



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the
First Round of 'Informal-Informal' Negotiations on the Zero Draft of the
Outcome Document *and* Third Intersessional Meeting of the UN Conference
on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20)

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Events convened on Tuesday, 20 March 2012

The Role of Civil Society/Major Groups in the Future of the International Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD)

Presented by CIVICUS



Neth Daño, ETC Group, explained the need for broader spaces for civil society engagement.

Opening the panel, Jeffery Huffines, CIVICUS, explained that the side event aims to help Civil Society and Major Groups develop concrete proposals for implementing a multi-stakeholder framework for the future IFSD.

Jan-Gustav Strandenaes, Stakeholder Forum, said that the changing involvement of civil society participation must reflect the "new reality" of global problems. He outlined options for future IFSD, including: reforming and strengthening the current Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD); reforming and strengthening the UN Economic and Social Council's (ECOSOC) role in sustainable development; and establishing a Council on Sustainable Development.

Neth Daño, ETC Group, said that discussions on international environmental governance (IEG) reform have been limited for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Major Groups, noting that most engagement comes from environmental organizations. She referred to the "brave experiments" that can be drawn from other civil society engagement processes, such as Major Group's advising on IEG under UNEP.

Maruxa Cardama, Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development, spoke about the concept of multi-level governance and how sustainable development implementation occurs primarily at local and regional levels. She advocated for a new category of non-state actors that are not considered as a Major Group but rather as "Governmental Stakeholders."

Tomás González, UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS), stressed the need for multi-stakeholder engagement arising from the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20) to ensure access to information for a transparent process. John Matuszak, US Department of State, expressed support for the idea of a compendium of commitments, which would include commitments of government actors and all parts of civil society. Ambassador Jean-Pierre Thébault, France, underscored the importance of civil society access to information and the "negotiating table."

In the ensuing conversation, participants discussed: issues relating to corporate power at the UN; the need for enhanced youth input; and the need to include the voices of people living in extreme poverty.

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Achieving Green Societies through Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Presented by the UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Moderated by Paolo Soprano, this event addressed the role and benefit of ESD in transforming societies towards sustainable development pathways.

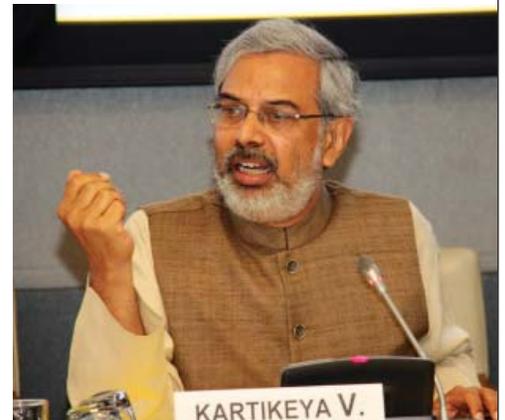
Chair Takao Kuramochi, Ministry of Education, Japan, outlined a number of activities undertaken by Japan for ESD, saying that it fosters citizens for a sustainable society and allows actions to be undertaken using comprehensive holistic approaches.

Kartikeya Sarabhai, Center for Environmental Education (CEE), India, said green societies should address all aspects of sustainable development, noting that education has a strong role to play.

Elizabeth Thompson, Rio+20 Executive Coordinator, said ESD has positive implications for transformation through accessing new tools and enabling decision-making. Jay Reetoo, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mauritius to the UN, said that sound policy-making has overcome any hurdles associated with ESD in his country.

Laila Iskander, Community and Institutional Development Consulting, Egypt, lamented that ESD and other policies are based on policies from the “developed North” and called for best practices from the “South” to be explored.

Nikhil Seth, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), questioned why more inroads into ESD have not been made. Alexander Leicht, UNESCO, stressed that ESD must go beyond the school environment.



Kartikeya Sarabhai, CEE, India, highlighted the leapfrogging opportunities for transforming to sustainable societies.

More information:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-sustainable-development/>

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The Sustainable and Just City

Presented by the Ford Foundation

This event, moderated by Staffan Tillander, Ambassador for Rio+20, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the UN in New York, addressed initiatives and ways to promote sustainable cities.

Ambassador Josephine Ojiambo, Kenya Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, highlighted innovative experiences promoted by the Kenyan Government, including programmes to upgrade slums.

Caroline Moser, University of Manchester, explained that low-income communities across the world are contributing to sustainable cities with local initiatives. She underscored: low-income communities' challenges, including resource shortages; and their strengths, including knowledge on addressing climatic challenges. Saraswathi Menon, UN Women, suggested focusing on encouraging the participation of women in such initiatives.

David Bragdon, Director of the New York City Mayor's Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, described the work underway to make New York a more sustainable city through the PlaNYC initiative, underscoring the role of national support for issues under shared or national jurisdiction and increased coordination among different departments.

Richard Kennedy, Skanska USA Building, said that the cost for transition to sustainable buildings requires partnerships and support from the government for the business sector. Victor D'allant, Dallant Networks, described the social networking platform, “urb.im,” that his company developed for sustainable city practitioners, noting the need to bring their voices “to the surface.”



Amb. Josephine Ojiambo, Kenya Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, stressed inequity and poverty as challenges for sustainable cities.

More information:

<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/index.php?page=view&type=510&nr=696&menu=20>

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Science Messages for Rio+20

Presented by The International Council for Science (ICSU) and UNESCO

This side event discussed ideas and practical steps to bridge the science-policy gap and to facilitate informed political decision-making on sustainable development.

Opening the session, Gretchen Kalonji, UNESCO, described aspects of the Science-Policy Dialogue and other natural science activities at UNESCO.

Gisbert Glaser, ICSU, outlined the activities taken by the Scientific and Technological Major Group and the priority issues for Rio+20 which include, *inter alia*: recognition that science and technology are fundamental for sustainable development; a strengthened science-policy interface; and establishment of a global mechanism on scientific collaboration on sustainable development.

Hilary Inyang, Chair of the African ICSU-UNESCO Regional Science Technology Workshop, provided an overview about the Africa ICSU-UNESCO Regional Workshop held in June 2011, and outlined proposed content for Rio+20 under the three areas of consideration: green economy; IFSD; and priority issues and emerging challenges.

Brice Lalonde, Executive Coordinator of Rio+20, underscored the need to take politically feasible action on scientific truths. He described the short-term nature of political thinking, saying it is often focused on re-election and limited to economic science. He said there is a need for scientists to understand better the political community. He highlighted the need for international programs based on cooperation to help bridge the gap between science and politics.

Timo Mäkelä, European Commission (EC), called for greater knowledge of natural systems and how they react to human pressures, and to better understand concepts related to resilience, drivers of sustainable development behavior, governance, and poverty alleviation. He described the challenges ahead as cross-geographical, cross-cultural and multi-disciplinary.

Georgios Kostakos, UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability (GSP) Secretariat, outlined the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability that formulates a new vision for sustainable growth and prosperity, along with mechanisms for achieving it. He highlighted Recommendation 51, which calls for launching "a major global scientific initiative, to strengthen the interface between policy and science."

In the following discussion, panelists addressed, *inter alia*: the need to educate youth in science; the censorship of science and the misuse of science for political gain; communicating scientific findings; methods to prioritize policy responses and solutions; and the need for evidence-based policy making.



Brice Lalonde, Executive Coordinator, Rio+20, underscored the need to communicate scientific findings to the public.



Georgios Kostakos, GSP Secretariat, summarized the key recommendations from the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability.



Timo Mäkelä, EC, described scientific goals as a "lighthouse" for where we want to go.

More information:

<http://www.icsu.org/rio20/home>

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Key Messages of Indigenous Peoples for Rio +20

Presented by the Indigenous Peoples' International Centre for Policy Research and Education (TEBTEBBA) and the Indigenous Information Network

This event, moderated by Karla General, Indian Law Resource Center, addressed key messages of the indigenous peoples for Rio+20.

Joji Cariño, TEBTEBBA, supported the integration of a fourth cultural pillar of sustainable development in the zero draft of the Rio+20 outcomes document to encompass the values of indigenous peoples' spirituality. She suggested: further integrating references to human rights for sustainable development; and respecting local economies, putting in place regulations to avoid land grabbing and predatory investments.

Miguel Palacín Quispe, Coordinator of Andean Indigenous Organizations (CAOI), said a fourth cultural pillar for sustainable development must reflect the way indigenous peoples live in harmony with nature and reflect their views of "good life."

Gretchen Gordon, Indian Law Resource Center, provided an overview on the implications of including language on human rights in the zero draft, saying this should imply legal obligations for states. She supported, *inter alia*: reference to indigenous peoples human rights; the recognition of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People as a standard for implementing sustainable development at all levels; and recognizing diverse local economies as the cornerstone of green economies.

Marie-Danielle Samuel, Yachay Wasi, highlighted the proposal to strengthen UNEP as a specialized agency, which should operate in partnership with local governments and civil society organizations.

Jadder Mendoza, Centro para la Autonomía y Desarrollo para los Pueblos Indígenas (CADPI), supported strengthening the zero draft components on indigenous peoples' self-determination and self-governance, territoriality and autonomy, as well as traditional knowledge, food sovereignty and economy.

In ensuing discussions participants addressed, *inter alia*: how to broaden support for integrating a cultural or ethical fourth pillar for sustainable development in the Rio+20 outcomes; and the role of local economies as an element of resilience.



L-R: Miguel Palacín Quispe, Coordinador General de la Coordinadora Andina de Organizaciones Indígenas (CAOI); Maura McCarthy, interpreter, Joji Cariño, TEBTEBBA; Karla General, Indian Law Resource Center; Gretchen Gordon, Indian Law Resource Centre, Marie-Danielle Samuel, Yachay Wasi; Julian Velez, interpreter, and Jadder Mendoza, Centro para la Autonomía y Desarrollo para los Pueblos Indígenas (CADPI).



Joji Cariño, TEBTEBBA, highlighted the importance of traditional knowledge in contributing to sustainable development as well as of local economies for building resilience.



Jadder Mendoza, CADPI, urged working towards binding mechanisms, namely: free prior informed consent, indicators systems for indigenous peoples and governance institutions to enhance direct indigenous peoples' involvement.

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