



Taking Issue

The Sustainable Development Issues Network

Volume 5, Issue 10
Friday April 15th 2005

A Daily publication of the Sustainable Development Issues Network (SDIN)
Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13)

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Meetings are held daily in Conference Room B at the United Nations Building from 9 to 10 am

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

Taking Issue is published with financial support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and with the support of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA)

<http://www.sdissues.net>

RIGHT TO WATER THREATENED TO BECOME A TRICKLE!

Save the Rights Based Approach for Present and Future Generations

By Michelle Leighton and Jeremiah Johnson

Skipping the usual morning stop at Café Vienna, NGOs hurried to conference room B, anxiously awaiting the Chair's text on Thursday. What they found was only the most discouraging news: the leadership taken by governments and the Chair in earlier versions of the Chair's

draft that referred to "**rights based approaches**" and the right to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, were erased from the page except for a single reference that was WATERED DOWN to almost nothing. What is left in the Chair's new text is now a lonely line, **para 2(A)(d)**.....a trickle of water in a dusty desert of words!

What is left in the Chair's new text is now a lonely line, a trickle of water in a dusty desert of words!

What governments can we turn to now to take up the banner of leadership needed to set the document right? We need champions to assure the text actually strengthens government commitments to the needs of the poor, underserved communities

and the thirsty everywhere. A rights based approach is the only means for ensuring truly that communities affected are empowered to work with governments to help develop more effective and *durable* water management policies and programs.

... Continued on Page 2



What Happened to our Leaders?

The Chair's report of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting included three references to rights and rights based approaches: para 29 ("shifting gears ... to a rights-based approach ... promoting policies and programmes supportive of the principles of the right to water"); para 70 ("establishing a rights-based approach to provision of sanitation"); and para 93 ("Treating sanitation as both a right and a civic responsibility is an approach that can help to shape both individual behavior and community action for improving sanitation.") After three days of discussion, with the aid of the friendly user matrix, three references to rights trickled to one lonely line: "Shift emphasis from a needs-based to a rights-based approach by making the rights based approach a part of national legislation and policy." That's it.

Then came the attack! The Chair's text eliminates reference to the right to water and "waters down" the rights based approach. **This attack is supported by only a handful of states, one hobbling giant and a few smaller ones**, anxious it seems to take this opportunity to deny billions of people around the world their human dignity in recognition of their right to water, their *human* right to water.

Why is a Rights Based Approach So Important to Securing Access to Water and Sanitation?

- A rights based approach creates a process which is participatory, inclusive and multi-sectoral.
- A rights based approach shapes a more effective and sustainable water policies by ensuring the effective participation of all stakeholder groups.
- A rights based approach needs to occupy a prominent position in CSD's outcome document.
- A rights based approach would employ a process that emphasizes accountability, transparency, sustainability,
- A rights based approach promotes the principles of non-discrimination and

This attack is supported by only a handful of states, one hobbling giant and a few smaller ones

attention to underserved and vulnerable groups.

- A rights based approach involves individuals, the private sector, NGOs, UN agencies, and international financial institutions as well as developed and developing country governments in assuring that water needs will be addressed.

A rights based approach to water policy formation is beneficial not only because it incorporates diverse views from a wide range of input and expertise, but also because it necessarily takes into account those whom policy and strategy are designed to empower, particularly the poor, women, children, indigenous people, minorities and refugees.

To be sure, a rights based approach is needed to improve access to safe drinking water in urban and rural areas. However, a rights based approach should also be used to address the critical issues surrounding sanitation and human settlements.

Why is the Right to Water so Important?

Human rights, including the right to water, are protected by internationally guaranteed standards that ensure fundamental freedoms and dignity of individuals and communities. The right to water entitles persons to sufficient and accessible amounts of water. Access to sufficient, safe, acceptable and affordable water is essential to reduce the risk of water-related diseases and provide for consumption, cooking, personal and domestic sanitation. The right to water recognizes the legal obligations for states to respect the right to water, to protect the right to water and to fulfill the right to water.

Recognizing the right to water informs individuals of their legal right to water and empowers them to realize such right. Such empowerment by the people leads to more transparent, accountable, sustainable and effective state policies and programs.

However, simply recognizing a right as a human right with specific legal obligations is not enough to ensure full enjoyment and realization for all. It takes the international community, working together, developing policy options and practical implementations to ensure all enjoy the right of equitable access and use of safe and clean water. Given the monumental task at hand, recognizing the right to water is needed to ensure participation of all stakeholders in the development of water management tools and local policies.

Call to Action for Support of the Rights Based Approach!

NGOs, leaders in our delegations, now is a time to act. Now is the time to find delegates and tell them the right to water and rights based approach is too important to be relegated to a small, tiny note among a sea of words. **The rights based approach needs to be supported by specific, identifiable actions and measures.**

These actions and measures include documentation of best practices; indicator development; promoting policies and programmes supportive of the principle of the right to water; targeted steps toward accessibility for personal and domestic use for all; and protecting water for present and future generations.

Armed with specific actions and measures, a rights based approach is the most effective and sustainable approach to all water policy options and implementation.

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NGOs react to the Chair's Draft Elements

While the delegates had their documents at hand, the NGOs waited patiently at the copy machine for their hot-off-the-press copies. There was a sense of history being made, as this was the first time in CSD history where major groups would interact directly into a negotiating process. But the heightened sense of anticipation quickly gave way to a certain sense of disappointment when people received the reports and started to read what was in it.

A commendable and short report, said some. After two weeks of reviews, one week of the IPM, delegate input, learner centre and partnership fair, this is all there is, remarked another.

The general feeling was that the document:

- failed to capture the scale and enormity and the urgency of the problem at hand;
- it did not tell NGOs who was doing what, when. (How are we going to

hold governments accountable if we have no idea what (priorities) they are to do, when (deadlines) and who they are to involve (multi-level, multi-stakeholder participation);

- it does not bring together any coherent fashion, the benefit of various valuable lessons learned;
- it does not state clearly the resources needed to achieve the goals;
- the all-important linkages and cross-cutting issues, especially reference to the three pillars of sustainable development (namely, poverty alleviation, protection of the natural resource base, sustainable consumption and production) were not at all captured nor given a prominent section in the text;
- rights-based approach was only applied to water, but not to sanitation and human settlements
- peoples' participation in planning, decision-making, implementation,

monitoring and evaluation should have been stated as an over-arching principle

A reminder

Let us pause for a moment and ask ourselves here if the decisions we are about to take at CSD 13 are really going to make a difference in the lives of the poor, the vulnerable, the marginalized and the downtrodden. If only the poor could eat these reports, we would have solved the world's problem. If ends could be achieved without means, we would have made a great start.

But, if we are contributing to global warming by flying here, if we have caused the destruction of forests for all the papers and we have contributed to New York's wastes, then it's time to have a big rethink. Bearing this in mind, the least we can do is to make the outcome of this CSD into an implementation plan that will improve the lives of all peoples.

-saradha/neth

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Earth Values Caucus and the Sierra Club present
"THIRST" a film by A. Snitow and D. Kaufman.

" Is water a human right or a commodity to be bought,
sold and traded in the global marketplace"?

When: April 18, 12:00, Conference Room B

INDICATORS AS TOOLS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Developing standards and measures for improving secure access to land and water

Even though governments and development agencies have affirmed their commitment to improving the access by poor rural men and women to land, water and related productive resources at numerous forums under voluntary guidelines and binding obligations, very little effort has been placed in monitoring and evaluating the level and nature of actual results being realized on the ground. This was the general view coming out of a side event organized by the International Land Coalition at the Dag Hammarskold Library Auditorium.

Promoting compliance

In a lively discussion by panelists and other participants drawn from intergovernmental agencies and civil society organizations at the CSD 13, there was consensus that there is a strong need to develop and implement a system of agreed standards and related indicators for monitoring legal frameworks, policies and practices on access to land and other resources by beneficiary communities. Participants called on governments and development agencies to formulate results-based strategies that could be measured within a given time frame. They also called on all stakeholders to promote compliance by countries to meet the targets they have set for themselves, especially in meeting national and international agreements. It is not enough, participants said, for governments and

other players to continue signing into agreements they have no intention of implementing.

Advantages

Clearly defined indicators will promote accountability and transparency of information as well as efforts geared towards improving the effectiveness of policies and programmes that help to reduce poverty. Indicators will ensure that financial and other resources are targeted to clearly defined projects where progress can easily be measured. They will help to raise awareness and promote the need for further progress in the implementation of national and international agreements. Indicators will also promote best practices that can be replicated in many other places. This exercise will help to avoid duplication of efforts by the different players in the development sector. The indicator approach would find favor with most policy makers as they like to deal with measurable targets and clearly defined time frames.

The broader picture

Formulating indicators is not enough in itself. Participants cautioned on the need to look at the broader issues of culture and social set-up of different communities as failure to do so could cloud the reality on the ground. For instance, participants warned, lack of access to vital resources such as water and land especially by the majority of the rural women could be

caused by deep-seated cultural norms that do not allow a married woman to inherit land from the father. The woman could end up being landless or even migrating into urban slum settlements if her husband died and she declined invitations to be inherited by her in-laws as is the norm in some cultural set-ups in Africa. There was also caution on the need to get away from academic ways of looking at sustainable development as happens in most international processes and instead bring out the real picture of issues as they affect communities at the grassroots level. Hence therefore, unless the indicators make provision for these underlying issues, such an approach is bound to be counter-productive.

Popular approach

This indicators approach has been tried by the International Land Coalition (ILC) and is beginning to bear fruit. According to Jing de la Rosa, the ILC Programme Officer on advocacy and Land Partnerships, it has already found widespread favor from most governments, UN agencies, multi-lateral institutions, civil-society organizations and other state and non-state actors.

On the face of it, the indicator approach would appear to be the way of the future. But there is need to proceed cautiously so that this is not perceived as just one of the many international buzz processes that have been abandoned in mid-stream

- By Samuel Waweru.

THINKING REALISTICALLY

Rainwater in CSD 13 Agenda

By Margarita Pacheco & Vessela Monta Moutafova

Rainwater, until recently a marginalised water supply option, is now coming into force in the political scenario. Highly empowering, highly decentralised and beyond tariff schemes, rainwater harvesting gives to the users the pride to be water managers, responsible for water quality, for the maintenance of their catchments systems and of their surrounding ecosystems.

Holistic approach

This holistic approach encourages building a new water paradigm inclusive of the needs of the poorest populations. A realistic thinking suggests they should benefit from decentralised water supply solutions. Catching rain where it falls and accepting it as a public good, will facilitate millions of people to change their daily lives.

Population growth, climate change and water mismanagement are already forcing to include alternatives to established water supply models. Inevitably rainwater will become the complementary source and, in some regions of the world, the main solution for fresh water supply, including sanitation and hygiene.

Small islands, arid and semi-arid lands, and regions with natural groundwater pollutions (arsenic, fluoride or salinity) or industrial groundwater polluters are already welcoming rainwater harvesting schemes.

In Eastern African, in India, central Mexico, north-east Brazil and China, rainwater harvesting experiences offer good examples to the world. Watershed



Rainwater in Malanadu Development Society, Kerala, India

developments, groundwater recharge, community-owned ponds and embankments, public buildings and household roof catchments are, among others, current practices showing the multiplicity of rainwater utilisation.

Both at rural and urban levels, rainwater management is the most appropriate means to ensure food security, to prevent flooding and landslides, to recharge aquifers and to serve people, livestock, wildlife and nature.

Stop using potable water

It is time to stop using clean potable water for industrial production, gardening or car washing. It is an absurdity to let safe drinking water run in toilet flushes. Incentives and all kind of encouragements must be installed to give a new direction to political thinking. New laws, regulations and financial mechanisms such as micro-credits must be introduced to promote a wide range of rainwater harvesting uses.

We call upon governments and donors in CSD 13 to support the significant inclusion of RAINWATER HARVESTING in the political agenda.



Water- buffalos in a community-owned rain-fed pond in Rajasthan, India

The International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance IRHA, created in Johannesburg during the WSSD in 2002 is engaged in positioning rainwater harvesting in the CSD 13 agenda and among government priorities. As a founding member of the Rainwater Partnership, IRHA with UNEP, IRSCA, RAIN, SEARNET, is inviting other like-minded organisations to join a world movement of convinced rainwater harvesters. For more information visit: www.irha-h2o.org

QUOTE OF THE DAY

There are two possible roads to affluence. Either produce much, or desire little.

- Anon.

A TRADE UNION TOOL

Sustainable Development Country Profiles have been made for all of the UN member states and territories, to help trade unions all around the world to become engaged in the struggle to achieve sustainable development, and hopefully make a difference.

Millions and millions of workers all over the world are members of different trade unions. In water services alone an astonishing 90% are public servants and most of them are members of trade unions. So imagine then, if all of these workers were aware of the issues concerning sustainable development. Imagine if they knew how to change their workplace into becoming more sustainable. And imagine if they also knew how their governments felt about sustainable development, and what kind of commitments governments have made.

Anabella Rosemberg from the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC) imagined it. She involved the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), and started the trade union country profile project.

Building capacity

And so, over two years, and still going on, a Sustainable Development Country Profile has been made for each of the UN member countries and territories. The first version of the profiles were circulated during CSD-12. At the request of the EU Presidency, Trade Unions then consulted with other Agenda 21 Major Groups, and have since produced a new and more complete version of the Profiles.



Anabella Rosemberg from the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC)

These are being circulated during this year's CSD.

- Most of the developed countries already have this information, says Anabella and explains:

- The reason for why we're handing the information out to the governments, is to show that we're building capacity in our camp and we want them to be aware of what we're doing. The idea is to create small dialogue tables on sustainable development where trade unions are included.

A tool for the workers

Most local trade unions will never have time or money to conduct a survey like the one talked about here. This is also one of the reasons for the project. – Quite a few of our trade unions are not a part of the process, they're not aware of the sustainability issues. These Profiles are meant to be a tool for them to get to know what's going on in their country, so they know what they have to work with. If we can reach the workers, we can modify the unsustainable patterns of consumption and production taking place throughout the world. Anabella also emphasizes that Trade Unions shouldn't, as they often are, be seen as disruptive elements by governments when it comes to issues of sustainable development. Whereas interests may vary when it comes to topics like wages, both governments and workers should be able to work together toward the same goals when it comes to sustainable development.

Unhealthy UN basement...

And finally, a comment from Trade Union Anabella, on the work environment of the CSD, the basement with the smoky café, no windows, stuffy air and very poor ventilation...: - It's not really a healthy place, that's for sure. And the fact that the cafeteria is so small is not good either, there are so many delegates... We have to unionise them!

...Ida

THE PROFILES

The sustainable development country profiles link economic, social and environmental data within a framework of sustainable development according to the following:

- **WSSD THEMES** (water, sanitation and energy), along with consumption indicators. The country is ranked according to the WWF ecological footprint per capita consumption rating.
- **A POVERTY AND LIVELIHOOD INDEX**, along with gender, education and other indicators.
- The country is ranked according to: (a) Human Development, (b) Labour Market Security and (c) Gender.
- **COMMUNITY AND WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT ISSUES**, including occupational and public health indicators. Workplace fatality is highlighted as a key indicator for sustainable development.
- **PRINCIPLES AND RIGHTS AT WORK**, including child labour and equity indicators. The country is ranked according to a Representation and Voice Security index.
- **GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT AND EMPLOYER ACCOUNTABILITY** issues, including multinational enterprises with operations in the country.

A few examples of the indicators used in the Sustainable Development Country Profiles

The top five worst countries according to the WWF Ecological footprint, which measures how sustainable production and consumption is in a given country by finding out how many earths would be needed if every country in the world was producing and consuming as this country, are:

1. United Arab Emirates (of 180 countries)
2. USA
3. Canada
4. New Zealand
5. Finland

(Source: www.panda.org/downloads/general/LPR_2002.pdf)

Representation security is about having a voice to be able to advance and defend an interest (negotiate over wages, benefits, working conditions, information gathering etc.), and about defining one's identity as a human being.

The top five best countries when it comes to **Representation Security** are:

1. Sweden
2. Denmark
3. Finland
4. Norway
5. Luxembourg

and the top five worst countries when it comes to Representation Security are:

95. Pakistan
96. Rwanda
97. Bangladesh
98. Mauritania
99. Guinea Bissau

(Source: Economic Security for a better world, ILO Socio Economic Program, Geneva, 2004.)

The five top best countries in **Labour Market Security** are:

1. Norway
2. Sweden
3. Ireland
4. Iceland
5. United Kingdom

and the bottom five countries in Labour Market Security are:

89. Bangladesh
 90. Pakistan
 91. Burundi
 92. Rwanda
 93. Congo Republic
- (Source: Economic Security for a better world, ILO Socio Economic Program, Geneva, 2004.)

The five top best countries in **Human Development** are:

1. Norway
2. Sweden
3. Australia
4. Canada
5. The Netherlands

and the bottom five in Human Development are:

172. Guinea Bissau
173. Burundi
174. Mali
175. Burkina Faso
176. Sierra Leone

(Source: UN Human Development Index, <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004>)

The five top best countries in **Gender Development** are:

1. Norway
2. Sweden
3. Australia
4. Canada
5. The Netherlands

and the bottom five countries in Gender Development are:

140. Burundi
 141. Guinea Bissau
 142. Mali
 143. Burkina Faso
 144. Niger
- (UN Gender Related Development Index, <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004>)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

NO RECOGNITION IN CSD13

Estebancio Castro and Lucy Mullenkei, Indigenous Peoples Caucus.

The Chair's text contains no single indication that Indigenous Peoples play a vital role in sustainable development. Listening to delegates speak, very few mention Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Indigenous Peoples react with the following to the chair's text:

- Governments must recognize Indigenous Peoples interest on water and customary uses by ensuring that indigenous peoples' rights are enshrined in national legislation and policy.
- States must improve water governance, which ensures effective use of existing resources and the active participation of Indigenous Peoples and all stakeholders.
- Effective development and management of water resources, efficient and equitable provision of water supply and sanitation services are essential for poverty reduction, ecosystem protection and sustainable growth.

- Indigenous Peoples and local communities must be active participants in the implementation of the Joint Plan of Implementation (JPOI) targets, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and planning and implementation of the Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) plans, the Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) initiative and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs).
- Governments should acknowledge the basic human right to water that the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ECOSOC) affirmed in November 2002.
- Recognition of this right in national policy-making and legislation is critical to bring about fundamental approach to poverty eradication.
- Water must remain in public sector and all governments commit to public sector delivery of water. There must be assurance that adequate financial resources are made available and adequate local capacity is built.
- Implement an ecological approach that incorporates Indigenous Traditional

Ecological Knowledge (TEK) principles of water management.

Due to poverty, forced resettlement and displacement due to continues conflicts in different regions, most of the Indigenous Peoples youth and young men have moved to cities causing stress and vulnerability and security risks for women and children. We therefore feel that as;

- Governments and other key players think of upgrading slums in urban areas, there is need for equitable attention of the rural areas where the Indigenous Peoples and local communities live.
- Development of action plans on human settlements and implementation of integrated land use planning and IWRM plans must be strengthened to provide security of tenure and legal protection of indigenous peoples lands and territories.
- Legal protection for Indigenous Peoples rights in development processes, planning and implementation of accessible water,



sanitation, labor, and other infrastructure projects for human settlements are some of the outstanding obstacles that must be addressed.

- Safeguards must be put in place to protect vulnerable and poor communities impacted by human settlement and involuntary resettlement, those whose well-being is closely linked to biodiversity and natural world integrity.
- Strengthen and build capacity of Indigenous and local communities applying both improved housing while focusing on indigenous Knowledge to ensure full and effective participation of the communities.
- Financing Institutions should provide funding to assist the Indigenous Peoples and the local communities to control and to manage their own services and improve their shelters for sustainable development.
- States must develop and strengthen policies, targets and institutional frameworks to improve human settlements services.
- The realization of access to basic sanitation and hygiene requires first and foremost effective policies at the national level. States members have the primary responsibility and obligation to provide effective policies, setting priorities and allocating resources. It is also important to have full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and all the stakeholders. They alone can ensure that the actions of States in this area is in the best interest of the people. Indigenous Peoples would like to propose the following recommendations:
 - Adopt strategies that explore alternatives to large-scale private sector systems and technologies by seeking innovations in formal or informal small-scale water system providers, intermediate technologies, indigenous knowledge and community-based approaches.
 - Developing and developed countries with indigenous tribal peoples must develop and strengthen clear policies, targets, financing mechanisms schemes and institutional frameworks to improve sanitation services and assure access to safe and adequate water supply to indigenous communities.
 - Water and sanitation services must be demand-responsive and people-oriented which requires the public sector and local governments to plan, implement, maintain and own the system. Governments must commit to public sector delivery of water services.
 - Rainwater is also useful for sanitation and hygiene. Indigenous Women can take care of multiple household needs and specially take responsibility on water quality and maintenance of Rain Water Harvesting systems.
 - Financial contributions need to be increased from all main sources, such as, national governments, donors, multilateral financing institutions, commercial lenders, private investors, voluntary donations and other sources, and made available to reach countries most in need for water supply, human settlement and sanitation services.
 - Capacity building and appropriate technological transfer initiatives must be implemented which recognize indigenous traditional practices of water management that are dynamically regulated systems. Capacity building includes developing education programs on Indigenous TEK of water systems.
- Political, technical and legal mechanisms on the national and international level must be developed so that the States, private sector and international financial institutions could be held accountable for their actions that threaten the integrity of water systems.
- Governments must enhance the participation and mutual partnership of indigenous peoples, in all aspects of agricultural water use, development and management of water resources, development of water and sanitation services and to recognize indigenous peoples' interests on water use, allocation and customary uses.
- Fundamental principles such as equality, equity, non-discrimination, transparency, accountability and the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and all the stakeholders are the central elements for ensuring the realization of effective policies on water, human settlement and sanitation services for the better health of our peoples.
- We must understand that responsibilities and obligations require co-related duties and that sanitation and hygiene services can be ensured only if the existence of corresponding obligations is acknowledged both at national and international levels.

French NGOs position themselves on water and sanitation for CSD 13

By Emmanuel Prinnet, Association 4D, France (www.association4d.org)

Acknowledging the relevance and importance of the CSD process, a large group of NGOs in France have been brought together by Association 4D to share the CSD's work, and discuss how best to prepare jointly for this session.

Working together in France

A first plenary meeting in February of this year led to the idea of writing a position paper, and a working group immediately began drafting a text, which was ready just in time to be released widely to the press for World Water Day on March 22nd. A copy of the text was also sent to the President of France and relevant French governmental authorities, as well as various NGO networks (ANPED; the European Environmental Bureau; etc.).

The message from a number of French NGOs

Our paper, entitled *Message from a Coalition of French NGOs on the follow-up of the Johannesburg Summit for Water and Sanitation Objectives for CSD 13, United Nations (11 - 22 April 2005)* is divided into four distinct sections for easy reading. The first section recalls some of the commitments made in Jo'burg and at the Millennium Summit (such as that all-too-famous "halving, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who do not have access to drinking water"). The French NGOs highlight the fact that inexpensive public water is primarily distributed in urban centers, while poor people in urban suburbs as in rural areas are often condemned to limited access

and high prices, with women bearing most of the grunt of lack of access to water and modern sanitation services, the situation being particularly severe in Africa. **The lack of political will to act quickly and effectively is largely to blame for this state of affairs!** The NGOs end this first section of the text on the need to "promote new tools that would enable local capacity building and enforcement", an essential component in assuring project quality and sustainability.

Specific requests

It serves no purpose to merely complain on the lack of implementation and point fingers; thus, the French NGOs have specific requests for this CSD concerning good governance. These are fully reproduced below, since they are surely the most important element of the NGO paper:

- Superficial and subterranean water resources remain public goods and, as such, should not be appropriated. Public authorities have the responsibility to organize the Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) between users, taking into account the natural constraints of the watersheds;
- Each State establish a multi-year plan of the development of services that takes into account the situation of the

most vulnerable populations and territories;

- The local level, particularly the local authorities, be recognized as the most appropriate level of action to organize, develop and manage these services;
- Sufficient means be mobilized to permit the reinforcement of public expertise through programs of capacity- and awareness-building of all local actors;
- Laws be defined relating to governance that define clearly the responsibilities of each actor in the system. The transparency of decision-making needs to become a rule in order to clarify the responsibilities of different actors intervening in the water sector (public authorities, operators, associations, etc.).
- An effective consultation process be put in place to involve all actors implies the need to consult, listen to and involve the populations quality of the service etc.);
- Mechanisms of aid be integrated into financing plans for developing capacities to contribute financially in these low-income countries;
- International financial institutions review their ways of intervention

effective subsidized programmes that facilitate access to water.

The development of services should respect several simple specific principles of good governance:

- Domestic drinking water service and sanitation services, which are undertaken in the interest of the public good, need to be in-line with principles of equal access, and social and territorial solidarity between users.
- The collective infrastructures of these services should be placed under the control of effective public authorities.
- The role of public actors close to users, such as local authorities, should be emphasized in local management.
- The organizing authority should remember to involve and inform all

the interested parties (consumers, users, citizens, employees, ...) in the conception, exploitation and evaluation of public water services. The authority in charge of the service must have the liberty to choose between different ways of management, and whether or not to involve the private sector. It is imperative that this authority be given the information to make an informed and free choice, as well as keep control over the decisions related to the water services and the water supplier.

- *This management must be periodically evaluated on the basis of both performance and service indicators, the results of which should be submitted to all interested and involved parties.*

Improving governance and capacity building are important, **but should not be**

used to avoid financing new access to water projects. The French NGOs also ask that **national legislations define the right to water for all.**

The ideas and principles stated above are not new... but today, we clearly need to move beyond these statements repeated over and over again at the various international conferences and summits.

The text has been signed to this day by 15 NGOs involved directly or indirectly in water and sanitation issues, some of which some are large federations. Others are expected to sign on at a later date as the position paper is being circulated within their networks.

The text can be downloaded from www.sdissues.net in the 'news' section of the Water Caucus.

Where are the voices of the Indigenous people?

By Anushua Shenoy and Elizabeth Walker, Sustain US

On the Sunday night before CSD began, we met as two SustainUS youth delegates who shared a common passion for incorporating the voice of indigenous people into the process of sustainable development. Excited to attend the first Indigenous People caucus on Monday, we were naively expecting a room full of like-minded people ready to discuss these issues. Much to our dismay, only two other people showed up. By Wednesday, a formal caucus meeting had yet to take place. Why are these meetings so sparsely attended? Who can and will give voice to the important concerns of this underrepresented groups?

The reality

Unfortunately, economic realities prevent many active advocates for indigenous rights to attend this conference. In addition, the technical, policy-oriented nature of this

conference does not easily address the needs and rights of these communities. However, we cannot blame those who are not here, but instead motivate those who are. We have active interests in promoting the growth of this caucus and advocating for more representation for indigenous people.

Indigenous most affected

Indigenous people represent a huge percentage of those most affected by the issues discussed at CSD-13. Water, sanitation, and human settlements all need to be addressed in rural communities and villages, many of which contain large indigenous populations. It is unfair not to include their input; their voices are just as important as the other strong voices projected at this conference. Furthermore, the international community stands to gain a great deal from indigenous cultures and lifestyles.

Often, indigenous methods of agriculture, water management, and village planning are in fact sustainable and could inspire certain outcomes of this conference.

It would be arrogant and ethnocentric to expect that we could speak on behalf of indigenous peoples; no one but the representatives from those communities has that right. However, as few have the opportunity to be at this conference for various reasons, we have a mandate to ensure that indigenous perspectives are justly represented. Instead of ignoring the issue, we need to at least use the caucus as a starting point in order to figure out how to enable representation to facilitate change.

Indigenous People caucus meetings take place at 1:00 every day in Conference Room B.

QUESTION OF THE DAY

You are an NGO on a national delegation, how does it work?



Danielle Morley – Freshwater Action Network, United Kingdom

- I get invited to the morning meetings with the UK delegation, this enables me to learn what's behind the scene. It is a way of useful intelligence gathering. I am responsible for coordinating with the other stakeholders that are not on the delegation to keep them in the loop.

In terms of limitations, I cannot make statements that go beyond or against the UK position, but I can work behind the scenes.



Lesha Witmer, Dutch Women Council, the Netherlands

-There is some tradition with including Dutch NGOs in the delegation of the Dutch government. Since Johannesburg the Dutch have included a Youth, a Women and a NGO representative in their national delegation, all three are elected by the groups that they represent and the government needs to approve them.

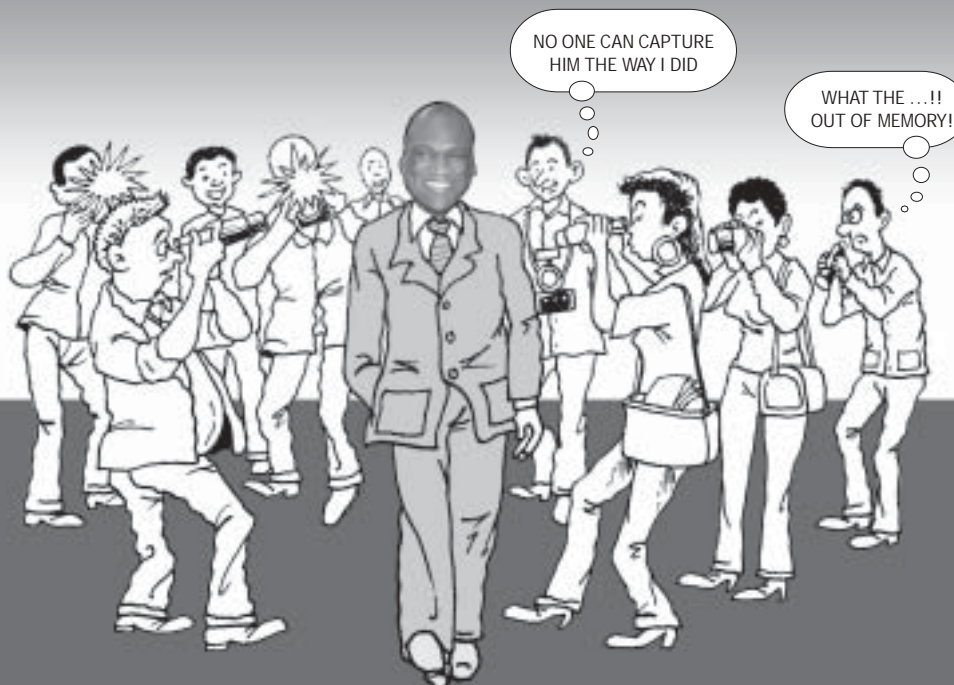
By being on a national delegation, you get a lot more information on what is going on, and most importantly you get it earlier. I get information on both the Dutch and the EU points. It gives an early opportunity to give your views. It is useful for both sides because it can help clarifying the language from both sides. Having a red badge is also helpful as it gives you access where you would be refused as an NGO, so you have better access to other governments.



Terje Kronen, Forum Norway, Norway

-We see our work in the delegation as our main channel of information; we get more information than if we would be working only with the non-governmental organisations. We have a good connection. At the moment they are setting the guidelines, and we feel it is very important to have an impact on the setting of these guidelines.

... and the Chair arrives ...



Mwangi 05

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. Or, send an email to: kirstenkossen@yahoo.com, or phone us on: +47 47 01 83 37

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