

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

PAPER 4

THE COMING CSD 14 AND 15:  
CLIMATE, ATMOSPHERE, ENERGY AND INDUSTRY – A  
DIRE NEED FOR A STRONG AND INSIGHTFUL CIVIL  
SOCIETY VOICE  
OR AN OPPORTUNITY NOT TO BE WASTED

BY JAN GUSTAV STRANDENAES



Foreign Affairs  
Canada

Affaires étrangères  
Canada

YMPÄRISTÖMINISTERIÖ  
MILJÖMINISTERIET  
MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT



Flemish  
government



**K|P|L KATZENBACH PARTNERS LLC**





## COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

### Introduction

Through the CSD, all stakeholders have a unique opportunity to create global public awareness and negotiated results on poignant themes that lie at the core of the sustainability debate. The cluster issues of the coming CSD two year cycle concern us in ways that are directly linked to our everyday life and well being: Climate Change and Atmospheric Pollution; Energy for Sustainable Development and Industrial Development.

The purpose of this document then is to highlight opportunities for stakeholder involvement in a process, which will start now, and result in strong factual and political input into the final CSD session in late April 2007.

#### ***Purpose***

All governments will have to deal with these issues for the next two years. They already have people working on them in various ministries. Governments committed to working on these and other sustainability issues during the Johannesburg Summit. The CSD provides us all with an opportunity to see if the commitments our governments made are being implemented.

With the seriousness of the present CSD themes, stakeholders all over the world now have a unique opportunity to build an awareness campaign on these issues among their constituencies, and thus make a relevant link between the concerns of the grass roots and those of the intergovernmental processes. The prerequisite for such a campaign to be successful are – that we are prepared, and willing to commit and understand the process. To highlight these issues is also a purpose of this paper.

This process should make use of the various CSD elements to promote civil society concerns: The UN CSD regional conferences (between December 2005 and primo February 2006), the CSD Review session, to be held the first two weeks of May 2006, the Major Group's official background paper (to be handed in to the UN by early December 2005), the official major Group's policy statement (ready by beginning of November 2006), the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting, the IPM (February 2007) and finally the CSD proper – April/ May 2007.

The process of developing a possible cooperation must at all times be open, participative, accountable and as inclusive as possible. In no way should the various participating organisations feel they would have to compromise any of their basic policies or values. Having said that, those of us who have conducted these informal negotiations with a possible aim of creating a common input into the CSD 14 and 15 cluster themes, feel strongly that all stakeholders may have a number of issues in



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

common. Some of these stakeholders, particularly a few of the Major Groups<sup>1</sup>, share to a large extent a common understanding of values, often analyse the issues in a similar way, and have developed their respective plans dealing with the CSD cluster issues that strongly complement each other.

***A poignant challenge and a lack of interest from civil society***

The CSD - the Commission for Sustainable Development - offers the world one of the most open and participatory intergovernmental processes on sustainability issues. With a renewed mandate from the JPOI<sup>2</sup>, CSD is about to start work on its second round of cluster themes.

The coming CSD cycle - CSD 14 and 15 - presents governments and civil society with a most poignant set of themes to work with and with this an opportunity to raise global awareness and renewed interest in some of the basic issues that relate to sustainable development: Climate Change and Atmospheric Pollution; Energy for Sustainable Development and Industrial Development.

Over the years, a great number of highly respected civil society representatives have turned their backs on a number of UN processes asserting that these processes amount to little less than a "great heap of talk". CSD has been criticized, discarded and ridiculed as the biggest talk show on earth dealing with sustainability. This criticism is of course not without its merits. But by leaving these processes, space has been left open to itinerant global conference participants, often poor on representation and issue knowledge, but good at process deliberations. And because for some reason, there will always be one or several civil society representatives present at international meetings, the UN and governments may claim after each conference, that civil society has been consulted. And we have seen that too often, what these so-called civil society representatives have said, does not mirror or reflect the views of civil society. This trend should and must be changed.

This document then, is as already stated, a call to participate in a process, which will start now, develop a global awareness and action programme among the grass roots on the CSD cluster themes Energy for Sustainable Development, Industrial Development and Air Pollution and Climate Change and result in strong factual and political input on behalf of civil society into the many intergovernmental conferences taking place during these two years and end up with a strong commitment to improve the global standards of sustainability during the CSD session in late April 2007.

---

<sup>1</sup> The 9 major groups as defined by the Rio Summit: Women, Youth, Indigenous Peoples, Farmers, NGOs, Trade Unions, Science and Technology, Local Authorities, the Private Sector.

<sup>2</sup> Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, decided on at the UN Summit on Sustainability, the WSSD in Johannesburg 2002.



## COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

### Historical Background For The Stakeholder At CSD

As CSD was set up in the immediate aftermath of the Rio conference in 1992, civil society continued to pursue its interest and deepen its commitment to sustainability issues. The CSD soon developed into one of the most interesting arenas within the UN to allow for a free flow of ideas and new modalities for participation. With the new CSD, decided upon at Johannesburg and spanning two year cycles, renewed effort will be made to put back sustainability issue on the global agenda. What follows here is a brief intro to the variegated history of stakeholder involvement in the CSD process.

#### ***The importance of civil society.***

There is an abundance of references to civil society within the UN as well as in a growing number of UN documents. The Secretary General of the UN, Mr. Kofi Annan recently released a report called “In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all.” The report is an ambitious attempt to shed new light on the importance of the UN in an effort to reform and recreate it as a globally responsible, necessary and indispensable vehicle to create precisely development, security and human rights for all. Mr. Annan goes on to state that: “Civil society organizations have a critical role to play in driving this implementation process forward to “make poverty history”. Not only is civil society an indispensable partner in delivering services to the poor at the scope required by the Millennium Goals but it can also catalyse action within countries on pressing development concerns, mobilizing broad-based movements and creating grass roots pressure to hold leaders accountable for their commitments...”<sup>3</sup>

#### ***New forms of participation.***

With growing importance attached to the voices of “we the peoples” comes also new ways through which these voices may be heard. CSD is in many ways in the midst of this evolving process. In a recently published book by the UN NGLS, the following paragraph is found<sup>4</sup>:

“*New Forms of Participation*: In recent years, the UN has begun to explore the possible benefits of new forms of participatory decision making, including multi-stakeholder dialogues, civil society hearings and roundtables between Heads of State and civil society. These are designed to bring together people who are involved with a particular issue to exchange perspectives and experiences. In general, the different mechanisms aim to promote better decision-making through wider input; integrate diverse viewpoints; develop trust and partnership; and mobilize commitment to implementation of decisions. This new approach has generated substantial interest. Aside from the annual meeting of the CSD, recent processes have incorporated new forms of participation including the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2002 World

---

<sup>3</sup> §38, p.13 from In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all, A/59/2005, March 21, 2005

<sup>4</sup> Intergovernmental Negotiations and Decision making at the United Nations, a guide by UN NGLS and Gretchen Sidhu, UN Geneva, 2003, UNCTAD/NGLS/2003/1, pages 72 and 73.



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Summit on Sustainable Development. The Security Council has also increased its Arria Formula informal meetings on specific topics, which may include NGOs.”

***The CSD civil society process – a bit of history.***

Many have referred to the CSD process as one of the more intriguing and interesting process for testing innovative ways to involve civil society in intergovernmental processes. Some have hailed it as a success in international democratic development bringing the voices of the peoples in direct interactive roles with representatives of governments, others maintain that the CSD amounts to little less than a talk show under the aegis of good governance. The sheer numbers of representatives that find their ways to and participate in the CSD processes, may be indicative of the importance these representatives attach to this political process: The WSSD, the pinnacle of the CSD process in 2002, had more than 8 000 civil society persons attend, and the just concluded CSD 13 had above 1000 pre-registered with well over 500 participating from all over the world.

NGLs sums up this unprecedented development in the following way:

“...By UN estimates, the number of international NGOs alone has grown forty-fold over the last decade (the 1990s), to over 37 000 in 2000. Countless, thousands – possibly millions – more work regionally, nationally and locally.

NGO involvement in the UN expanded considerably through the series of UN conferences held during the 1990s. These large-scale conferences on key development issues, such as sustainable development and population and women, sometimes drew as many as 40 000 participants. With some exposure to the mechanisms and possibilities of intergovernmental decision making, many NGOs took a new interest in the UN as an arena for policy dialogue and advocacy. Others came forward through intensive organizing around emerging issues such as the creation of the International Criminal Court, the critical problems of landmines, child soldiers and the devastating worldwide pandemic on HIV/AIDS.”<sup>5</sup>

***The Multi-stakeholder Dialogues at CSD Take Shape.***

A few years ago, an MIT study that appraised the work of civil society in the CSD process, stated<sup>6</sup>:

“The Program of Work for CSD-6 through CSD-10 (1998-2002) was laid out at “Earth

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pp vii and viii.

<sup>6</sup> The CSD secretariat commissioned in 2001 Ms. Michèle N. Ferez, Senior Associate, Consensus Building Institute, CBI, and a Graduate Fellow at the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School, with guidance from Dr. Lawrence Susskind, Ford Professor of Urban and Environmental Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Director of the MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program, to research and evaluate the multi-stakeholder dialogues as they had evolved from 1997 to 2002. <sup>6</sup> The more than 100 page long study called “Multi-stakeholder Dialogues: Learning from the UNCSD” contains a multitude of information documenting the history and first five year (1998-2002) development of the multi-stakeholder process.



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Summit+5,” the UN’s first stocktaking exercise following the Rio Earth Summit. At the end of rather fractious deliberations, the UN General Assembly, meeting in the 19<sup>th</sup> Special Session, stipulated that the CSD should conduct “a high-level policy debate aimed at consensus-building on sustainable development.” As an integral part of that effort, the CSD should “strengthen its interaction with representatives of major groups, including through greater and better use of focused dialogue sessions, and round tables.” (UN Document A/RES/S-19/2, 1997). The multi-stakeholder dialogue segments were instituted in response to this request.

The precise form the dialogues took emerged from a mix of prior experience and improvisation to meet the CSD’s institutional requirements. Inspiration was in part drawn from the Local Agenda 21 experiences, the National Councils for Sustainable Development, and proceedings at the UN Conference on Human Settlement, (Habitat II) which is remembered by many as a high point of civil society engagement in international negotiations. “Earth Summit+5”(June 23-27, 1997) also set important participatory precedents: for the first time in the U.N.’s history, representatives of civil society organizations – comprising each of the nine major groups – made statements in a General Assembly Plenary meeting. Less dramatic but equally important for the subsequent dialogues was a week-long series of panel discussions, each of which focused on lessons learned, priorities and future expectations presented by one major group. These miniature dialogues were an official part of the proceedings of the Commission and were chaired by a CSD Vice-Chairperson.

Starting at CSD-6 (1998), the duration of each multi-stakeholder dialogue segment has been two days, typically scheduled at the beginning of the regular CSD Session. The dialogues precede a Ministerial or “High-Level” segment and the elaborate intergovernmental negotiations resulting in the final Decisions issued by the Commission and submitted through ECOSOC to the UN General Assembly for approval.

The dialogues have involved representatives from several major groups and focused on the role of specific economic sectors in achieving sustainable development. They have thus been organized thematically and aimed for interactive discussion between major group and government representatives.”<sup>7</sup>

Critical voices of the CSD acknowledges the valuable contribution of the dialogues to democratising the intergovernmental systems, but as they claim, this contribution has not gone beyond the CSD. And what is more, the CSD has failed to get the sustainability messages across 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue in New York and make it relevant for the rest of the world.

And there may be some truth to that. But who has failed, and why?

As has been pointed out, a number of the major stakeholders have turned their backs on the CSD process – a process we can and should turn.

---

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, pp 14 and 15



**Challenges Building Relevance**

**a) The CSD themes – the next two years:**

Sustainability issues seem to become ever more important, yet, one cannot claim that these issues are among those that the general public are concerned with on a daily basis. Too often people say these issues are complicated, are of a political nature that do not concern their every day life, are global and as such does not have immediate relevance for them. By using the CSD themes, we all, governments and civil society alike, have a golden opportunity to make a call for public interest and heighten political awareness in basic sustainability issues for the next two years. The themes for the next two years are:

CSD thematic cluster:	Crosscutting issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy for Sustainable Development</li> <li>• Industrial Development</li> <li>• Air Pollution / Atmosphere</li> <li>• Climate Change</li> </ul>	Poverty eradication, Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Sustainable development in a globalizing world, Health and sustainable development, Sustainable development of SIDS, Sustainable development for Africa, Other regional initiatives, Means of implementation, Institutional framework for sustainable development, Gender equality, and Education

**b) Focusing on the issues.**

Various stakeholders will bring different expert knowledge to a global awareness and policy campaign. To be effective in the context of the CSD themes, stakeholders will have to identify relevant key issues to work at this meeting and start mapping a strategy for the coming two years. A system or modalities will have to be developed through which the various participating stakeholders will have equal opportunities to input their experiences while not having to compromise their own priorities.

Inspiration in developing a programme with relevance for each country and each region can be taken from the so-called ‘official CSD reporting system’:

*“The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its eleventh session, encouraged countries to provide national reports, on a voluntary basis, in particular to the Commission’s review sessions. In doing so, the Commission underscored that the reporting should:*

1. *reflect the overall progress in all three dimensions of sustainable development, focussing on the thematic cluster of issues for the cycle;*



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

2. *focus on concrete progress in implementation;*
3. *include lessons learned and best practices;*
4. *identify actions taken*
5. *highlight relevant trends, constraints, challenges and emerging issues*
6. *incorporate, where relevant, the effective use of indicators for sustainable development.*

*The present Guidelines request information for the second implementation cycle of the CSD, that is, for sessions 14 and 15 (2006-2007), where the focus will be on the following: atmosphere, climate change, energy, and industry development, in addition to the cross-cutting issues.”*

(Quoted from the CSD demands on national reporting)

**c) Coherence, relevance and cutting-edge knowledge**

Two other issues must also be tackled, two issues where civil society is often vocal and critical: coherence and knowledge. The two issues are often intertwined.

Coherence, relevance and cutting-edge knowledge have become some of the abused “buzz-words” of the international intergovernmental and civil society scene, lack thereof has often raised the level of indignation among representatives of civil society. Neither governments nor civil society have an abundance of good practices to show in the area of coherence.

However, realising this, the 9 major groups are making efforts this time to coordinate their initiatives and approaches as far as possible.

Similar initiatives are taken within the NGO community, and striving to reach some level of coherence will be yet another target for the cooperation outlined in this document.

As has been pointed out time and again, several processes are going on simultaneously within the intergovernmental systems; so also with respect to the CSD cluster themes.

The following bullet points concerns the issue of climate change and energy and will be address during the next two years by the scientific community, the media and the stakeholders within the intergovernmental processes. Several processes are taking place, and they all address the same core issues:

**d) On energy and climate/ atmosphere:**

There is the ongoing COP negotiations (Montreal early December 2005), UNEP has put energy firmly on their agenda and will discuss this at their upcoming Global Ministerial Environment Forum next year in Dubai (February 2006).

What other issues should be dealt with in the context of climate?

These are but some of the issues that would have to be deal with:

- Compliance
- Adaptation
- CDM – the Clean Development Mechanism
- Climate Science



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

- Climate change impacts
- Emissions trading, the carbon market
- Joint implementation
- Kyoto Protocol
- Land-use and land-use changes and forestry
- Public participation
- Other energy sources than fossil fuels

A crucial question that has been raised a number of times is: What will happen after 2012? When the Kyoto protocol expires in that year, what mechanisms/ agreements/ problems are we faced with?

Similar lists of bullet points will of necessity have to be made concerning the other two CSD cluster issues. The challenge is to be able to single out what is the essential points and then address them in an expert manner that also has relevance for the grass roots constituencies belonging to or adhering to the various stakeholders.

***e) Overarching deliverables for the period 2005 to 2007:***

Which opportunities exist in working on these issues? In one way the easy answer is: the sky is the limit. In another context, a proper answer is: opportunities exist in awareness raising as long as the issues raised have relevance for the constituency. Not being able to or ignoring to make the relevant connection between the intergovernmental process and the grassroots' concerns, is probably one of the biggest problems in re-establishing CSD as a relevant body for stakeholders at all levels of operation.

The following list of bullet points is just meant to trigger the mind set of the organisation to think systematically about how to deal with the relevance of CSD issues. The list is by no means exhaustive:

- Help identify, focus and develop relevant issues for civil society from the three major themes: Climate Change and Atmospheric Pollution; Energy for sustainable development; Industrial development.
- Develop a global NGO/ civil society network to work actively on the CSD 14 and 15 clusters consisting of the major NGO networks on these themes.
- Ensure presence of competent, global NGO networks at CSD.
- Make sure NGOs present at CSD are prepared and view the two-year CSD as one unit.
- Identify possibilities for coherence between ongoing processes on the CSD clusters.
- Contribute to the CSD process relevant, new and cutting edge knowledge.
- Develop a global campaign to disseminate information on and raise awareness and interest in the CSD cluster themes.
- Provide facilitation and coordination services for NGOs in relation to the official CSD process



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

- Provide information for NGOs on the modalities of the CSD process, what rules of engagement are there, requirements for participation etc.
- Keep all NGOs updated on the official proceedings of the CSD
- Facilitate and coordinate the development and writing of the official 8000 word NGO background paper.
- As a service to the civil society with an interest in the CSD themes, help establish a “road-map” system to track all meetings and conferences that have relevance to the CSD themes.
- Coordinate policy issues to the extent it is natural and relevant with other Major Groups.
- Help develop coherence between this process and other intergovernmental and UN process relevant to the three cluster issues.

**f) Deliverables for a larger international region, from June 2005 until December 2005.**

- Organise a network of UN ECE based NGOs to work on the CSD 14&15 cluster themes.
- Inspire these networks to develop and carry out an information and awareness raising campaign on these issues both on a regional and a national level.
- Help organise and participate in a meeting in Paris in September to bring the Major Groups together to discuss priorities and strategies in connection to the CSD themes.
- Bring the major European NGO networks together to map out a strategy on the CSD themes with relevance to the UN ECE region.
- Organise and carry out a regional civil society/ Major Groups conference in conjunction with the UN CSD regional meeting in Geneva in December 2005.
- Help facilitate the regional civil society input into the UN ECE regional CSD conference.

*(Please note: Similar deliverables are being developed for the three other regions as well. It is worth bearing in mind that the regional plans being developed by civil society vary in degree depending on the nature of the regional UN conferences being organised in each region.)*

**g) Deliverables during the CSD meetings at the UN, more specifically the Review Process, May 2006, the IPM, February 2007 and the CSD proper April/ May 2007.**

- Organise and carry out a capacity building seminar on the modalities of the CSD, lobby techniques etc. for all interested participating NGOs and other representatives of civil society.
- Facilitate the morning NGO meetings to provide information service to the participating NGOs on the day to day deliberations, provide factual background analysis, and function as an information hub for all participating Major Groups.



## COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

- Organise and facilitate the afternoon issue caucus meetings to develop official NGO statements, select the NGO speakers, organise dialogue input on behalf of the NGOs.
- Write, edit and produce the daily conference paper, Taking Issue, to provide both a platform through which participating NGOs can present their particular concerns as well as reporting on the proceedings.
- Post the conference paper on the internet, and make it available to all interested parties globally

### ***h) The seriousness of the coming CSD***

There are a number of reasons why the well-informed and expert networks among stakeholder groups should get involved in the work of the CSD. The seriousness of the themes is but one of these reasons. However, allow us to point to a few other reasons – starting this time with four strategic ones:

*Aim one: ensure presence of competent, global NGO networks at CSD.*

*Aim two: Make sure NGOs present at CSD are prepared and view the two-year CSD as one unit.*

*Aim three: identify possibilities for coherence between ongoing process on the CSD clusters, and*

*Aim four: contribute to the CSD process relevant, new and cutting edge knowledge*

*Aim five: initiate a global awareness and information campaign on the CSD themes.*

### ***i) The need to be present so the UN can refer to a representative body of civil society.***

Space is filled, always, in international conferences and during negotiation processes. If we are not there, others will be and be seen as speaking on behalf of civil society. By far, the best represented of the Major Groups, are the NGOs.

Over the past 10 years, some 100 to 150 NGOs have on average participated annually in the CSD negotiations. Although the participating NGOs have by and large shown dedication and commitment to the issues, and to the cause, not all the participating NGOs have brought with them representative or cutting edge knowledge to the discussions. The overall performance of the NGO community could always have been better, and with the seriousness attached to the present cluster themes, it is imperative that insightful knowledge is presented during the coming two year CSD process. Despite rumours to the contrary, civil society was called upon by the CSD 12 and 13 chairs to participate in the official plenary negotiations more often than during any earlier CSD. The 9 Major Groups experienced what may truly be called an unprecedented high level of participation in the formulation of the outcome documents. We have reasons to believe this practice may well be repeated during the next cycle as well. In this context it is well worth remembering that after the CSD sessions are over, the UN including all the participating country delegations will say, emphatically – we allowed space and gave recognition to civil society, we did consult with civil society, and this is the result, this is



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

what they gave us. This is as good as it gets. And we need to make this good in the upcoming CSD.

***j) If we are not present, hard won victories may be defeated, others will take the lead:***

If we do not safeguard the language and decisions that presently govern the international regime on the three cluster themes, language will be weakened, and victories we thought we won in earlier years may be turned into defeats these coming years. NGOs and the other major Groups have helped to develop language and decisions that have contributed to set at least minimum standards on the three cluster themes. We need to defend these positions, and if possible seek ways to develop these standards further.

Critics have been quick to judge the first two years of the new CSD (CSD 12 and 13) as a near failure. Perhaps if we had expected an outcome from CSD that would have guaranteed the much-coveted progress with visible improvement of international standards, and if we feel that this did not by any standard materialise, it would be correct to write CSD 12 and 13 off as a failure. Perhaps critics may even be correct when they ascertain that this last CSD actually weakened language on a number of issues relating to water, sanitation and human settlements. But if this assessment is correct, a number of questions immediately spring to mind: Why did the CSD develop negatively, and why did civil society not put up a fight to ensure progress? And if they did, why did they not succeed? Why is it true that so many of the participants, delegates and civil society representatives seemed to come somewhat unprepared?

We would fool ourselves if we now think there are no players interested in the upcoming thematic cluster: the energy-climate nexus.

There are numerous challenges in this field, and many of them are looked upon as controversial, and too expensive for nations economies to tackle: emissions controls, quotas and cleaner production systems, to mention but a few. There is little doubt that we need to be prepared to handle their challenges.

Then there is the possible long-term preparation for the 2012 Kyoto renegotiations.

***k) Creating linkages and synergies between ongoing processes***

Several processes are going on simultaneously with respect to the CSD cluster themes: On energy and climate/ atmosphere: There is the ongoing COP negotiations (Montreal early December 2005), UNEP has put energy firmly on their agenda and will discuss this at their upcoming Global Ministerial Environment Forum next year in Dubai (February 2006).

On industrial development: How do we interpret this perhaps more undefined cluster theme: Industrial Development? Clearly a number of nations, not the least among the G 77 look upon this theme as being able to focus on what should be the very motor of development. And they will be supported by a number of production happy entrepreneurs all over the world, representing big business and the US itself.



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

The trade unions say that this is the theme that puts the work place, safety and health as well as the issues of corporate accountability in the middle of the sustainability agenda. And perhaps it will be correct for civil society to say that we will deal with industry in relation to the so-called SPAC agenda: Sustainable Production and Consumption. This then ties the CSD work into yet another ongoing UN process – the Marrakech process – a meeting on this is to take place in September this year in Costa Rica. How can we, the NGOs contribute to develop coherence, knowledge and strength in relationship to the CSD processes? We know that a large group of NGOs from all segments and parts of the world are engaged in the above processes. NGOs seem to be everywhere. Is it possible to coordinate this enormous interest and harness and combine our common strength to make a solid impact on the intergovernmental processes?

The scientific community participated in a workshop during the last CSD where they clearly stated that now was a time to recognize the position and importance of science at CSD. Clearly having the next cluster themes in mind, they stated that it is high time we move from problem-focus to solution-focus. And as they made this statement, they also said they would use their position to focus on the coming CSD themes and embarrass those who did not see the gravity of these issues. It would be a waste of time and energy to send representatives from the NGO community to participate in the CSD who do not understand the invitation presented by the scientific community. But to be able to reap the profits of this invitation, we need to involve those NGOs that may be said to possess expert knowledge on the issues.

***1) An opportunity to start a global campaign – yet again***

Finally, these two coming years do offer us a new opportunity to start a global awareness campaign on these issues, addressing crucial areas highly relevant to the survival of our planet. And in so doing we can also contribute to laying the grounds for the Kyoto revisions, perhaps forge new alliances, and make untried forays into the world of cooperation. For a global campaign to succeed we also need to involve networks with strong grass-root links; and as CSD spans the globe, so can we!

**Discussion Points for the stakeholders themselves**

The above paragraphs lead ultimately to a number of central questions to be asked and answered by those stakeholders that feel tempted to participate. The challenge boils down to a number of essential questions to be made at various levels.

***a) Question area one:***

**Are we willing to:**

- *Be present at the sessions;*
- *Defend language and hard won victories;*



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

- *Bring forth substantive knowledge and coherence;*
- *Involve organisations at all levels, from local to global.*

By using the content of paragraphs 1 and 2, and by using the information available in the annex, which highlights but a few modalities legitimising stakeholder involvement in the CSD process, reasonable answers could be arrived at. We might think the rest is just to make a simple strategy and a plan based on this.

**b) Question area two:**

The new CSD is based on a two-year cycle. The first year is a so-called review year, the second year is policy and implementation. It is quite obvious that the two years are meant to be seen as one unit. One reason why it is warranted to say that the first two-year CSD cycle fell short of a success, is that most participants failed to leave the one year modus thinking behind, and considered CSD 12 and 13 as two separate units. To be able to have a successful participation of stakeholders, it is imperative that the engagements last for the entirety of the two years. It is also important that we understand the many facets of the CSD operative:

Stakeholder modalities, rules of engagement etc, as well as the different arenas: the plenary, the corridors, the side-events, the partnership-forum, the learning centre

**Are we willing to**

- *Stay the full two years and plan for that;*
- *What does it imply for the organisation to do precisely that, input, work-hours, strategy, finances;*
- *How can you legitimise working on this rather 'expensive' process for a two-year period;*

**c) Question area three:**

Another reason for the lacklustre performance during the last CSDs is poor preparation from many of the participant's point of view. To make CSD relevant for both the global, regional and local level, it is imperative to bring the discussion away from mere generalities. The new modalities allow for such a change. It is much up to the stakeholders to furnish the new CSD with consistent and relevant input.

**Are we willing to consider the following:**

- *Make sure that we all bring relevant and well thought out positions to the table;*
- *Make sure the people we bring to the conferences have first hand knowledge of the issues at stake and have good contacts with the constituency;*
- *Are accountable to a constituency and have consulted with that constituency*

**d) Question area four:**

To be able to involve all levels of stakeholders – from our grass roots constituency to the intergovernmental levels, strategies and programmes need to be developed and adhered to. There is an abundance of information available; there are a number of highly



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

qualified networks to cooperate with; there is a hungry media and willing politicians and decision makers to cooperate with.

**These are a few questions we should address:**

- *How would you develop a two-year strategy to be involved in the next two year CSD cycle;*
- *Which of the three thematic areas will you choose to concentrate on;*
- *How do you plan to integrate the various segments of the CSD process;*
- *What would your needs be to fulfil your designed strategies;*
- *How could the various major-group focal points serve you best to become an influential stakeholder;*
- *How do you plan to involve your stakeholder constituency and explain the relationship between the grass roots and the intergovernmental level;*
- *How will you utilise the fact that your government is already working on the CSD issues, have made reports on this (a public document) and probably sent it to the SG of the UN?*
- *How do you plan to make this into a national campaign to make other organisations, your media and people in general aware of what's going on?*
- *Your country has probably written a national strategy on sustainability – provided you know of it, how will you use it in this context?*



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Annex

**OUR LEGITIMATE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE**

**CSD 11 created the modalities for Stakeholder involvement**

The following extracts represent a few references to the final CSD 11 outcome document<sup>8</sup> from CSD 11 where the modalities for among others the involvement of all stakeholders are dealt with. By reading this document, the rules of procedures and opportunities for engagement are made quite clear.

§ 2...

(iv) Contributions from major groups, including scientific experts, as well as educators, taking into account paragraphs 139(g) and 149(c) and (d) of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, on their result-oriented activities concerning the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

(d) The Review Session evaluation should enable an improved understanding of priority concerns in the implementation of the selected thematic cluster of issues and pave the way for an effective policy discussion in the course of the Policy Year, with a view to strengthening implementation in these areas;

(e) The outcome of the Review Session will be a report including a Chairperson's Summary containing identified constraints and obstacles and possible approaches and best practices for implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

(f) In the Policy Year the Commission will convene an Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting, for one week in New York in February/March to discuss policy options and possible actions to address the constraints and obstacles in the process of implementation identified during the Review Year.

(g) The discussions of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting will be based on the outcome of the Review Session, SGs reports as well as other relevant inputs. Based on these discussions the Chair will prepare a draft negotiating document for consideration at the Policy Session.

(h) The Commission's Policy Sessions, to be held in April/May of the second year of the cycle, will take policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite

---

<sup>8</sup> Commission on Sustainable Development: Report on the eleventh session (27 January 2003 and 28 April – 9 May 2003) Economic and Social Council, Official Records, 2003, Supplement No.9

The banner features a teal and blue abstract background with a globe-like pattern. The text is centered and reads: COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

implementation in the selected thematic cluster of issues, taking account of the discussions of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting, the Secretary-General's reports and other relevant inputs;

(i) The Review Sessions and the Policy Sessions should mobilise further action by all implementation actors to overcome obstacles and constraints in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and address new challenges and opportunities, and share lessons learned and best practice.

(j) Specific organizational modalities for Commission meetings will be recommended by the Bureau of the Commission through open-ended and transparent consultations conducted in a timely manner, following the established United Nations rules of procedure. Activities during Commission meetings should provide for balanced involvement of participants from all regions, as well as for gender balance.

§ 3....

(iii) Provide input to the Secretary-General's reports and the Sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development. These inputs may include identification of obstacles and constraints, new challenges and opportunities related to the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and sharing of lessons learned and best practices.

(iv) Provide for contributions from major groups, taking into account paragraphs 139(g) and 149(c) and (d) of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

§ 5.

Invites governments, as well as organizations at all levels and major groups, to undertake results-oriented initiatives and activities that support the Commission's programme of work and promote and facilitate the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The results of such initiatives and activities should be an input to the Commission, as appropriate.

§ 12.

Encourages countries to present, on a voluntary basis, national reports, in particular to the Commission's Review Session, focusing on concrete progress in implementation, including achievements, constraints, challenges and opportunities.

§ 13.

With the purpose of implementing paragraphs 130 and 131 of the Johannesburg Plan of



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Implementation and the Commission's Decision 9/4, paragraph 3, encourages further work on indicators for sustainable development by countries at the national level, including integration of gender aspects, on a voluntary basis, in line with national conditions and priorities, and requests the Secretary-General to consider progress made in this regard, including further work on the above-mentioned indicators, in the report to the Commission, as appropriate.

§ 14.

Underscores that reporting to the Commission on Sustainable Development should be guided by the following considerations:

(a) Reporting should reflect the overall progress made on the three dimensions of sustainable development, focusing on the thematic cluster of issues for the cycle, and include inputs from all levels, as appropriate, including national, sub-regional, regional and global levels, and drawing on those sources listed in paragraph 2(c)(ii-iv).

(b) The existing reporting systems should be used to the fullest extent possible and are expected to provide the bulk of information required;

(c) Reporting should focus on concrete progress in implementation, taking into account the three dimensions of sustainable development and their integration, including information sharing, lessons learned, progress made and best practices, identifying actions taken, constraints, challenges and opportunities.

(d) The effective use of indicators, as described in paragraph 13.

(e) Country reporting should provide information on the status of national strategies for sustainable development.

§ 15.

Requests the Secretariat of the Commission, working in close cooperation with other organisations of the United Nations system, to:

(a) Take measures to streamline reporting in order to avoid duplication and unnecessary burden on states including in accordance with the Secretary General's report on United Nations reform;

(b) Provide focused information that highlights relevant trends, constraints, challenges and emerging issues;

(c) Provide technical assistance to countries, upon their request, in national reporting through regular and extra-budgetary sources.

§ 16.

Invites the secretariat of the Commission to improve national reporting guidelines and



COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP  
PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

questionnaires, with the intention of making reporting more efficient and less burdensome on countries, and focused on implementation, bearing in mind the provisions of this resolution, in consultation with Governments, United Nations organizations and secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements, and to report to the Commission for its consideration.

§ 20...

(c) Enhancing participation and effective involvement of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, as well as promoting transparency and broad public participation;

---

Jan-Gustav Strandenaes

Senior Policy Adviser

ANPED

Facilitating the NGO input into the CSD as the UN CSD NGO organising partner.

---

Contact points:

[jgstr@online.no](mailto:jgstr@online.no)

+47 87 30 30 (land line)

+47 470 18 337 (cell phone – global)

*Jan-Gustav Strandenaes is Senior Policy Adviser with ANPED, the Northern Alliance for Sustainability, a European/North American /Central Asian NGO network headquartered in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He is presently facilitating NGO input into the CSD process for the SDIN, the Sustainable Development Issues Network, a cooperative effort by ANPED, ELCI, the Environment Liaison Centre International, Nairobi, Kenya, and TWN, Third World Network, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Working for the NGO Major Group at CSD.*

*Jan-Gustav has worked with civil society and sustainability issues all his life, in many different positions and in many different countries and locations.*