



Taking ISSUE

The Sustainable Development Issues Network

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A Daily publication of the Sustainable Development Issues Network (SDIN)
at the Twelfth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

Make the new CSD into a Common Caring Capacity

Well organized, vocal and with daunting experience to back up their message, the Women's Major Group delivered an opening statement in a composed way, with a profound effect on the CSD participants. Here is their statement:

It is with great respect for the hundreds of millions of our sisters - living in all corners of this one planet Earth –, that want our voices to be heard at this CSD.

Our sisters:

- who walk the long distances over rough terrain to collect water, fuel and fodder – day after day;
- who carry heavy loads on their heads and shoulders;
- who do all the work in the households: washing, cooking, cleaning, purchasing;
- who produce food on the land, collect products from the forest, catch fish from the waters;
- who sell their goods in villages and towns, and earn the incomes that sustain their families;
- who share their knowledge and wisdom with their daughters and sons, generation after generation;

- who care for the healthy and the sick, the young and the old;
- who sustain disasters and face conflicts, and rebuild their communities.

Our sisters that are being abused and raped, when they are searching for water, or for a safe place to defecate.

Their daughters that can not attend schools at times that they menstruate, as safe toilets are failing.

Our sisters that bear the heavy burden of the HIV/AIDS pandemic more than anybody else – carrying loads of water to the sick often at the expense of income generating activities.

It is their life-giving resources that become destroyed, polluted, impoverished, privatized, unaffordable, un-accessible. Their voices that are not heard yet, their perspectives that are not guiding our water and sanitation agenda yet, their decision-making seats that are not open to them yet.

We are women from all corners of the world, we are indigenous women, rural women, women living in urban slums, in conflict areas, and on land that has been flooded or dried up.

Yes, we want the JPOI to be implemented, the MDGs to be reached, and above all a peaceful and healthy planet for all.

Let's make this CSD and its follow-up a manifestation of our Common Caring Capacity!!

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Meeting schedule

THURSDAY 22, APRIL 2004

- 9.00 - 10.00, NGO Organising Partners
- 10.00 - 11.00, NGO Steering Committee
- 11.00 - 12.00, Freshwater
- 12.00 - 1.00, Earth Values
- 1.00 - 2.00, Indigenous Peoples
- 2.00 - 3.00, Youth
- 3.00 - 4.00, Latin America
- 4.00 - 5.00, Education
- 5.00 - 6.00, Women
- 6.00 - 7.00, Trade Unions
- 7.00 - 8.00, Caucus Coordination

All meetings in Conference Room B

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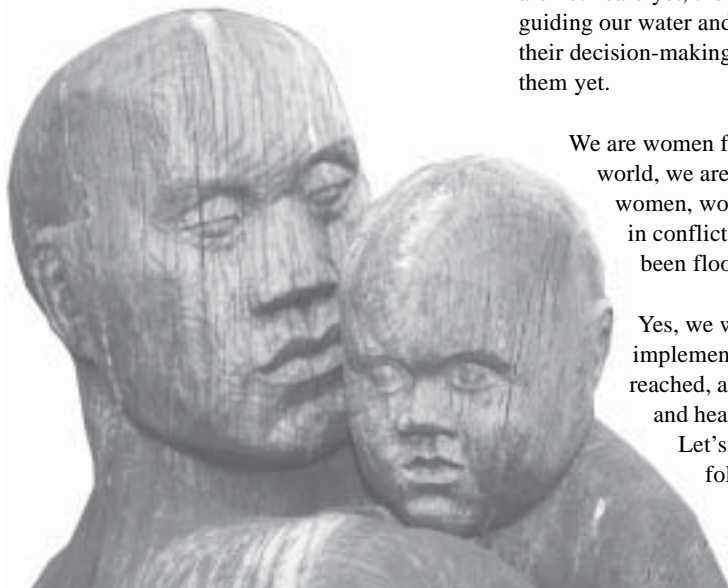
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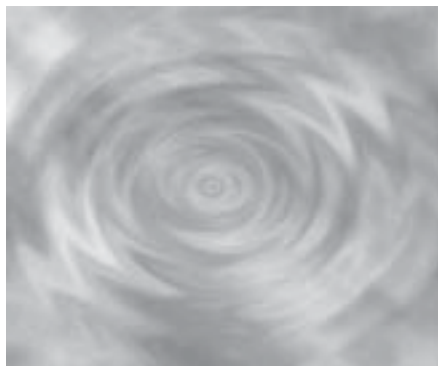
Visit the SDIN morning strategy meetings for reports from working groups, information sharing and strategic discussions. SDIN Morning Meetings are open to all NGOs.

Meetings are held in Conference Room B at the United Nations Building.

Articles reflect the opinions of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SDIN Network

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The cycle of life

Water is sacred. It is a source of life, a human right and a right for all of nature, plants and animals. These were the sacred words of **THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CAUCUS** in their statement at the CSD-12 interactive dialogue segment. Below is their full statement.

We the Indigenous Peoples' Caucus here at the CSD-12 reaffirm our relationship to Mother Earth and responsibility to future generations to raise our voices in solidarity to speak for the protection of water. We acknowledge that water connects and regulates Mother Earth as the sacred mat of life, which is the ocean. Protection of the ocean is fundamental as the ocean is where life begins and ends. We also understand how the air, the clouds, land cover, trees, and the heat of the sun along with freshwater systems connect to oceans and the oceans to the freshwaters. This is the cycle of life.

Our relationship with our lands, territories, and water is the fundamental physical, cultural and spiritual basis for our existence. This relationship to our Mother Earth requires us to conserve our freshwaters and oceans for the survival of present and future generations. We assert our role as caretakers with rights and responsibilities to defend and ensure the protection, availability and purity of water.

We recognize, honor and respect water as sacred and the sustainer of all life. Water is the source of life, it is far more than a human right, it is a right for all of nature,

all plants and animals. Within many Indigenous cultures, our women are the traditional caretakers of water.

Targets and goals

The Indigenous Peoples' Caucus felt the need to briefly share with you our cosmovision that are our guiding principles in any discussions concerning water and its holistic value to life. As Indigenous Peoples, we offer these fundamental principles to the delegates here in our deliberation and review of the implementation of Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Joint Plan of Implementation. Reaching the targets and goals for water and its linkages to sanitation and human settlements truly are the prerequisites for future discussions addressing other target areas such as poverty eradication, protection of the environment, economic and sustainable development and building healthy communities.

An environmental crisis

Since the early 1990's, the water systems and ecosystems of Mother Earth have been compounding in change. The earth is in an accelerating spiral of climate change and global warming. When combined with the continued production and release of toxic chemicals and greenhouse gases, unsustainable energy policies, and mining practices,

all these combined, create a crisis in the natural environment and tremendous challenge for an industrialized society that is out of balance with the forces of nature.

We fully understand that only the guarantee for the world to have a continuous supply of freshwater is to ensure the integrity of nature and ecosystems from which water comes from. Many of our struggles around our rights to our ancestral territories were and are struggles to ensure that the sources of our waters are protected, that the water continues to flow as it should and its purity is maintained. This is one of the key reasons why Indigenous Peoples in all parts of the world are against large dams and why we are stopping the entry of extractive industries, such as logging, mineral, oil and gas extraction in our lands. This is why we fully support the recommendations of the World Commission on Dams report which recommends democratization of decision-making including the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples. We also support fully the recommendations of Dr. Emil Salim in his final report on the World Bank Extractive Industries Review to ban submarine tailings disposal and riverine tailings disposal and also to require free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

A healthy water system

To adequately review where the world is at with meeting the Millennium Development Goals, especially Goal 7 and 8, and the WSSD Plan of Implementation, a thorough assessment of water management has to be done, that includes looking at all stressors and vulnerabilities that prevent the maintenance of a healthy water system. Integrated Water Resource Management mechanisms are an effective tool to begin these assessments, as well as coastal area and river basin management mechanisms. A healthy water system, including ground water and aquifer systems is a necessity for alleviating poverty and inspiring economic development.

Efforts towards implementing IWRM must include governance mechanisms that are transparent, open, inclusive, equitable and are accountable to all water users, stakeholders, and especially Indigenous Peoples, where Indigenous Peoples reside in the water basin area. During the assessment process, socio-economic and cultural indicators must be included within assessment models that take into consideration cumulative impacts to water management.

Balanced principles and practices

Indigenous Peoples have much to offer within IWRM. Indigenous Peoples' traditional systems of water management and use are based upon principles and practices that balance immediate needs with the needs of the environment and other living things, plants and animals, as well as other people, and consider the sustainability for

future generations. Integrating this Indigenous Traditional Ecological Approach to IWRM would contribute to meeting the goals of the Millennium Development Goals. Indigenous Peoples have an important role in sustainable water resource management and management assessment tools. Our cultures and [traditional] knowledge are an integral part of humanity's heritage and cultural diversity. In this context, due respect must be given to Indigenous Peoples' rights. The continuing violation of our rights translates to the loss of these wholistic knowledge, management and governance systems on water and biodiversity conservation.

A water crisis

Water quality and adequate water supply, wastewater, sanitation and waste disposal systems are essential to the health of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Among the many Indigenous Peoples communities worldwide, in both developing and developed countries, safe and adequate water supply and wastewater disposal facilities are lacking. An alarming number of Indigenous Peoples have unsafe drinking water, and the numbers are growing. There is



a lack of the existence of community infrastructure programs to address the most immediate health threats, requiring the provision of clean water, basic sanitation facilities and safe housing.

Throughout Indigenous territories worldwide, Indigenous Peoples are experiencing increasing scarcity of fresh waters and the lack of access to water sources, including oceans. In these times of scarcity, governments are creating commercial interests in water that lead to inequities in distribution and prevent access to the life giving nature of water.

Over 80% of the world's remaining biodiversity is found within Indigenous Peoples' lands and territories. Indigenous Peoples represent approximately 350 million individuals in the world and make up approximately 90% of the world's cultural diversity.

Underlying the water crisis is a governance crisis and a cultural crisis.

An ethical framework based upon respect for life-giving water and its cultural manifestations is of critical importance for water policy and use. When water is disrespected, misused and poorly managed, Indigenous Peoples see the life threatening impacts on all of creation, all populations and human settlements.

With all this said, Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination and sovereignty, application of traditional knowledge, and cultural practices to protect the water are being disregarded, violated and disrespected. Already there are

eruptions of serious disputes within and among States and Indigenous Peoples and local communities over water.

Narrow scientific methods

Indigenous traditional knowledge developed over the millennia is undermined by an over-reliance on relatively recent and narrowly defined western scientific methods, standards and technologies. Indigenous Peoples support the implementation of strong measures to allow the full contribution by Indigenous Peoples to share our experiences, knowledge and concerns.

A skewed global agenda
Economic globalization constitutes one of the main obstacles for the both the recognition of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the protection of water resources. Transnational corporations and industrialized countries impose

their global agenda on the negotiations and agreements of the United Nations system, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and other bodies which reduce the rights enshrined in national constitutions], international conventions and agreements. The regard of water mainly as an economic good, and no longer a basic human right, is what underpins programs on water privatization and full-cost recovery which is undoubtedly increasing mass poverty instead of reducing it. This makes the achievement of the MDG goals more elusive each day.

We are highly critical of the role of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the water industry in promoting such concepts and programs and imposing public sector reform which has led to the privatization of water.

The world needs to reevaluate its relationship to the sacred nature of

water. To many of our Indigenous Peoples, the nature of water represents peace. There is a need to develop education curricula about the sacredness of water and the linkage peace.

Communities must declare all water sources as sacred sites

As Indigenous Peoples, we respectfully demand governmental leaders to fully recognize our rights to self-determination, and to own, control and manage our ancestral lands territories, waters and other natural resources.

The Indigenous Peoples' Caucus, along with a network of Indigenous Peoples worldwide, stand united to follow and implement our knowledge, traditional laws and exercise our right to self-determination to preserve water, and thus to preserve life for all peoples and living beings.



SIDE EVENT: 'MOTHER WATER'

The Indigenous Peoples' Caucus is hosting a film and panel presentation on Thursday, 22 April from 6 to 8pm on the 8th Floor, Boss Room of the Church Centre, 777 UN Plaza corner 44th Street (directly across from the UN)

The film is entitled "Mother Water" and highlights the adverse affects of the Peabody Energy Company's activities on the Hopi and Navajo lands, specifically on their water supply.

The panel discussion will be making the link between the unsustainable extractive industry practices, the rights of Indigenous Peoples and water.

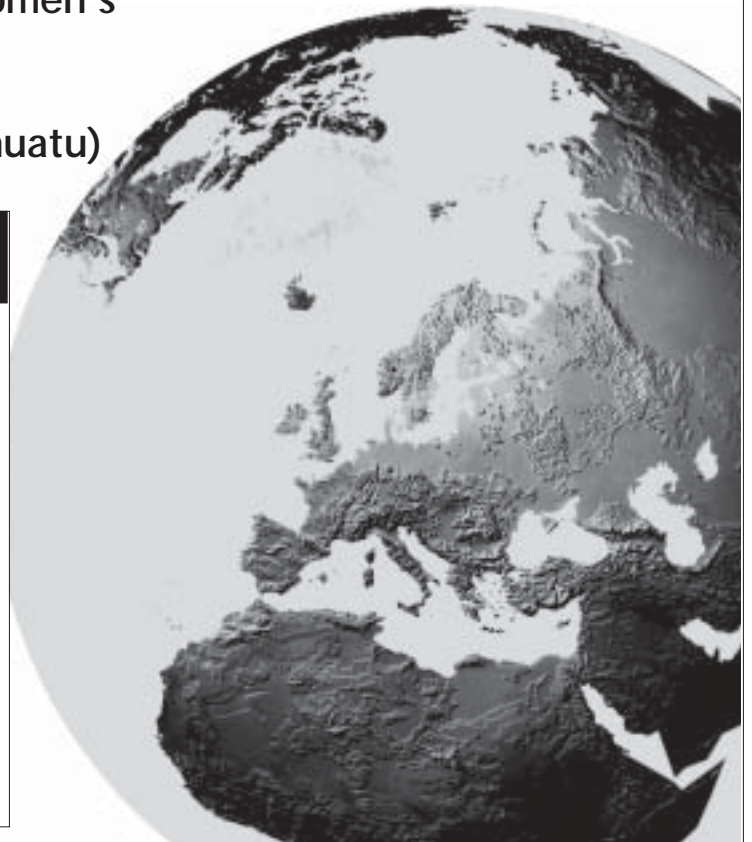
The panel of Indigenous experts will feature:

- Mrs. Wahleah Johns (Dine' Nation), Black Mesa Water Coalition, Arizona
- Mrs. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Indigenous Peoples International Centre for Policy, Research and Education (Philippines)
- Mrs. Lucy Mulenkei, Indigenous Information Network/African Indigenous Women's Organisation (Kenya)
- Motarilavo Hilda Lini, Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (Vanuatu)

CD RELEASE

"PAINT THE WORLD"

In celebration of Earth Day, on Thursday Night, 22 April starting at 9:30pm at Joe's Pub, located at the New York Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette Street the Native rock performer Robby Romero and Red Thunder will be playing, presenting a preview from their upcoming CD Release "Paint the World". This event will feature the esteemed Host Chief Oren Lyons. Tickets are available directly at the Box Office.



NGOs challenge uneven representation of SG's Advisory Panel on Water and Sanitation

by Karin Krchnak and Shiney Varghese, Co-chairs of the Fresh Water Caucus

Kofi Annan recently announced the establishment of an Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation to galvanize global action on these issues, which are central to eradicating poverty and achieving first and seventh Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The board membership (see list below) includes quite a few eminent people with proven records in trying to address the issue of reaching water to the poor (Seventh MDG on water and sanitation).

However, it is distressing to see that the list also includes names of people whose track record is not particularly favourable to poverty alleviation. Particularly noteworthy are the names of Gérard Payen, Senior Executive-Vice-President of Suez, the largest water multinational corporation, and that of Mr. Michel Camdessus, ex-IMF chief and the author of the now-infamous Camdessus Panel report. (Some may recollect that this report on financing of water infrastructure was presented at the Third World Water Forum for ratification by the ministerial gathering; However in response to the strong criticism and walkout by the civil society, it was not ratified.)

All Major groups in panel

Civil society groups at the CSD need to draw the attention of the UN Secretary General to this fact and ask him to exclude the Suez person from the list. Alternatively, we could demand that all major group representatives be included in the panel, especially since there are talks about increased civil society participation in CSD and other UN fora. We hope this issue may be taken up during discussions at CSD-12. We can ask for representation of at least a few major groups, if not all. (While all major groups have a stake in the issue, in the PrepComs and recent CSDs several major groups have been very active on the issue of water governance to help meet MDGs, in particular, NGOs, women, indigenous people, and trade unions.)

The Secretary-General has asked the Board to use the unique expertise of its members to raise awareness of water and sanitation issues, to help mobilize funds for water and sanitation projects, and to encourage new partnerships. Since the new partnerships should entail more than just business groups, it follows logically that other groups would be represented in the advisory panel. The announcement stated that additional members will be announced shortly; we are hopeful that SG will adequately address this issue.

Members of the Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation

Chairman of the Board:

- Former Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto of Japan
- H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Abou Zeid, Minister of Irrigation and Water Resources of the Arab Republic of Egypt
- Mr. Michel Camdessus, Special Representative of the President of the Republic of France for Africa
- H.E. Ms. Juanita Casta F1o, Former Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia
- Ms. Uschi Eid, Parliamentary Secretary of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany
- H.E. Mr. Angel Gurria, Former Minister of Finance of Mexico
- H.E. Mr. Ronnie Kasrils, Minister for Water Affairs and Forestry Department of Water Affairs and Forestry of South Africa
- Ms. Olivia la O' Castillo, President Philippine Pollution Prevention Roundtable
- Mr. Eric Odada, Director, Department of Geology, University of Nairobi
- Mr. Gérard Payen, Senior Executive-Vice-President, Suez
- Ms. Judith Rees, Deputy Director, London School of Economics and Political Science
- Ms. Christie Todd Whitman, Former Administrator Environmental Protection Agency of the United States
- Mr. Peter Woicke, Executive Vice President, International Finance Corporation, Washington, D.C.



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PROTEST THEIR EXCLUSION

Indigenous NGOs' participating within the CSD 12 as the Indigenous Peoples Caucus (IPC) are dissatisfied with the lack of real, measurable progress in meeting the state of implementation of the goals and targets as agreed upon in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Joint Plan of Implementation. The Indigenous Peoples gathered

here are concerned with the high degree of exclusion of Indigenous Peoples within the known review and implementation initiatives. In the Major Groups Interactive Dialogue Segment, held on Tuesday, 20 April, the IPC presented an intervention to governmental delegates and other Major Groups on critical points the IPC felt were missing within the CSD discussions. *- Tom Goldtooth, member of the IPC*

YOUTH: CONCERNED AND FRUSTRATED

By Emma Juniper

The youth is concerned and frustrated with the lack of organization and communication regarding logistics and proceedings of this CSD regarding youth involvement. This has, for example, led to the omission of the following legitimate, intervention statement yesterday morning at the statements and review session:

Thank you Mr. Chairman for recognizing our contributions and for keeping this meeting efficient. We would like to express agreement with the statements made by the NGOs, women's caucus and trade unions. We would also like to thank and commend all the countries that were able to show concise and real progress today. We are speaking today because the allocation of resources directly affects us, the youth, the future generation. We would like to make two points.

First, we would like to comment on the commonly stated position that trade must be liberalized. We would like to stress the importance of fair trade rather than free trade and encourage the WTO and all countries to be very careful that any further liberalization of trade be implemented in a way that encourages sustainable development.

Second, we would like to stress the importance of government subsidies in supporting sustainable practices such as organic small farmers, eco-villages, recycling and sustainable consumption.

The reformation of the subsidy system should be accompanied by parallel reformations in the World Bank, IMF, and GEF policies that often encourage unsustainable policies such as privatization and decreases in social services spending.

We would like to encourage these financial institutions to work with and help governments on the implementation of Agenda 21 through financing sustainable development programs and through encouraging spending on social services such as education. Finally, as always we would like to stress the vital importance of engaging youth in the decision-making processes concerning the implementation of Agenda 21. Thank you."



OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

YOUTH SAYS: Implementation starts with the man in the mirror. Throughout this article, we will be telling the story of the problems that the youth caucus has been facing.

The last two days we as youth have been wondering about what our role could be, will be and is in this new format of CSD. Frankly, at this point we are still in the dark trying to figure out what we stand for.

The main problems are:

Repetitive Cycle:

We have been discussing about same issues such as education, sustainable consumption and production patterns, poverty reduction etc. without having something solid in hand. Basically, we have been rephrasing ourselves around same old subtext.

Mainstreaming Problems:

We are more than happy to welcome the new members of the youth caucus however. However at the

same time we have to make some necessary and urgent moves. We committed ourselves to the process yet every time we have been moving backwards or stepping on the same floor because of updating new members. We urge governments, organizations and NGOs that have youth representatives to train them before they arrive so that we can be on the same page and move at the same pace because we are the only ones who can transfer the knowledge to future generations.

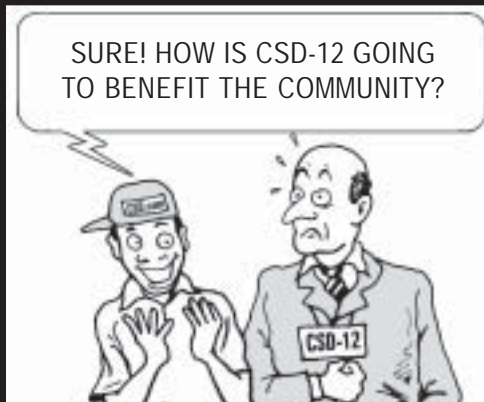
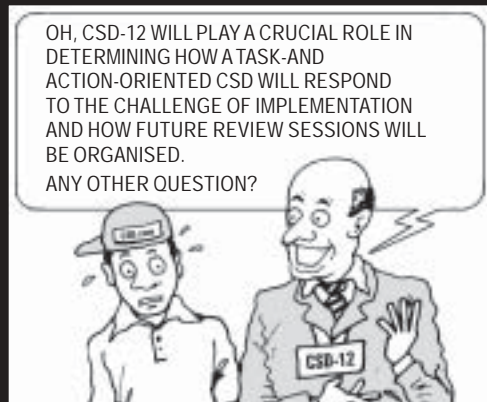
Lacking the Experts and Experienced Youth:

When we first started the CSD process, we were all new trying to figure out what to do and how to do it.

Throughout the time youth who has the knowledge and experience, who has the

ability to negotiate had to leave us due to financial reasons. Therefore, we feel like we are moving away from being effective, efficient and active.

Unequal Representation: As we always thank the governments that have official youth delegates, we also expect other governments to take the initiative to include youth. The majorities of youth members present now and before are/were from developed countries. Yet, WE WANT TO SEE AFRICAN, ASIAN, THE MIDDLE EASTERN AND LATIN AMERICAN YOUTH with us. Otherwise, we are lacking the most important part of the knowledge and experience of sustainable development process.



Contribute to *Taking Issue*

To publish articles in this newsletter, please submit your text before 5.00 p.m. to one of the SDIN facilitating organisations' staff.

SDIN Facilitating Organisations:

ANPED, The Northern Alliance for Sustainability

TWN, Third World Network

ELCI, Environment Liaison Centre International

Or send an e-mail to: kirstenkossen@yahoo.com

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