard is a tool to enable governments and stakeholders to understand critical issues that the 2005 agenda will address. The Dashboard works by creating an index of government performance and delivery against a defined set of criteria. Outreach will be running a different index each day, around issues critical to the 2005 agenda.

### Index Criteria:

	Rank	Points	Country
• Greenhouse gas emissions	1	768	Sweden
• Ozone depletion	2	757	Spain
• Fishing subsidies	3	747	Switzerland
• Global Environment Facility	4	724	Germany
• Montreal Protocol Fund	5	675	Finland
• Treaties: Kyoto	6	670	Netherlands
• Treaties: Beijing	7	620	Norway
• Treaties: CBD	8	609	United Kingdom
• Wind energy	9	608	Japan
• R&D Cons and renewables	10	603	Denmark
	12	575	Portugal
	13	571	Greece
	14	556	Canada
	15	550	Austria
	16	527	Belgium
	17	506	Italy
	18	468	Ireland
	19	461	France
	20	325	Australia
	21	199	United States

Data source: Centre for Global Development



Courtesy SGSDI – Consultative Group, IISD  
[www.iisd.org/cgsdi/dashboard.htm](http://www.iisd.org/cgsdi/dashboard.htm)

# RIO GRINDS

## The light-hearted side of Sustainable Development

*Much discussion has focussed on the juggling future CSD bureau. Little does the ill-informed delegate know that the bureau for CSD 15 on energy has already been set. Left in a photocopier and found by an Outreach staffer, we can reveal all...*

*Africa: Nigeria*

*Europe: USA*

*Asia: Australia*

*West Asia: Saudi Arabia*

*Latin America: Venezuela*

*CSD 9 all over again? Can't wait.*

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# WEDNESDAY'S DIARY

Time	Event and Location
8:30-10:00	CR 1: Informal Ministerial Meeting, with heads of UN Agencies
10:00-11:30	CR 1: Statements and interactive discussions - Responding to the Challenges
11:30-1:00	CR 1: Releasing the energy of entrepreneurs and partnerships
10:00-1:00	CR 6: Partnership Fair
10:00-6:00	CR D: Learning Centre
1:15-2:45	CR 1: Water for life
1:15-2:45	Policy principals and guidelines for private sector participation in sustainable water and sanitation services
3:00-4:30	CR 1: The role and contribution of major groups
4:30-6:00	CR 1: Statements and interactive discussions on water
6:15-7:45	CR 1: The Mediterranean response to the WSSD commitments
6:15-7:45	CR 2: Preparation of an international framework allowing a guaranteed access to basic services
6:15-7:45	CR 6: Water, peace and sustainable development: Implementing Johannesburg to prevent and resolve conflicts.

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