

OUTREACH 2015

Providing you an insightful lively critical analysis and news

EU ON ENSURING SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR ALL



By Matthew Carroll,
UNCSA Youth Caucus

E.U. Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas met with civil society representatives last night for a discussion on the role of the European Commission in the issues of this CSD cycle, U.N. reform and international environmental governance. Mr Dimas began by introducing two

issues of importance to the commission, first calling on civil society to continue to push the E.U. towards improved standards for air pollution, noting that the U.S.A. currently has substantially stricter regulations regarding air pollutant levels than the European Union. Second he highlighted the need for greater strength and coordination within international environmental governance, the E.U.'s position being towards creating a U.N. Environmental Agency. Along side these requests for assistance in moving these issues forward, Mr Dimas took the opportunity to highlight the need for the CSD to take substantive decisions next year during the policy cycle, and avoid the danger of becoming just a talking shop. Bluntly put, he challenged us all to ensure that our presence here at CSD next year is genuinely worth the carbon emissions of our flights to and from New York.

An interesting discussion ensued. Leif Holmberg (European Youth Forum) brought up the disappointment of the youth major group with the draft chairman's summary document, pointing out the lack of clear definitions of what clean energy means (with substantial concerns remaining over the inclusion of nuclear power and clean coal) and the lack of a generational perspective. Three European Union countries made statements regarding youth and the issues of this CSD cycle, but this has not been reflected in the summary. Jan Gustav Strandenaes (ANPED) raised concern that the four thematic areas of this CSD have not been dealt with equally, that energy for sustainable development has dominated here at CSD14. Can the four areas be brought together equally during the policy discussions next year? The Commissioner responded positively regarding the balance of issues here at CSD14, that energy is very important, but needs balance. Energy security, action on climate change and renewables are mutually reinforcing,

and at the same time action on air pollution is very much intertwined into the other issues - they need to be dealt with equally.

Asked to clarify the long term vision of the commission regarding international environmental governance, Mr Dimas explained that an initial suggestion by France to create an international environmental organisation had been developed into the idea of upgrading UNEP to give it the same status as other specialised agencies, with more stable financial support and appropriately staffed. This would strengthen international governance of environmental issues and provide opportunities to streamline Multilateral Environmental Agreements where appropriate and upgrade the status of the organisation to a similar level as that of other international agencies such as the WTO, dealing at least in part with the problem of environmental agreements being seen as subordinate to trade agreements.

Greenpeace expressed concerns at the outcomes of this CSD regarding energy - specifically the issues of nuclear power and coal, which are unsustainable and will need to be phased out. However this is not being addressed at CSD14 and is in danger of being passed over again during the policy year. Also, that the substantial corporate presence here at CSD raises concerns. The U.N. should be a body to set standards and hold corporations to account but there is no mention of corporate accountability in the Chair's summary. Regarding the nuclear issue, the commissioner clarified that due to differences between the positions of E.U. member states, the European Union as a whole takes a neutral stance on nuclear power.

THURSDAY 11 MAY

EU on Ensuring Sustainable Energy for All	page 1
No More Chernobyls!	page 2
Industrial Development in a Responsible Society	page 3
Highlighting the Role of Partnerships Implementing Sustainable Development	page 4
Blogging the UN	page 5
Public-Private Partnerships Focus of High Level Discussion	page 6
Global Challenges – Local Solutions! Experiences and lessons learned out of Four Years of Strengthening City2City-Cooperation	page 7
'Small is Beautiful': Making Decentralised Energy a Reality	page 9
Check the Diary of Side Events on page 10.	

NO MORE CHERNOBYLS!

By Felicity Hill,
Greenpeace International

We have just marked the 20th year of the Chernobyl disaster. Due to the nature of the materials released on 26 April 1986, hundreds of future generations will mark this anniversary. Unless the true facts of the Chernobyl disaster are faced and analysed, any efforts to contain the dangers and prevent future incidents are undermined.

Greenpeace marked the Chernobyl disaster by creating the Chernobyl calendar, available on our website¹. The calendar documents a nuclear accident or incident, not just 26 April, by every day of the year, providing 365 arguments against nuclear power. The calendar can be used regardless of the year; it can be used for the next 250,000 years, the time it will take plutonium existent now to become harmless.

Our report on health, *The Chernobyl Catastrophe*², involved 52 respected scientists and includes information never before published in English. It challenges the International Atomic Energy Agency Chernobyl Forum report, which predicted 4,000 additional deaths attributable to the accident as a gross simplification of the real breadth of human suffering. The new data, based on Belarus national cancer statistics, predicts approximately 270,000 cancers and 93,000 fatal cancer cases caused by Chernobyl. The recent research based on the demographic data indicates that an additional 67,000 people have died in Russia because of the Chernobyl accident, and estimates of the total death toll for the Ukraine and Belarus could reach another 140,00.

Greenpeace commissioned a photographer Robert Knoth to generate an exhibition being shown around the world³. Knoth won the prestigious World Press Photo Awards for his collection that shows the nuclear devastation in the former Soviet Union. A CD Rom made available at this CSD features the photo exhibition.

The Chernobyl site continues to be a nuclear hazard. Greenpeace commissioned a report *20 Years Later*, which is a technical analysis of the status of the sarcophagus. The exploded reactor poses a hazard for personnel on-site as well as for the population in the surrounding area. Due to the remaining fuel inside the destroyed reactor building there are two main hazards, one from the flaring up of a nuclear chain reaction that would release more radiation, and the other due to the collapse of the destroyed building which would distribute radioactive dust. The sarcophagus itself was a hastily built super structure erected around the damaged reactor was designed to have a maximum lifetime of 20-30 years.



According to this report, less than half of the stabilisation work has been performed under the Shelter Implementation Plan, and while this work has been underway it has become apparent that the remnants of the reactor are less than stable.

An honest accounting of the true cost of Chernobyl and the nuclear age is long overdue. The costs have been too high – economically, environmentally and for human health. The IAEA and its Member States must stop the promotion of the dirty, dangerous nuclear industry and instead focus human and economic resources towards disarmament and the promotion of renewable energy sources.

¹ <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/reports/nuclearaccidentscalendar>

² <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/press/reports/chernobylhealthreport>

³ <http://www.greenpeace.org/international/news/world-press-photo-awards>

Correction:

“Major Groups Respond to the Chair’s Summary”, Wednesday 10 May Issue.

A technical error took place in the electronic transmission of the Indigenous article on Wednesday. The Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG) acknowledged the numerous times the Chair recognized indigenous peoples in his Summary. However, the IPMG saw that the “S” letter was omitted on “peoples” within his Summary. The WSSD adopted the unqualified term “indigenous peoples” in its official political declaration and governments had “reaffirmed the vital role of indigenous peoples in sustainable development.” The chair must note the approved language included the “S” on peoples. The chairman and the secretariat should maintain consistency with the WSSD language and insert the letter “S” on all text in the Summary that mentions indigenous peoples. The “S” on indigenous peoples is important in their international struggle to gain the collective right to exist as peoples.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN A RESPONSIBLE SOCIETY

*By Giuseppe Traverso,
Environmental Lawyer*

Corporate Social Responsibility is the attempt to give market rules and companies a human face, responding to global demand of social and environmental justice. However, the voluntary nature of CSR initiatives - whether codes of conduct, corporate reporting or firm foundation activities – allows for the potential for CSR to lead a shift towards a market based on transparent rules and aware consumers, or remain a pure marketing manoeuvre to clean companies reputation and image.

Consequently, we need to set minimum standards and requirements on corporate information and reporting, aiming to ensure the authenticity and comprehensiveness of corporate information which would empower people to select products and brands, and choose in their purchases through rational criteria.

Comprehensive information on producers means compiling data about the whole entity of a corporation and the way it acts: should consumers be empowered to know that paying Kraft food products means paying (financing) Philip Morris tobacco industry, or that by buying Barilla pasta they are also financing weapons industry which is the main economic activity of one of the major Barilla shareholders?

Transparency means 100% clarity and not a partial truth. Otherwise, it is like looking at those postcards with a wonderful landscape, which hides a huge industrial area just beyond the picture. Transparency and transparent rules mean empowering people to freely choose which products and subjects they want to reward. Do you want to pay advertising in the product you are buying? Do you want to finance weapons industry or nuclear energy? You can, but if you don't want to you must have been put in a position to know and to be able to reject. Currently, advertising and labels appeal to consumers' emotions- they do not inform.

George Akerlof, together with Michael Spence and Joseph Stiglitz, won the Nobel Prize of Economy in 2001 for their theory of asymmetric information: meaning that information must be balanced between individuals and corporations, buyers and sellers, in order to avoid adverse effects on the market: the first must have the same quality and quantity of information about the least than the least about the firsts; otherwise it is not information but use of power¹. Managers and boards know more than shareholders about the company's profitability; similarly, banks know the private life



preferences and economic conditions of their clients, although clients normally ignore banks activities and financial operations.

A real willingness towards corporate transparency would be proven through a reform of national corporate law, making boards of directors and managers' decisions transparent to consumers, as well as liable towards stakeholders. Indeed, any firm as any individual is a legal subject with rights and duties, obliged to respect and fulfil constitutional rights and to be held liable for its actions. Law has been created to serve people, "citizens": to protect social values of the majority and to balance opposite interests. However, there still exists a huge gap between the social concept of responsibility and the legal scope of liability, the least covering only a small portion of the first.

The economy and economic activity is a means to achieve welfare and prosperity, not an end in itself or a means for a minority of 'haves' to act to the detriment of the majority. People are looking to people in business to abandon the veil of corporation absentee and to act transparently and responsibly as individuals.

Several companies still produce goods by exploiting manpower and natural resources to achieve the highest monetary profit. The social paradox is that the accumulation of such profit is not even increasing the individual satisfaction, well-being or happiness of the 'haves' (as recently shown by the 2006 OECD Report "Alternative Measures of Well-being"). Logic is therefore missing, so this circle is breaking.

CSR is a potential tool to bring economic activity back to a rational use of resources, a higher respect of the environment and respect of human beings: people in

business themselves would not work at the working conditions they apply in some places, nor would they treat their own garden as they sometimes treat the environment of the countries in which they produce. The role of CSR consists in adequately considering and composing the different interests of each stakeholder.

The creation of a positive environment made of transparent and true information, of respect and fulfilment of fundamental rights would enable a trigger in the market, rational and human, in which competence is based on differentiating different products according to qualities and properties instead of in an asymmetric capacity of advertising by means of emotional messages and the creation of artificial needs, models and lifestyles. The implications of such a change can be great and manifold. It is not a matter of refusing current rules, but a matter of accepting and promoting human and made-for-all rules.

This wonderful, inextricable connection and interdependence that globalization has brought between people, even distant in

geography and culture, has built inseparable linkages between any community's welfare, has put self-realization and respect of any living and social diversities as new paramount values, in this constantly interactive and multiethnic one-society. Then, the respect of general interests and individual rights is no more an ethic need advocated by some, but a necessity for society's stability and pacific connivance. The great changes we need, as the use of renewable energies to substitute fossil fuels or the re-launching of the role of local markets and products which minimize transport economic and ecologic costs and help consumers to physically know and hold liable producers, should be feared only by those businessmen and institutions working in a short-term perspective which is not consistent with a responsible management of global interests.

¹ "There are asymmetries of information between those governing and those governed, and just as markets strives to overcome asymmetries of information, we need to look for ways by which the scope for asymmetries of information in political processes can be limited and their consequences mitigated", Joseph Stiglitz.

HIGHLIGHTING THE ROLE OF PARTNERSHIPS IN IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Partnerships for environment and development were the focus of a Seed Initiative event held last night. The Seed Initiative (www.seedinit.org) promotes and supports nascent, locally driven and entrepreneurial partnerships through an award scheme, partnership services, and research.

Since the early 1990s, partnerships have emerged within the UN system as an innovative and increasingly acknowledged means of realizing the sustainable development agenda. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) broke new ground by officially recognizing "Type II Commitments" as an essential means of implementation, defining them as: "... voluntary, multi-stakeholder initiatives contributing to the implementation of Agenda 21, Rio+5, the JPOI and the internationally agreed development goals in the Millennium Declaration." In May 2003, CSD-11 further advanced the notion that successful partnerships for sustainable development must adhere to certain guidelines and principles. Following CSD-11's mandate, the CSD Secretariat has undertaken several activities to support the ongoing development and launch of partnerships, including a partnerships fair and a partnerships database.

The first cycle programme of work of the CSD indicated that while there has been significant emphasis on the role of partnership for sustainable development, numerous challenges remain. More analysis is needed to understand which partnerships are actually delivering results, and how issues of

reporting, transparency and accountability are being addressed.

Last night, the Seed Initiative launched the report *Partnerships for Sustainable Development: On the Road to Implementation*. Based on a sample of Seed partnerships, the report aims to address critical questions related to the contribution of partnerships to sustainable development and their business models and management.

Partnerships are one of the most important non-normative outcomes of the CSD process, so how to best facilitate the replication of successful partnerships remains an important issue for the Commission. To address this, Stakeholder Forum has recommended that the Commission develop adequate mechanisms to ensure accountability, transparency, and a process for lesson-sharing and enhancing such partnerships. Further exploration of this is needed.

For further information on Stakeholder Forum work on partnerships see:

Ideas for Launching and Evaluating New Partnerships/ Initiatives and Reinforcing Old Ones by Maria Figueroa Kupcu at www.stakeholderforum.org/csd/csd

See also *Strengthening the Johannesburg Implementation Track: Considerations for Enhancing the CSD's Multi-year Programme of Work*, available at www.stakeholderforum.org

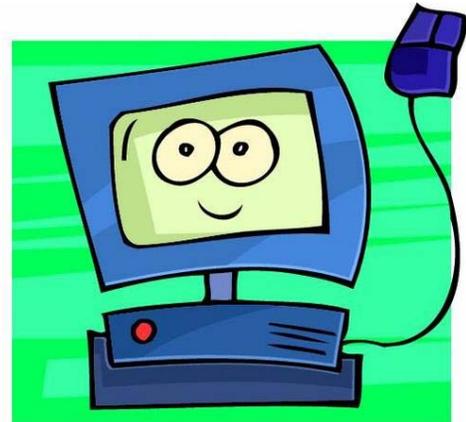
BLOGGING THE UN

*By Richard Sherman
Consultant, Stakeholder Forum*

Since 1972, non governmental organisations have provided independent reporting and analysis of major United Nations Conferences and Summits. Many delegates will be familiar with the mainstream publications such as: ECO's published by NGOs at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention to Combat Desertification; Outreach published at the Commission on Sustainable Development and UN Environment Programme's Governing Council; the Earth Negotiations Bulletin, which has been published at most major environment and sustainable development negotiations since 1992; and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, which provides a range of reporting products on events at the World Trade Organisation. For participants at international meetings, these reports are a valuable source of what is happening, both formally and informally, and for those policy makers and NGOs who are not always able to attend meetings in person, the freely available reports on the internet provide a keyhole into what is happening around the world.

In addition to these traditional reporting processes, a growing number of organisations have turned to the internet to provide new information flows regarding UN related processes: some are websites, others are blogs. The increasing use of open source software and the seemingly relative ease, particularly in developed countries, of setting up an online publishing site, has enabled numerous NGOs as well as concerned citizens to turn to blogging in order to provide either neutral or nuanced information on UN negotiations. In 2002, Andrew Sullivan wrote in Wired Magazine: "Poised between media, blogs can be as nuanced and well-sourced as traditional journalism, but they have the immediacy of talk radio. Amid it all, this much is clear: The phenomenon is real. Blogging is changing the media world and could, I think, foment a revolution in how journalism functions in our culture." According to wikipedia, the role of blogs has increasingly become more mainstream, as political consultants, NGOs and news services using them as tools for outreach and opinion forming.

Over the last year, a number of new NGO reporting initiatives have been launched, supplementing the reporting services provided by the already well established processes. The following sites, focusing on the UN and the current reform processes are worth a visit:



ieg-dossier is an online clearing house dedicated to providing information on intergovernmental negotiations and processes related to the strengthening of the UN environment and development architecture. An initiative of Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future, ieg-dossier focuses on providing insightful information regarding current or future negotiations related to UN reform, outlining: the status of negotiations; developing country proposals; developed country proposals; the UN system's response; intergovernmental proposals; and NGO and Major Group proposals. For more information visit:

<http://www.stakeholderforum.org/policy/ieg.php>

ReformtheUN.org is a project started by the World Federalist Movement - Institute for Global Policy (WFM-IGP), to spread information about the current UN reform initiatives to people in all parts of the world. In addition to regular posting of important documents and country statements, an email newsletter will keep you up to date about new developments in the UN reform debate and additions to the website. For more information visit:

<http://www.reformtheun.org/>

UNSGselection.org is another project of the World Federalist Movement-Institute for Global Policy that aims to promote a more effective, transparent and democratic selection process for the next UN Secretary-General. The website serves to engage relevant actors worldwide in tracking the process, initiating debate, sharing and disseminating information, and outlining criteria for the appointment of a qualified candidate through an improved selection process. For more information visit:

<http://www.unsgselection.org/content/>

Security Council Report: Launched in November 2005, the Security Council Report is dedicated to covering events

and discussions taking place at the UN Security Council. The initiative was created to provide consistent, high quality and publicly-available information and analysis about the Council's activities, as well of its subsidiary bodies. As a source of both analysis and detailed background information, Security Council Report publishes a free Monthly Forecast Report, as well as previewing issues coming up in the Security Council. Security Council Report is an independent not-for-profit organisation in affiliation with Columbia University's Center on International Organization. For more information visit:

<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org>

Low-level Panel is a growing network of young professionals working in or alongside the UN system that have joined together to propose a series of practical, "low level" recommendations to enhance the UN's working practices. The low level panel was created by two UN staff members in June 2004, and has grown to include over 70 people from all over the world, and from various UN departments and agencies. The panel also includes a number of professionals from the private and national public sectors. In January 2006, the first low-level panel report was published, outlining a series of practical recommendations in four areas: strengthening staff performance, information and knowledge management, procurement, and field-HQ

coordination. For more information visit:

<http://www.lowlevelpanel.org/>

UNSG.org provides news and commentary on the selection process of the next United Nations Secretary General. The blog addresses the selection of and the broad "job description" for the next UNSG, the various candidates, positions of the Security Council members and other governments, and ongoing reform efforts in the context of their implications for the future of the office. Information is provided by civil society leaders, government officials and media sources. UNSG.org is published by Tony Fleming, a masters candidate in international security at the University of Maryland, School of Public Policy, with occasional contributions by guest authors. For more information visit:

<http://www.unsg.org/>

UN Dispatch is a blog intended to promote thoughtful discussion about the UN, and to provide an outlet for important news and views on the UN. UN Dispatch is sponsored by the United Nations Foundation, and is administered by Peter Daou and features frequent posts from knowledgeable guest contributors. For more information visit:

<http://www.undispatch.com/>

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOCUS OF HIGH LEVEL DISCUSSION

By Kym Kline called for a sense of urgency, as well as collaboration among the private sector and other major groups.

A panel of ministers and industry leaders kicked off the high-level discussions at CSD yesterday morning, focusing on the topic of public-private partnerships. Countries on the panel pointed out their successes in this area. The US asserted that progress in sustainability would only be possible through the private sector.

A Business Action for Energy representative stressed that sustainability already plays an inherent role on the agenda of significant companies. Many business leaders asserted the need for reliable, affordable, and clean energy for all people, and emphasized business as the agent for change in this arena. The chairman of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development spoke of the need to meet existing international standards. There was a consensus among business leaders that incentives were needed to encourage investment in renewable energy. Several spoke of the need to establish guidelines for industry's role, for effective change to occur. A business leader from Holland

In an intervention, the Bahamas called for a "global paradigm shift" toward renewable energy, and drew a parallel between renewable energy and retroviral drugs to emphasize the need to make technology affordable. The Netherlands asserted regulation of the private sector is necessary to assure progress in all aspects of sustainability.

The NGOs, together with several other major groups, made a joint statement stressing the need to focus on Agenda 21. They spoke of the need to establish decentralized energy systems, and pointed to the history of human rights violations by the private sector. NGOs also denounced fossil fuels and nuclear as forms of renewable energy.

The issue of public-private partnerships has been a contentious one with NGOs calling for increased corporate accountability and regulation as well as a larger role for governments to provide basic human services.

GLOBAL CHALLENGES – LOCAL SOLUTIONS! EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED OUT OF FOUR YEARS OF STRENGTHENING CITY2CITY-COOPERATION

By Ulrich Nitschke

*Head of Service-Agency Communities in One World/
Capacity Building International/ InWEnt, Bonn Germany*

1400 initial offers for emergency aid and long-term reconstruction have led to the establishment of partnerships between actors involved in Tsunami relief programmes. These partnerships are supported by the government-funded Service Agency. The agency's task has been to gather all applications for aid and provide consulting to the actors involved. Over the long term, the agency will work toward enhancing the capacities of local authorities and NGOs in the region as well as in Germany. Nearly 320 new co-operations have developed out of the Tsunami Partnership Initiative, involving a diverse range of actors from various sectors and levels of society across Germany.

It all started when the Johannesburg Plan of Action 2002 initiated so-called partnership initiatives as one of the concrete implementing sustainability strategies. Concrete action was and is required – this is almost common sense in the sustainability family 14 years after the inauguration of the Agenda 21.

The German Service Agency Communities in One World together with its partners took up the initiative and facilitated several events relating to local implementation of crucial issues of the Johannesburg Plan of Action. Starting with a Mayors' Forum on strengthening C2C partnerships as a tool for exchanging experiences in December 2003 in Bonn, we continued with the strong support of Lady Mayor of Bonn, Mrs. Bärbel Dieckmann, with the Local Renewables 2004 and in March 2006 with the Mayors' Forum on Early Warning.

These local level conferences Bonn each brought together up to 50 mayors from all around the world dealing with local questions of sustainability just before major events on specific subjects. The purpose is always the same – urging national governments as well as intergovernmental institutions to focus on local implementation and learn about lessons learned at the local level. These initiatives are signing up-processes – inviting local authorities to join and initiate action.

So far the initiatives were heard by actors of different levels: Next to the political declarations like the Local Renewables Declaration as well as the Mayors Declaration on Early



Warning (EWC III) local authorities have committed themselves to concrete plan of action.

Several lessons have been learned from this initiative as well as from 10 years' experience in facilitating partnerships at the local level. All of them will be discussed in detail at the **SEED Partnership Forum**, a side event held at the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the UN; 871 UN Plaza, 10017 NY; today, 09:00 - 12.45 am.

1. Identify common areas of interest on both sides!

In many cases, we discovered that there were a variety of unknown interests involved in international co-operation – be it business, joint venture activities or NGO and municipal arrangements. A joint learning process begins with this insight – name your clear interest and you will be better off in the long run.

2. Pursue co-operation projects that have clear and measurable outcomes,

but only if you can identify a mutual benefit for all actors involved. In the beginning, avoid focussing on financial transactions– funds often serve to further entrench divisions between North and South, thereby reinforcing an outmoded approach to development.

3. Develop a common understanding of monitoring and evaluation!

What role do you play in this process? Who sets the targets and how do you go about settling conflicts – do you have strategies for conflict resolution?

Sometimes even external professional moderation can be useful if conflicts in C2C emerge. Make sure you have exchanged views on different issues before they escalate.

4. Sign commonly-developed Memorandums of Understanding/ MoU

In terms of political implementation, our learning experience has been that you will need to establish a clear and outspoken political commitment – in the form of a written

document to be signed by both sides. You will also need to seek the council and concrete support from the mayor of the city.

It is best to gather the support and the signatures from all political parties involved. This establishes an impartial basis that allows the partnership to receive continuous support.

5. Seek experience from existing development programmes – avoid reinventing the wheel and identify common areas of action.

The systematic use of existing programmes in development cooperation should be open for both sides. It is virtually impossible to meet face-to-face on a regular basis, but larger NGOs, government-funded development organisations and international institutions may be able to facilitate the process. If funding is involved, identify transparent measures for monitoring and reporting.

6. Build upon existing structures and actors

Churches, unions and NGOs are often highly involved in international co-operation. However, local authorities and administrations often lack the capacity for continuous involvement. Identifying a suitable and manageable role and function is therefore crucial to avoid disappointment on both sides.

For further Information please contact:

www.service-eine-welt.de

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e-mail: ulrich.nitschke@inwent.org

**TONIGHT IS BLISS
NIGHT!**

256 E. 49th St., New York, NY 10017
(at 2nd Ave.)



To relax at the end of the CSD,
Stakeholder Forum suggests a relaxing
evening at **Bliss Bar and Lounge** from
9pm tonight- before everyone
disappears!

See you there!

Citizen Science

Join us as we honor and showcase the
2006 Citizen Scientists at CSD 14!

Miranda Newbetty

Student at University of Texas at Arlington in Lewisville, TX
Utilizing Microbial Metabolism in Human Development and
Sustainability

Joan Fang

Student at Stuyvesant High School in Bayside, NY
Genetic Engineering— Helping Hunger

Thursday, 11 May, 11:00-12:00 am
Conference Room B

Citizen Science is a national program of *SustainUS*.

We work to encourage
young scientists in the US
who are enriching public
dialogue with innovative,
scientific approaches to
sustainable development.



www.sustainus.org

CSD 14 Side-Event



**Energy and Atmosphere from the Perspective of
Children's Health**

Friday 12 May, 1:15-2:45 pm
UN Conference Room A

Organised by:
World Information Transfer

In collaboration with:
UN NGO Committee on Sustainable Development
World Association of Girl Scouts and Girl Guides

All are invited

For further information: Roma Stibravy, Chair, UN NGOCSD/
CONGO
212.703.5069
WIT: 212.686.199

'SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL': MAKING DECENTRALISED ENERGY A REALITY

By Adam Musgrave,
Practical Action

Report on the Side Event at the CSD 14, 8 May 2006

Over 80 people attended the side event 'Small is Beautiful', which examined the role that decentralised energy services can play in getting electricity to isolated areas in developing countries, and how to make such services more viable and sustainable.

The meeting was opened by Chairperson Sarah Adams (Programme Co-ordinator, GVEP), who welcomed the speakers and introduced the issue of decentralised energy as an energy option for the rural poor.

The Hon. Syda Bbumba MP, Minister for Energy and Mineral Development in Uganda, described the energy picture in Africa. Despite the continent having vast renewable energy resources, including hydro-power resources which are virtually untapped (only 5% has been developed), access to electricity on the continent now stands at about 8%, having dropped from 12% in the last 10 years. She detailed the current issues and constraints in Africa's power sector, and called for a different approach in undertaking rural electrification in Africa. In addition to grid extension, governments and the international community should consider small and medium-scale decentralised power generation and distribution at the village level. She went on to describe the situation in Uganda, where the Energy for Rural Transformation Programme (ERT), which was developed to accelerate the rural electrification coverage from 1-2% in 2001 to 10% by 2010, includes components of renewable energy resources to supply decentralized grid systems. Rural electricity access in Uganda has increased from 1% which was achieved in 50 years to 5% in five years.

The Minister was followed by Rene Karotki from the EU Energy Initiative. Rene spoke about the growing global consensus of the important role of energy in poverty alleviation and economic growth. He said that the EU Energy Initiative, launched at WSSD to contribute to the achievement of the MDGs through the provision of energy for the poor, operates with a wide menu of technical options which should be adapted to the specific conditions. The EUEI is implemented in dialogue with and through ownership by participating developing countries, and the dialogue has confirmed a role for decentralized forms of energy. He said that a range of decentralized energy technologies are mature and can be applied, both electrical and non-electrical (for example thermal energy), but that standards are needed to ensure quality and reliability.

Wendy Aulakh, Managing Director of Winrock International's Clean Energy Group, described a successful decentralised energy programme in Nepal – the Nepal Biogas support program. The technology is simple – using a fixed dome in which dung is fed, produces biogas which is 60% methane. Biogas is primarily used for cooking – about 80%. The other 20% is used for lighting. The benefits of biogas are numerous, including offsets the demand for firewood which in turn conserves forest resources, promoting effective manure management, reducing indoor smoke-related respiratory diseases, and reducing CO2 emissions. Wendy described the private sector as a key part of program - biogas construction companies are responsible for marketing and installing biogas plants, providing maintenance and after sales service guarantees for at least 3 years. Financial support mechanisms through micro-credit facilities were also crucial to the success of the program. It is a positive example of government, donors and the private sector working together, and the program is now expanding in Nepal, Laos and Cambodia and new programs are being replicated in Bangladesh and Vietnam.



The final speaker was Teo Sanchez, Energy Technology and Policy Adviser with Practical Action, the conveners of the meeting. Teo began by highlighting the challenges of providing access to modern energy services for the rural poor. A lack of financial resources is not the only constraint; there are numerous other barriers including a lack of technology, a lack of financial mechanisms, and in particular a lack of capacity in the local communities. He went on detail a case study in Cochán, Peru, in which Practical Action developed a community management model which involved private enterprise as a key component within the programme. This management model is now being adopted by the World Bank in their water programme.

The presentations were followed by a number of questions from the audience.

STAKEHOLDER FORUM

is an EcoSoc Accredited Organization

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Zonny Woods; ANPED *Jan Rademaker*; Arab Network for Environment & Development *Emad Adly*; Baha'i International Community *Peter Adriance*; CIVICUS *Kumi Naidoo*; Centro de Estudios Ambientales *Maria Onestini*; Commonwealth Women's Network *Hazel Brown*; Consumer Research Action & Information Centre *Rajat Chauduri*; Development Alternatives *Ashok Khosla*; *Herman Verheij*; Eco Accord *Olga Ponisnova*; Environment and Development Action (Maghreb) *Magdi Ibrahim*; Environment Liaison Centre International *Cyril Ritchie*; Huairou Commission *Jan Peterson*; International Chamber of Commerce *Mike Kelly*; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions *Lucien Royer*; International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives *Ruth Tregale*; International Council for Social Welfare *Nigel Tarling*; International Institute for Environment and Development *Camilla Toulmin*; International Institute for Sustainable Development *Kimo Langston James Goree VI*; International Partners for Sustainable Agriculture *Linda Elswick*; IUCN *Scott Hajost*; Leadership for Environment & Development *Julia Marton-Lef vre*; Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the EU *Daphne Dav s*; Justice & Sustainability Associates *Mencer Donahue Edwards*; Participatory Research in Asia *Rajesh Tandon*; Peace Child International *David Woollcombe*; Stockholm Environment Institute *Johannah Bernstein*; South Africa Foundation *Neil van Heerden*; Stakeholder Forum *Derek Osborn*; Stakeholder Forum; World Business Council for Sustainable Development *Claude Fussler*; World Information Transfer *Jacqueline Cot *; World Resources Institute *Jonathan Lash*; WWF International *Gordon Shepherd*.



DIARY - SIDE EVENTS

1:15-2:45	Sustainable Energy. European Commission - Directorate General Environment	2
	Energy Security in the Least Developed Countries. United Nations Industrial Development Organization and Government of Austria	4
	Energy for Sustainable Development, Industrial Development, Air Pollution/Atmosphere and Climate Change in China. Government of China National Development Reform Commission (NDRC)	6
	Nuclear Power – Myths and Reality. Heinrich Boell Foundation	A
6:15-7:45	4000 deaths a day from cooking fires? Let's prevent them! World Health Organization	2
	Cleaner Energy solutions: Acting Fast for Long-Term Perspective Government of France	6
	Global Warming: Making the Connections. Labor/Community Strategy Center	A

OUTREACH 2015

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THURSDAY 11 MAY, CSD 14

10