



# Taking Issue

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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 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*

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## WASTING WOMEN'S ENERGY

Women's voices are as usual not being heard in the energy debate - on any level.

By: WEDO and ENERGIA

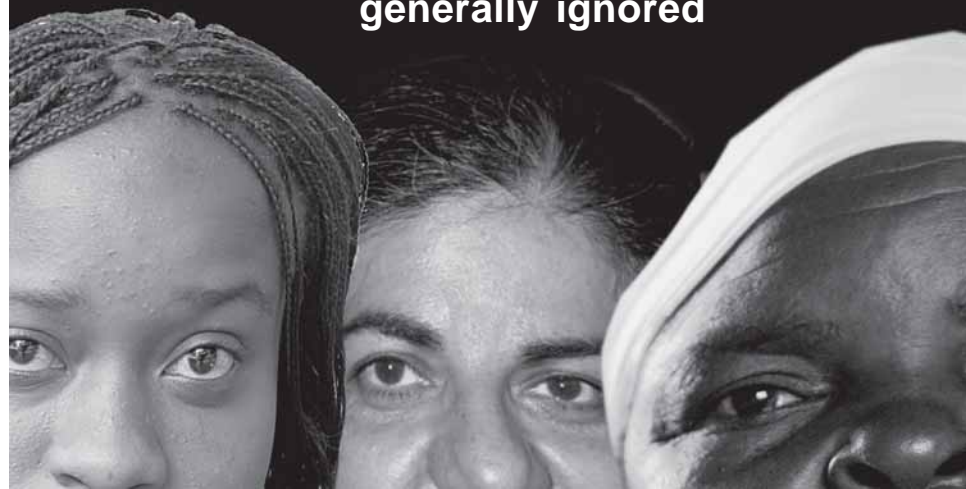
The Women's Caucus expressed frustration with the CSD-14 Secretary General's report's primary focus on economic, technical, and financial analysis, many times setting aside the social aspects of energy poverty - including the gender dimensions.

The Secretary General's report does acknowledge that poverty eradication and gender equality are critical components of sustainable development and that access to affordable, clean and modern sources of energy can contribute to the goal of gender equality. However, there is too much reliance on private sector technology-based solutions and not enough analysis of how energy

policies can promote real social benefits and empowerment. This is symptomatic of the current trend to promote market-based rather than rights-based approaches.

Women's voices are still rarely heard in energy decision-making processes and women's needs are generally ignored, even though in many countries where biomass is still the primary fuel source, women in rural areas are the dominant energy managers. Energy agencies tend to focus primarily on increasing fossil fuel supplies and expanding electrical distribution grids or industrial and urban development, rather than addressing women's needs for

**Women's voices are still rarely heard in energy decision-making processes and women's needs are generally ignored**





household energy and small-scale productive enterprises.

### Indoor air pollution

While the Secretary General’s text does not adequately address these concerns, many governments and organizations at CSD-14’s first panel discussion on Monday pointed to the need for gender-sensitive policies to improve access to energy services. A number of governments emphasized that women are most affected by the lack of energy and have the most to gain from increased access. Without convenient, affordable fuels for cooking and heating, women have to spend large amounts of time and physical energy obtaining traditional fuels (such as wood and agricultural wastes) to heat water and cook meals for their families. Cooking over indoor fires also exposes women and their children to smoky conditions that cause respiratory and other illnesses. Annually, nearly two million people, mainly women and children, die from illnesses linked to indoor air pollution - including pneumonia, respiratory illnesses, lung diseases and cancer - caused by smoke from home cooking fires.

### No attention to cooking fuels

Despite these strong statements, panelist Elizabeth Cecelski of ENERGIA (International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy) pointed out that current practices and policies still do not reflect much attention to women’s needs. There is little attention to cooking fuels in national energy policies, and few policies are subjected to gender assessment. In fact, most energy policies and programs are viewed as being gender-neutral.

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Ms. Cecelski also emphasized that it’s not sufficient to just “add energy and stir” to achieve the potential benefits to women’s lives. One of the reasons for this is that women are generally in subordinate positions in society. Their labor is less valued than that of men and they have less access to education, land, credit, and power. Relatively simple steps, such as gathering data so it reflects impacts on both men and women, can make a particular energy policy

more equitable and more effective. Several speakers at the panel discussion highlighted the importance of enabling women’s voices to be heard in energy decision-making. Women are currently under-represented in energy policymaking at all levels, including national and local governments, as well as their communities, homes, and workplaces. Greater participation of women in the design and implementation of energy initiatives will increase the likelihood that women, as well as men, will benefit from them.

### Side events on the topic:

ENERGIA, WEDO – Women’s Environment and Development Organization, Third World Network, and other organizations will build on Monday’s panel by presenting additional case studies and lessons learned from Africa, China and India at a lunchtime side event on Tuesday May 2 in conference room 6, as well as analysis of private sector trade and investment policies, women’s energy-related entrepreneurship, and the MDGs in a lunchtime side event on Wednesday May in conference room A. For further information: [www.wedo.org](http://www.wedo.org) or [www.energia.org](http://www.energia.org).

## CSD DE-MYSTIFIED - A SIMPLE GUIDE TO PARTICIPATION

Still confused about how to participate in this large and perhaps, confusing, but still fairly organized conference? Frustrated “newcomers” are having a hard time navigating. But it’s not as complicated as it seems. Here’s hoping we can help you:

First of all, come to the 9 o’clock meeting. (It’s not just for NGOs it’s open to all!). Information is shared and briefs on the previous days sessions are reported on, complicated processes are explained.

Second, remember that you have been invited to review the issues, not lobby on policy decisions. Substitute targets and dates for experiences, best practices and identified obstacles. CSD 11 decided that: “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.”

A few wise things were said at Monday mornings 9 o’clock: “The policies have all been made in the past, there’s not really a lot of new things to come in that department. Focus on commitments that haven’t been kept. Obstacles that are not talked about, and what needs to be done to overcome them.” And: “Think about what you want the policy statement from CSD-15 to say – and what you need to contribute this year, at CSD-14, in order to hopefully achieve this.”

Third, here’s where and how you can contribute:

There are official and non official segments to the CSD.

Presentations and discussions from the official segments will be reported on and the reports are part of the official outcome of CSD 14.

The following are the official segments:

The two-multi stakeholder dialogues on Wednesday May 3rd and Thursday May 11th and the closing remarks on the last Friday. This is where the major groups play the chief role:

Other official segments are:  
Thematic discussions: there are ca 20 panels, all of them have representatives from major groups. Participate in the discussions, make your thought

ful and prepared statement...

The Partnership Fairs. Participate, learn and discuss (There are 14 Partnership Fairs registered)  
The Learning Centre activities. Participate, learn and discuss (There are 17 Learning Centre activities registered)

The non-official segments are:

Side events. This is where you can pick up cutting edge information on the cluster issues. (There are close to 90 side events registered)

And you can write one or several articles for Taking Issue.

Go and visit and absorb new information at related events such as the UNEP tent outside the entrance and other events held outside the UN HQ.

Post your case studies on the CSD web-page ([www.un.org/esa/sustdev/](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/)) and e-mail your interventions to [csdmregister@un.org](mailto:csdmregister@un.org).

Information from the official and also from the unofficial segments will eventually find its way into the Matrix, an overview of information concerning the cluster issues, grouped together under the headings of:

- Barriers/ Constraints
- Case Studies
- Lessons Learned, Best Practices, Results
- Key Implementation Actors

The Matrix is also on the CSD web. It is not an official document, but it is our experience that all these information points are reflected in the

Matrix and together constitute the basis upon which the policy document for CSD 15 will be based – the document we will debate and lobby a year from now.

And finally

You can politely introduce yourself to delegates and together have a cappuccino at the Vienna Café. (Remember, you’re not trying to lobby for policy, you just want to share your experience...) and then bring forward your points and impress the official representatives. We are after all “We, the peoples...”

Still hungry for more?

Check out the following websites for information and documents about anything and everything that has to do with the CSD and the thematic clusters:

[www.anped.org](http://www.anped.org) (Find among other interesting things Taking Issue online)

[www.sdissues.net](http://www.sdissues.net) (Check out ‘Making Sense of CSD – 14 ON <http://sdissues.net/SDIN/documents/MakingsenseofCSD14-backgrounddocument2.doc>)

[www.iisd.ca/](http://www.iisd.ca/) (ENB online via ‘linkages’, a multimedia resource for environment and development policy makers)

[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/) (The works. Reports, matrix, what’s going on, you name it. This is also where you find links and instructions on how to submit case studies.)



## “WE NEED MORE PARTICIPANTS FROM THE SOUTH”

### About bringing developing country participants to New York, the vibrancy of the youth, the missing education caucus and a hope for a better future.

— Matthew Carroll, Northern coordinator, CSD Youth Caucus —

#### What is your take on the nine major groups – do they help or confuse the process?

I think they're essential to the process. The establishment of civil society having permanent seats at the table in Rio was the most substantial thing that could have happened in this process. It enables young people and all other aspects of society to participate in these meetings, knowing that they are part of the formal proceedings. And every year the governments comment on the breadth of knowledge and diversity that the major groups contribute.

I think any division you could make could never be perfect. A specific example for a major group missing is educators. As someone who works with young people on education, I really think it is a constituency that is missing. You could probably argue for others as well, it's not perfect, but it's better than just having one big 'civil society' category. There are diversions, for instance between NGOs and business communities, and the division into groups helps to separate them out to the constituencies so their voice is being heard in the discussions.

#### What is the biggest challenge for you in relation to your constituency?

In relation to youth the biggest challenge is two fold: First of all to find funding to enable participants from the south to attend. It's an ongoing issue. A few spaces are funded by the secretariat, but it's difficult to get

participants from developing countries to New York. Our second challenge is due to the transient nature of youth as a constituency. By the time people have pulled together sufficient knowledge to be really effective, they're at the other end of youth and on their way to other things.

#### Does your constituency feel represented at the CSD?

Yeah, we have over 100 people registered this year, we're definitely represented. The issue is that there is over dominance from well-funded youth organizations from the north. Yes, we're represented but we need mechanisms to increase participation from the south.

#### Is the constituency interested in the process, the issues?

Yes, hugely interested. There are a lot of new people to the process this year, when I speak to them they have an incredible energy about them. They're keen to learn, find out what's going on, they want to talk to government delegates, reach out to those who are back home... It's wonderful to have the energy of young people around. It adds a sense of vibrancy that's really nice.

#### How do the different groups work together?

One thing that we try and do as youth is get young people who are interested in other groups to also take part in those groups. In past years we've had some splendid results of

such cooperation. There is a great deal of overlapping and solidarity between the groups. But then there are also issues that are unique to the different groups.

#### Do you think that the major groups should speak with one voice?

Sometimes. I think there are situations when it has been very powerful to have a joint statement, as happened during the process of CSD-12. But sometimes the diversity of the issues necessitate that we speak as groups.

#### How do you approach the review session as opposed to the policy session?

Personally, I've approached it with the view to try to get as many of the case studies of youth projects that are working to be raised during the discussions. During this session, governments are not stressed. The thing we learnt during the last review was that governments have a lot more willingness to listen to you and learn how you've tackled issues, learn you're your experiences. I think we have their ear a great deal more than we do during the negotiating sessions. We obviously hope that they will be able to reference back to these studies and experiences next year, and that they can enter into the final text.

#### If you could change something about the CSD process, what would that be?

Apart from having a youth chair person I think I'd go back to the biggest obstacle that we face: To get increased funding for under represented communities from the south.

#### Make a statement:

Young people around the world are working hard right now in communities and on campuses to build the clean, renewable energy future that will safeguard future generations. Some of us are here at CSD to share the experiences and challenges we face in this work. Talk to us, hear what we have to say, and most of all remember why we are here: the hope of young people for a better future.



# Why Youth are here

**Delegates and many major groups are often a bit surprised to hear and see youth at CSD. They seem to wonder what young people are doing here. Well, this is why youth is present:**

By: Gabi Spitz and Sanne van Keulen, youth delegates from The Netherlands, and Nadine Braun and Carsten König, youth delegates from Germany.

### 3 Reasons Why CSD14/15 is Important to Youth:

1. The issues we discuss today, have great impact on future generations. Most people that are present at CSD14/15 will not see the consequences of the decisions taken - like global warming, short-running natural resources and ecological destruction. The youth of today will.
2. Walking around in the UN 'dungeons' where CSD is held, the number of youth present (there are between 75 and 100 youth here at CSD14), makes it clear that many young people find CSD very important. All of them are engaged in sustainable development and working hard on the best possible outcomes. Nevertheless, there are more voices to be heard, especially the voices of those that are already highly affected by the problems we discuss today.
3. Last but not least, there are 2.8 billion people under the age of 25

and it will take only a few more years until youth represents half of the world's population. Youth is therefore one of the biggest stakeholders in sustainable development.

### 4 Reasons Why Youth is Important to CSD

1. Youth have proven to be engaged and effective lobbyists in various areas of sustainable development, for instance for cheaper fares of public transportation, environmentally friendly cars and the creation of youth employment opportunities.
2. The word 'development' implies continuity. It is therefore only logical to involve youth in the CSD process, as this is the only way to make sure that positive steps that are taken today, will be sustained and continued in the future.

3. Figuratively, youth are the biggest source of untapped energy and innovation to address issues of sustainable development. Youth can act as the conscience of policymakers and politicians, as they tend to see things that are sometimes overlooked by others. And, with their positive thinking and creative ideas they can put issues on the agenda in a refreshing way.
4. Besides women, youth are the only major group that is not defined by social or economic background. The only criteria to be youth is your age. Therefore youth represents the variety of society within their group and are qualified to bring in a more comprehensive view.

We hope, that from now on, when you hear or see youth at CSD, you'll make sure to keep your eyes and ears open!



*Youth coordinator  
Matthew*

# GREEN Hydrogen is the solution!

## It is no longer a question of whether – it's when

By: Alice Slater, GRACE Policy Institute

Take a minute and think about the following:

- Renewable energies can satisfy 100% of the world's energy needs and the technology to harness them is available now.
- Every thirty minutes enough of the sun's energy reaches the earth to meet the world's energy demand for an entire year.
- The wind has the potential to meet all of our planet's energy needs five times over.
- Geothermal energy from beneath the earth and tidal and wave energy can also be harnessed in abundance.
- When the sun doesn't shine and the wind doesn't blow, we can convert that safe earth energy into hydrogen fuel for a steady flow of limitless power.
- When hydrogen is used in fuel cells for cars, trucks, and buses, the by-product is heat and water vapor – pure enough to drink.
- Hydrogen is plentiful and available right now at competitive costs – if supported by incentives and subsidies comparable to those given to fossil and nuclear fuels.

Now stop thinking about these things, and start acting on them.

Harnessing hydrogen can be key to achieving sustainable development goals and eliminating poverty. Hydrogen would enable us to balance the world's growing demand for energy with the imperative to mitigate climate change and avoid the toxic legacy of nuclear power, which affects not only our health and the environment, but any prospects for world peace. Yet, as the title "green" hydrogen implies, some approaches to making hydrogen fuels are green,

while others are green-washing. The hydrogen Freedom Car President Bush proposed in 2003 is expected to derive 90% of its hydrogen from fossil fuels, with the remaining 10% coming from nuclear energy sources.

### Doing it sustainably

To realize the benefits of hydrogen fuel, it is critical to generate it sustainably. The beauty of hydrogen fuel is that it can easily be created with clean, safe renewables, rather than with fossil or nuclear power. Electrolyzers – the most advanced of which can split water at an 80% efficiency rate – can already be run on geothermal, wind, and solar-generated electricity, thereby creating a 'closed circle' of renewable energy production. This eliminates oil dependency, greenhouse gas emissions and nuclear waste, and saves vast amounts of water. Hydrogen uses only one third the amount of water needed to produce gasoline fuel.

Even so, the US government and International Finance Institutions have yet to demonstrate serious commitment. US federal royalty relief, tax breaks and other incentives for fossil, nuclear and biomass energy sources totaled about \$27 billion for 2005 - more than enough to equip all 100,000 gas stations in the United States with hydrogen fuel dispensers. The World Bank allocated just 9% of its energy financing to renewable projects last year.

**"It's not a question of what the fuel is in the future; it's a question of the pace of change."**

Globally, \$250 billion in subsidies went to unsustainable fuel last year.

### Doing it now!

Nevertheless, there are cases of hydrogen use working now. Latin America's first wind-to-hydrogen production plant opened last year in Argentina. In northeastern Spain, wind-to-hydrogen is being considered an alternative to costly grid reinforcements. It is also under consideration in Scotland, Ireland and North Dakota, USA. Iceland, which plans to become a fully "hydrogen society" by 2050 using its geothermal resources, began using hydrogen buses in 2003. China will deploy fuel cell buses (FCBs) during the 2008 Olympic Summer Games, and plans to have a fleet of 20,000 FCB's in operation by 2010. Japan intends to have a fuel cell train in operation by the end of 2007.

### Doing it soon:

In Europe, where gas is already around \$5 per gallon, hydrogen fuel is already cheaper by half. The EU is implementing a plan to provide hydrogen fuel and infrastructure to a third of its population by 2020. By one estimate, this would cost • 3.5 billion (US \$4.2 billion) – less than the EU spends on nuclear energy subsidies in a year. California's "Vision 2010" project establishes a preliminary network of these hydrogen fuel stations to serve the majority of Californians by 2010. A recent US Department of Energy Report predicts that, "By 2030, centralized wind- and solar-based hydrogen systems (electrolysis and other pathways) can produce enough hydrogen to virtually eliminate petroleum energy use and greenhouse gas emissions from the light-duty transportation sector assuming fuel cell vehicles displace all internal combustion engine and diesel vehicles." Major car manufacturers such as Honda, Mazda, Toyota, and DaimlerChrysler, will be mass-marketing hydrogen cars by early next decade, if not sooner.

According to Pete Pithers of Ford Motors, "It's not a question of what the fuel is in the future; it's a question of the pace of change."



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IF ONLY OUR LOCAL POWER COMPANY WERE AS GENEROUS AS THE SUN! A SAFE 93 MILLION MILES FROM YOUR HOME, THIS SMALL STAR IS THE ONLY NUCLEAR REACTOR WE'LL EVER NEED. EXTRA BONUS: A SOLAR-POWERED PLANET WILL BE A PLANET AT PEACE.

**Green Hydrogen: Towards a Sustainable Energy Future, Tuesday May 2nd 2006, 6.15 - 7.45 pm Conference Room A**

## LET GOD DESIGN THE CLOUDS.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE SO...WELL...SO...TWENTIETH CENTURY! AND SO IS NUCLEAR ENERGY, FOR THERE IS NO FIREWALL BETWEEN NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS. DON'T TAKE NUKES FOR AN ANSWER.



**Myths and Realities: Nuclear power, climate change and the proliferation of nuclear weapons, Wednesday May 3rd 2006, 1.15 - 2.45 pm Conference Room 6**

## ENERGY AS FREE AS THE WIND

MOTHER NATURE IS A BLOWHARD. THE POTENTIAL ENERGY BLOWING IN THE WIND IS EQUIVALENT TO THE OUTPUT OF 4,000 NEW NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS. EXTRA BONUS: TERRORISTS DO NOT TARGET WINDMILLS. A WIND-POWERED PLANET WILL BE A PLANET AT PEACE.



*Hosted by Grace Policy Institute and Friends of the Earth*

## SIDE EVENTS

**Nuclear power is not sustainable - for our health, our communities and our future, Friday May 5th, 1.15 - 2.45 pm Conference Room 9**

## Question of the day

**What do you do personally to try and make your consumption sustainable?**

**Karin Wallin, Red Cross Youth Representative:**

"I'm involved in the fair trade movement in Sweden. I try to buy organic and fair trade produced food. I also do a lot of lobbying with local politicians through the Swedish Red Cross Youth. A lot of things are just natural for me, things I've grown up doing, coming from Sweden. Things such as separate garbage collection and not wasting water is something you do without even thinking about it."

**Jürgen Maier, Director of the German NGO Forum on Environment and Development:**

"I produce my own electricity with a PV (photovoltaic) system on my roof. And I own shares in an organic vineyard."

**Andrea Innamorati, advisor to Italy:**

"I only buy organic food. I try to look for 'Demeter', they make biodynamic products with no substitutes or chemicals. It is a result of a complete system of agriculture. At the office I try to not use paper on only one side, I always use both sides. I take the train to work. Here in New York it's difficult. There is no separate collection of garbage, and at the hotel they change the towels every day. I also tried to pay for my CO2 emissions flying over here, certain countries have programmes where this is possible, but I was not able to. But I walk to the UN every day."



### Contribute to Taking Issue

To publish articles in this newsletter, please submit your text before 7.00 p.m. to one of the SDIN facilitating organisations' staff. Or, send an email to: [idaib@yahoo.com](mailto:idaib@yahoo.com), or phone us on: +47 47 01 83 37

**SDIN Facilitating Organisations:** The Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED), Environment Liaison Centre International (ELCI) and Third World Network (TWN)

Public Listserv SDIN-Info@sdissues.net, for general news and announcements about SDIN-related events and other important items.

SDIN Online Discussion Forum: [www.sdissues.net/cs/forums/](http://www.sdissues.net/cs/forums/)

*The editors reserve the right to refuse articles or edit for length and clarity*