



RIO+20
United Nations
Conference on
Sustainable
Development

inside:

An oceans rescue plan at Rio

Sustainable energy for the people:
Lessons from Fukushima

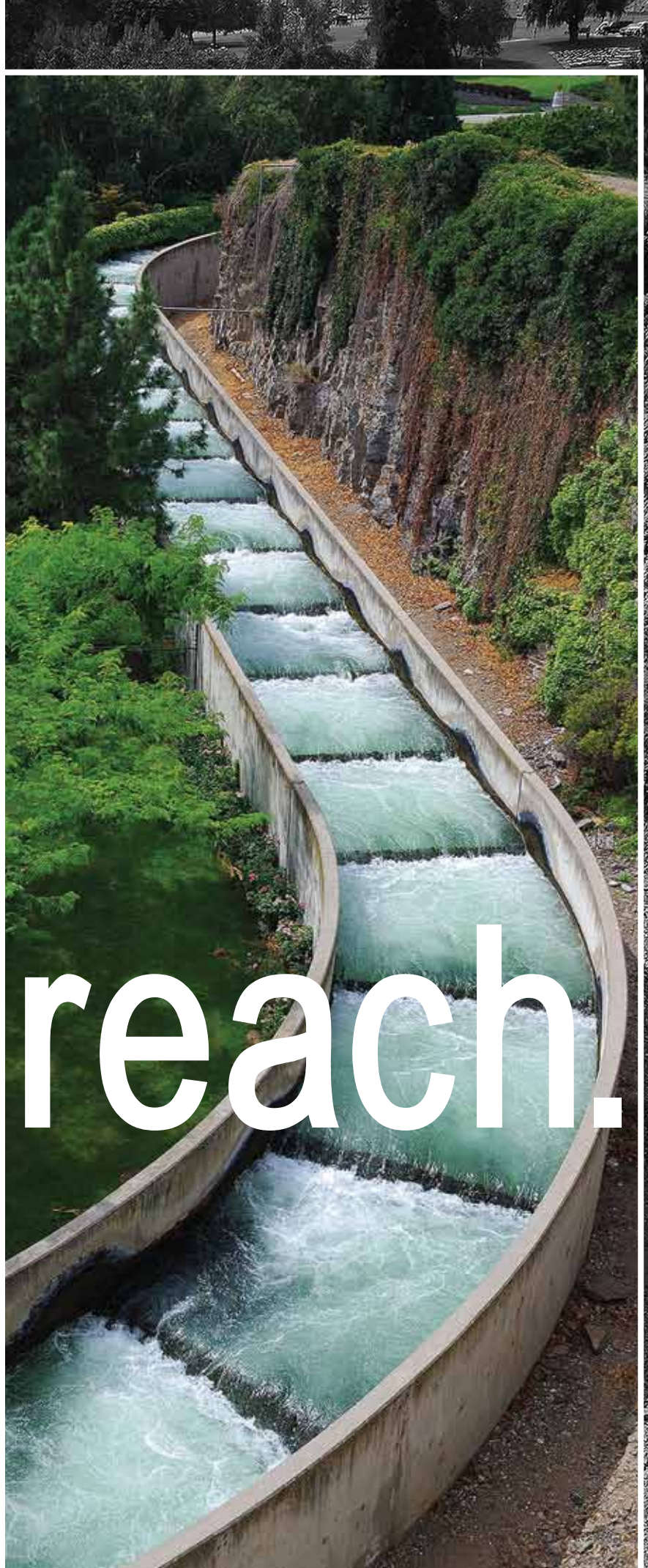
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pic: Keith Park

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About Stakeholder Forum

Stakeholder Forum is an international organisation working to advance sustainable development and promote democracy at a global level. Our work aims to enhance open, accountable and participatory international decision-making on sustainable development through enhancing the involvement of stakeholders in intergovernmental processes. For more information, visit: www.stakeholderforum.org

Outreach is a multi-stakeholder publication on climate change and sustainable development. It is the longest continually produced stakeholder magazine in the sustainable development arena, published at various international meetings on the environment; including the UNCSD meetings (since 1997), UNEP Governing Council, UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) and World Water Week. Published as a daily edition, in both print and web form, Outreach provides a vehicle for critical analysis on key thematic topics in the sustainability arena, as well as a voice of regional and local governments, women, indigenous peoples, trade unions, industry, youth and NGOs. To fully ensure a multi-stakeholder perspective, we aim to engage a wide range of stakeholders for article contributions and project funding.

If you are interested in contributing to Outreach, please contact the team (gmacdonald@stakeholderforum.org or acutter@stakeholderforum.org)

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An oceans rescue plan at Rio

Sofia Tsenikli
Greenpeace

Whilst the Brazilian text that came out on Saturday was a grave disappointment as a whole, it is encouraging that oceans has been recognised as one of top issues for the Summit and a concrete commitment to deliver a High Seas Biodiversity Agreement was included in Paragraph 163.

Of course, a place at the top also signals that this issue is one of the most contentious. A large majority of countries – from South Africa, Brazil, the EU, India to Fiji, for example – support a high seas biodiversity agreement to protect our oceans, but progress is being fiercely opposed by the US along with Canada, Russia and Japan.

The high seas cover more than 64% of the oceans, belonging to not one country, but to all of us. However, with rights also come responsibilities. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) sets out clear obligations for countries operating in international waters, including the responsibility to protect ocean life from potentially harmful activities, such as fishing and energy exploration.

Unfortunately, up until now, emphasis has been put on the right to exploit the oceans, rather than the responsibility to protect them. This has created a 'Wild West' approach to oceans management. There are regulations in place that govern fishing, drilling or mining in international waters, but when it comes to protecting them – through creating marine reserves free from extractive activities – there is simply no clear way to do so. A new agreement is urgently needed to ensure conservation and sustainable use of our oceans, to stop uncontrolled ocean plunder and to deliver future generations healthy oceans and viable fishing industries for the long-term.

The US prides itself protecting its national waters. Unfortunately, it has been adopting a hard line, opposing any progress in protecting the high seas.

The US government argues that there are already enough international agreements to protect our oceans. They then worryingly talk about having Regional Fishery Management Organisations (RFMOs) take up the task of creating marine reserves. International bodies charged with managing fisheries simply cannot accomplish this. These fisheries management organisations have not been able to end overfishing, instead they have brought some fish stocks to the verge of collapse through failed policies that allow destructive fishing to continue unabated. Although properly implementing existing ocean protection rules would greatly improve the situation, this alone will never be enough.

The US has also opposed a new biodiversity agreement that would fill the gap regarding the access and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of marine genetic resources (MGRs). As one of the top countries in support of MGR claims, they have no interest in sharing the benefits of the use of these genetic resources with developing nations that are not yet in a position to gain from them.

The High Seas Alliance – a coalition of 26 Oceans NGOs, including Greenpeace, are at Rio+20 to support the nations calling for oceans protection. Oceans give us oxygen, food and jobs: if we want to save them for future generations, we need the US government to stop hindering progress and deliver an oceans rescue plan here in Rio ■

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Sustainable energy for the people: Lessons from Fukushima

Akira Kawasaki
Peace Boat

The Energy section of the Outcome Document currently under negotiation states that 'access to sustainable modern energy services' is necessary for fulfilling 'basic human needs'.

The UN Secretary General's call for 'Sustainable Energy for All', focusing on access to energy, energy efficiency and renewable energies, is duly noted. While these points are worth supporting, several concrete issues from the experience of Fukushima must also be considered.

The meltdown of the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake on 11th March 2011, not only reminded people globally of the fundamental dangers of nuclear energy, but also highlighted the structural problems of this particular industry.

First, the system of nuclear power generation has no local community ownership. The Fukushima plant was generating electricity to supply to Tokyo, not for the local people of Fukushima. This system was created by the central government through huge financial handouts. However, it is the people of Fukushima who were most affected by the accident, and continue to suffer serious damage from which it is extremely difficult to recover.

Second, it is now clear just how closed and exclusive the 'nuclear village' comprising of government and industry is, and how unaccountable it is to the people. When the Fukushima accident occurred, the Japanese government did not disclose its data predicting radiation diffusion – resulting in unnecessary exposure of citizens to radiation.

The post-accident investigation process has revealed that although safety deficiencies of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Plant were continuously reported internally by staff, no improvement measures were taken. This needs to be understood, not merely as a problem of the specific corporation TEPCO, but as a structural problem common to electricity corporations that are not accountable or open to the local people.



pic: John O Dyer

Third, however, is the fact that energy conservation and efficiency is indeed feasible. Following the Fukushima accident, Japan's 54 nuclear reactors have been shut down one by one, and finally Japan reached zero nuclear power operation in May 2012. The Japanese government has overridden massive opposition and decided recently to restart two of these reactors, but even despite this, it is anticipated that Japan will have very few, if any, operating nuclear reactors for the foreseeable future.

Some may wonder how Japan, which until the accident had relied on nuclear power for one third of its electricity, can achieve this. While acknowledging with appreciation the international support received following the disaster, the ability to cope with such a reduction in electricity supply was brought about by citizens from all backgrounds coming together and coordinating to conserve and use energy more efficiently. During the summer of 2011, Japanese households and businesses were able to reduce their electricity consumption by 15%.

Fourth, is the high potential of the contribution of renewables to the regional economy. Following the disaster, many Japanese municipalities have expanded activities to break away from the dependence on nuclear energy and introduce more renewable energy projects, which are starting to show great progress. The recent International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) report, which shows the huge potential of sustainable energy for job creation, directly coincides with the activities being undertaken throughout Japan.

To summarise, the lessons learned from Fukushima for the world's energy future are as follows: The energy system symbolised by nuclear power generation not only has high risks regarding safety, it is also centrally monopolised, and prone to wasteful spending. It is necessary to establish a system with local community participation and ownership, built upon renewable energy sources founded on traditional wisdom. It is these responsible, sustainable policies which will provide security and accessibility for future generations. Excuses of lack of sufficient technology are no longer relevant, and such a crucial policy shift is indeed possible with sufficient political will ■

Unburnable carbon

Victoria Johnson

nef (the new economics foundation)

Over the past five years, if not more, the concept of unburnable carbon - the fossil fuels that should not be burnt because, if they are, the risk of dangerous climate change would to unacceptable levels - has been infecting the minds of scholars, campaigners and business leaders. At first it was simply an idea - albeit a no-brainer - contemplated over gritty coffee or watery beer at UN climate conferences, during heated debates or by the occasional columnist.

'Ladies and gentlemen, I have the answer', wrote campaigner and Guardian columnist George Monbiot in late 2007, 'incredible as it might seem, I have stumbled across the single technology that will save us from runaway climate change!...Already this technology, a radical new kind of carbon capture and storage, is causing a stir among scientists. It is cheap, it is efficient and it can be deployed straight away. It is called...leaving fossil fuels in the ground'.

But despite the past 20 years of climate talks, development of the renewable energy industry and the growing impacts of climate change, investing in fossil fuels is still considered to be financially attractive by the vast majority of market actors. And, according to a recent analysis by new UK-based NGO, Carbon Tracker, there is now more carbon contained in fossil fuel assets listed on the world's stock exchanges than can ever be burnt if humanity has any intention of staying below 2 °C (approximately 1.2 °C above today's global average temperature).

In a report to be published later this year, the Climate Change and Energy, and Finance and Business teams at nef (the new economics foundation) interviewed 17 industry experts to explore why investments into carbon intensive sectors are still not considered to be high risk, and what would be the ideal mix of policy interventions to change investor behaviour. Overwhelmingly, respondents cited the lack of 'loud, long and clear' commitments to climate change policy as a key reason for continued investment into the fossil fuel extractive industries. The lack of political certainty at the national and international levels, and high policy risk from indecisive policy makers means that investors are tending to stick to what they know rather than invest in alternatives, such as renewable energy. But, short-termism, climate change denial, disconnect between investors and the final decision-maker, and the herding mentality of investors were also seen to be important factors.

While 100% renewable energy systems are still viewed with some scepticism, a growing number of studies suggest that not only is it possible but that barriers are primarily political and social, rather than technological and economic. This echoes the responses from our interviewees.

In other words, technically, nothing prevents us from a 100% renewable energy future, and the Earth Summit offers the opportunity for governments to increase political certainty so finance flows out of the anachronistic fossil fuel sectors, to technologies that can harness free clean energy from wind, water and sunlight ■



The consolidated text: A diluted commitment to water?

Lis Martin
Progressio

The consolidated text has both positives and negatives when it comes to water. But as it stands, the text is not yet waterproof.

First up, the positive. The text's acknowledgement of the centrality of water to sustainable development is very welcome. So too is the recognition that water is a scarce resource, which needs to be used much more efficiently and with less waste. Significantly, the text goes beyond recognising the need for access to safe, clean drinking water and basic sanitation to 'stress the need to significantly improve the implementation of integrated water resource management at all levels'.

At Progressio, we work alongside some of the poorest and most vulnerable communities in the world. They are particularly disadvantaged when there is competition over scarce water resources. We know that water scarcity already affects 2.8 billion people and global demand for fresh water will soon exceed supply by 40%. So it is vital that Rio+20 promotes the participation of all stakeholders in water management if future water use is to be fair, equitable and inclusive of the poorest people. What does that look like?

María Yolanda Rojas Ávila farms in the watershed of the Lurin river, near Lima, Peru. Like many in her community, and for small-scale farmers around the world, water is essential for lives and livelihoods. Without water, people, animals and crops cannot survive.

Water scarcity for María Yolanda and other local farmers is exacerbated by poor management, both on the part of the farmers, as well as the state and private sector. As she illustrates, knowledge and participative co-ordination are needed to manage water effectively. The proper implementation of integrated water resource management, an evolving body of theory and practice, is essential:

"I'm taking some practical steps to make sure my grandchildren inherit a better world. I participate in activities such as the Concejo de Cuencas [the water users' organisation at watershed level]. This organisation gives small water users an equal voice in the management of our watershed, because until now it is the big companies and the State who make all the decisions, and we are not even told about what they decide".

The version of the Outcome Document we now have is in many respects a statement of intent. We know that on many issues, Rio+20 must not be seen as the end of the road, but rather the launch of a new trajectory for sustainable development.

But the Outcome Document needs to go one step further than name-checking, and specifically secure the participation for poor and marginalised people like María Yolanda in the management of their own water systems. This will require action by government and business to enable participatory approaches to water governance, the empowerment of communities and institutions at the local level, the inclusion of women in decision-making and management of water that is ecosystems-based and appropriate.

Bottom line, the text lacks commitment on water. Whilst it is to be expected that the agreed version will be reasonably vague in terms of how to implement 'acknowledgements', 'recognitions' and 'reiterations', it is not enough to say that we need to think carefully about water. Immediately after Rio+20's closing statements, States must commit to act on water management with the participation of the poorest at its heart. The launch of the Status Report on the Application of Integrated Approaches to the Development, Management and Use of Water Resources to the UNCSD Rio+20 Conference by UN Water on Tuesday will be an opportunity to discuss how and where this approach has been successfully (and unsuccessfully) enacted.

The current text also makes the adoption of measures to address water scarcity contingent on 'national priorities, policies and circumstance'. But Progressio works with communities that cannot wait for national priorities to align with the local priority of securing sustainable access to water. The Outcome Document therefore must motivate action. Otherwise, when it comes to the issue of water, Rio+20 will have failed to secure a waterproofed future for poor people and communities ■

MORE INFO

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Water day in Rio: UN global leadership is responding

Josefina Maestu

UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication

UN-Water is an interagency coordination mechanism that brings together 30 UN member agencies, water programmes, and 26 partner organisations. For the last year UN-Water has been coordinating and organising its presence and position for Rio+20. Today, the 19th of June (in P3-6 Riocentro), is the day in which this will all come to fruition.

Heads of UN Agencies, Heads of State, Ministers, Heads of key partner organisations and major groups will gather today as the UN comes together to 'recognise progress and take action for the future we want'. There will be the presentation of **the UN-Water Report on Water Resources Management**, specifically produced for Rio+20, as well as the launch of the UN system drive for universal access.

The Water Day will bring the UN-Water contribution to the Rio+20 Conference, building on the UN-Water Statement submitted to the Rio+20 Secretariat in November 2011 and the UN-Water Deliverables submitted in March 2012 through the United Nations High Level Committee on Programmes.

The UN Water statement for Rio highlights the importance of sustainable water management and the efficient provision of adequate drinking water and sanitation services, investment in water infrastructure and water based adaptation to climate change, for successfully achieving a green economy. It also emphasises the importance of targeting the poorest to help lift them out of poverty and realise their human right to basic drinking water and sanitation services. Water policy and institutional reform are encouraged, in order to promote efficient water use, protect freshwater ecosystems and achieve water, energy and food security. Increasing water resilience and sustainability of cities is identified as a priority area, as is agriculture, where there is a need to increase efficiencies along the whole food supply chain.

The Water Day at Rio+20, organised by UN-Water, is seen as an opportunity:

- To demonstrate to the broad range of stakeholders, particularly decision makers, that some of the major challenges facing humanity today relate to water management; this will be based on findings of the major UN-Water reports.
- To identify major water issues that connect with the themes of the Rio+20 Conference, particularly its link to the green economy.
- To focus on the means of implementation, in particular the action areas where UN organisations and agencies can act together through UN-Water.

At the Water Day following the welcome address and key note of UN-Water Chair Mr. Michel Jarraud and UNEP Executive Secretary, Mr. Achim Steiner, there will be a high-level panel discussion on the benefits of Integrated Water Resources Management for a sustainable and equitable future. The themes for the other three high level panels relate to some of the issues that have been under discussion during the Prep Coms. An opportunity, then, to present some very thought provoking topics for dialogue, information sharing and exchange. Participants will be able to explain and understand arguments on the basis of information and substance. The other themes for the UN-water day are: Global commitments on universal access to water and sanitation; Water and sanitation as a human right and Water cooperation. The 2013 International Year of Water Cooperation could be a first concrete step to take forward the Rio+20 outcomes ■



pic: Alex Eflon



Civil society statement on Sustainable Energy for All

Over 100 groups from around the world have called on governments and the UN to support a more ambitious, accountable and people-driven Sustainable Energy for All initiative at Rio+20. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his initiative's High Level Group are in Rio to announce private sector, civil society and government 'commitments' to the initiative, as well as decide its future beyond Rio – the signatories believe SE4ALL must avoid being captured by corporate interests and must become a truly transformational initiative if it is to meet the urgent challenges of energy poverty and climate change. The calls come from a broad range of civil society groups from North and South, representing environment, development, women, indigenous peoples, farmers, faith and labour, as well as decentralised renewable energy enterprises.

The statement calls for:

- Democratic accountability and a post-Rio consultation process
- Country-level SE4ALL strategies and civil society participation
- Prioritising of universal access through decentralised clean, safe, affordable and reliable energy
- Delivery on climate targets and clear technology standards
- International leadership and support, in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities

Extract:

'The initiative as it stands is inadequate and non-inclusive and will not achieve the level of change required to tackle both energy poverty and dangerous climate change. To date, multinational corporations have been given the biggest role, while the very voices of those it intends to help have been excluded at the highest levels. We call on the UN Secretary-General to ensure a meaningful, accountable and people-driven process at global and national level that involves the energy poor, affected communities and vulnerable and marginalised groups. In turn, this can deliver the higher levels of ambition needed to bring about effective change. Without such engagement, the initiative risks being ineffective and illegitimate'

Reaction from signatory organisations:

'The world agrees that our energy system is broken. It is not working for the billions without electricity or clean cooking facilities, and it is not working for the planet as it sends us hurtling towards a climate crisis. If the UN Secretary-General is serious about providing sustainable energy for all, he needs to listen to people around the world calling for an ambitious and people-driven initiative that can really transform our energy system, not lock the poor into another generation of dirty energy.'

Pascoe Sabido, Friends of the Earth Europe

'Any global energy initiative that does not put people in the driving seat is bound to fail in addressing energy poverty. Instead of looking at community owned and managed energy, it pushes more privatisation and makes sure our energy system and our democracies remains in the hands of the 1%. Corporate interests have ensured that the world is actively avoiding a rapid shift to clean and renewable energy.'

Lidy Nacpil, Jubilee South Asia/
Pacific Movement on Debt and Development

'Now more than ever we need to ensure that the poorest people in the world, especially in Africa, can enjoy the basic rights that citizens in rich countries take for granted. We need to ensure that the people of Africa can enjoy clean and affordable energy – an energy future that helps our people and is not solely about delivering even bigger profits for dirty energy companies.'

Augustine B Njamnshi, BDCP Cameroon,
Pan African Climate Justice Network

In this year of Sustainable Energy for All, governments at Rio+20 have the opportunity to commit to ending the scandal of energy poverty worldwide by supporting an urgent push to provide clean and affordable energy to deliver lighting, cooking, vaccine cooling and power small enterprise. To achieve this goal it will be essential that poor communities are viewed as partners in delivering the energy they need, not just as customers for power companies.'

Alison Doig, Christian Aid

MORE INFO

List of signatories and the full statement: www.t.co/jgK8D38x

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Sustainable energy in the green economy: Some lessons from Korea and Germany

The Rio+20 Committee of Korean Civil Society and ANPED

In the discussions on the green economy text proposed by the Brazilian government, a Korean delegate presented Korea as a good example of a country that is truly implementing the green economy.

He was happy to share their positive experiences and supported the EU proposal for a capacity development mechanism. However, he also stressed that green growth should be reintroduced into the text. But what actually is green growth, what will be powering it, and how good is the best practice in Korea?

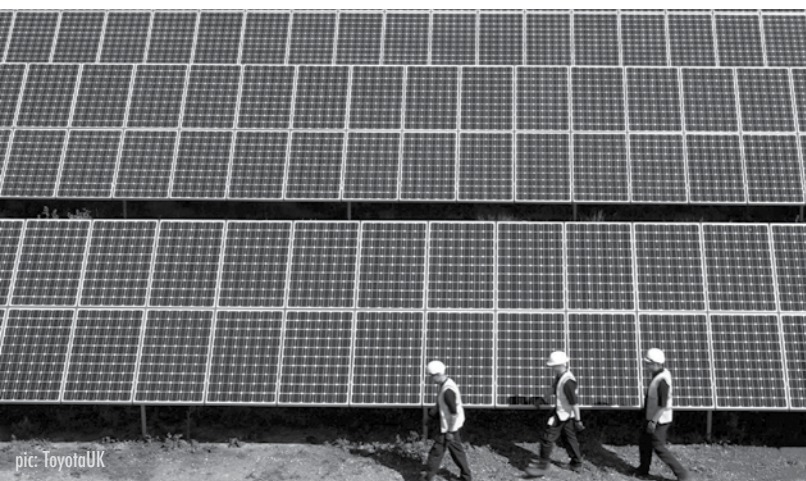
Despite the Fukushima disaster, Korea – the country closest to Japan – continues its aggressive nuclear expansion policy. It will increase the number of nuclear power plants from the 23 reactors it has now to 34 by 2024. If this plan is achieved, South Korea will rank 1st in nuclear plant density globally. They also plan to export 80 nuclear reactors to the rest of the world, inspired by their first deal with the United Arab Emirates to export four nuclear reactors. This nuclear expansion policy is the core of The Low Carbon Green Growth strategy by Korea.

The Rio+20 Committee of Korean Civil Society is very unhappy about this strategy. Their 'Green Growth? Greed Growth' campaign exposes the untold dirty stories behind Green Growth. Korea also invested \$20 billion in the so-called 'Four Rivers Restoration Project', which has turned out to be a massive environmentally destructive project. It destroys much of the river ecosystems, worsens the water quality and does not prevent floods as promised. Furthermore, the critical voices of civil society, academia and religious groups have been excluded completely throughout the entire process. Green growth inevitably means growth in energy needs, and this growth is clearly creating more damage and risk to people, planet and democracy.

Korea is far from alone in translating the green economy into green growth, or to include nuclear energy in sustainable energy scenarios. Ban Ki-moon, also from Korea, has created the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (SE4ALL) with the goal to make sustainable energy a reality for all by 2030. But Rachel Smolker from Biofuelwatch states "while the term sustainable is used, there is absolutely no indication what this means. Large-scale biofuels, natural gas projects, large hydroelectric dams, waste incinerators, even fossil fuels and nuclear energy all appear to be acceptable under this initiative and all are referred to as sustainable."

Almost 50 civil society groups have published an open letter denouncing the UN Secretary General's new initiative. The letter states: 'The SE4ALL process and Action Agenda are deeply flawed and threaten to further entrench destructive, polluting and unjust energy policies for corporate profit under the guise of alleviating energy poverty, while undermining community rights to energy sovereignty and self-determination'

Criticism is easy if you do not have an alternative so the question is: can a country with a high standard of living survive without nuclear energy, big dams and unsustainable energy sources? Of course it can! Germany, until very recently a champion of nuclear energy, has completely changed its energy policy after the Fukushima disaster. One of the consequences is that at one point last Saturday, for the first time ever, 50% of the electricity used in Germany came from solar-energy. We recognise that Germany also has unsustainable energy sources and we feel it is a shame to wait for disasters like Fukushima to finally come to policy changes that are so urgently needed. But, imagine what could be possible if States would proactively make energy policies that do not create more damage and risk to people, planet and democracy ■



Great apes spur community support for protected areas

UNEP

The world's rarest ape inhabits a strip of forest along Cameroon's western border that spans barely 20 kilometers at its widest point. Home to critically endangered Cross River gorillas, the Takamanda National Park forms part of an important network of rainforests, volcanoes, oceans and islands. Declared a protected area in 2008, the keepers of the park are now taking a new revolutionary approach to the way that protected areas are managed in the 21st century.

Protected areas comprise of a tiny fraction of the earth's surface, but the role they play in determining the planet's environmental health is vital. This will be the focus of discussions at 'Protecting the Protected Areas; Partnering to Expand the Most Precious 17% of the Planet', a Rio+20 side event that will be held at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Pavilion Auditorium at 1pm on 20th June.

Since 2008, UNEP has partnered with the Spanish Government to promote protected areas through LifeWeb, an innovative programme that uses direct management support and community engagement to enhance protected areas. From marine corridors in the Caribbean and mountains in Central America to rainforests across the Congo Basin, these protected areas are essential to providing the oxygen, water, and energy necessary for the earth's survival.

Six Spain-UNEP LifeWeb projects focus directly on habitat in Africa and Asia that includes great apes, based on the premise that the chimpanzees, gorillas, orangutans and bonobos in those regions are charismatic flagship species that double as reliable indicators of ecosystem health. These projects are managed by the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP), a unique alliance of member nations, United Nations agencies, conservation organisations and private supporters, who target habitat protection and restoration that benefit a wide variety of species beyond apes, such as elephants, tigers, rhinoceroses - and human beings.

In Indonesia, GRASP works with the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (UNESCO) to strengthen protected areas in the Gunung Leuser National Park, a region that is home to critically endangered Sumatran orangutans. By improving park protection and restoring forest buffer zones along the park's perimeter, GRASP helps ensure that communities living nearby play an active and meaningful role in ensuring the area's long-term survival.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, GRASP partners with the African Parks Network (APN) to support two of the region's best known and most bitterly contested protected areas: the Garamba and Kahuzi-Biega National Parks. Years of civil war and regional conflict have taken a terrible toll on the biodiversity of those parks, yet priority populations of chimpanzees and gorillas make those areas more important than ever to conserve. Spain-UNEP LifeWeb's support through GRASP has focused on issues of law enforcement, conflict resolution, wildlife monitoring, and provided infrastructure such as a new hospital for park staff and local communities in Garamba that delivers widespread support.

In the Republic of Congo, GRASP again leverages the prevalence of chimpanzee and gorillas to promote community cooperation and environmental stewardship. The Lossi Fauna Reserve and the Nouabale-Ndoki National Parks play an important role as bridges between forests that wind through Central Africa. Stabilising corridors and promoting law enforcement in this region allows the migration of wildlife across three countries. However the Ebola virus outbreaks periodically plagues the area, which is why GRASP supports great ape health monitoring projects that ensure the safety of both the apes and the human population.

Cameroon's Takamanda National Park may house as many as one-third of the remaining 300 Cross River gorillas, currently considered the world's rarest great ape, but habitat destruction and hunting combine to produce a very uncertain future. The rampant conversion of forest land for agriculture is also a threat. Working through GRASP, the Spain-UNEP LifeWeb partnership produced expert analysis and environmental guidelines that could reduce harmful emissions by as much as 5 ½ million tonnes over the next 20 years.

GRASP was formed a decade ago to lift the threat of imminent extinction faced by great apes in Africa and Asia, but implicit in that mandate was the similar fate faced by mankind. By focusing on protected areas through the Spain-UNEP LifeWeb programme, GRASP has been able to promote community support for great ape conservation, even as those same communities help themselves ■

MORE INFO

To find out more, join us at UNEP's Side event.

SIDE EVENT: Protecting the Protected Areas

DATE: Wednesday, 20 June

TIME: 1:00 pm to 2:45 pm (lunch will be provided)

VENUE: UNEP PAVILION, Auditorium



Political will: Not present at the negotiations on water and sanitation

Prakash Amatya, Nathalie Seguin
Freshwater Action Network (FAN)

High hopes were raised back in January when the Human Right to Water and Sanitation was recognized in the newly released Zero Draft. Nevertheless in the latest version, redrafted by the Brazilian Government in an attempt improve the document, this General Assembly resolution (64/292) was withdrawn.

It is unacceptable that “access to clean water, adequate sanitation and hygiene” is being disputed as a human right. Meanwhile, every year millions of people, particularly poor women and the children, bear the brunt of poor access to water, sanitation and hygiene, which leads to 4,000 children dying every day across the globe from different water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) related diseases. This is despite the fact that there is enough fresh water on the planet and sufficient resources to achieve one hundred percent water supply and sanitation coverage globally and universally. It is the lack of political will that has delayed its realisation.

As such, sanitation is the imperative basis for human development and therefore, ultimately for sustainable development. But, it is the hard fact that 2.5 billion people still live without safe access to sanitation. Inadequate and poor sanitation negatively affects food security, livelihood choices and educational opportunities for poor families across the world. A simple intervention in sanitation can lead a step towards achieving sustainable development goals. For instance, a good sanitation facility in schools can encourage attendance of girl students in particular; as such improve the overall performance of school thus promoting universal primary education. It can reduce incidences of deadly diseases thus maintaining immunity power and the working ability of people. Overall, improved sanitation and hygiene can contribute to all the development goals.

Freshwater Action Network (FAN) is a facilitator for the water and sanitation issue cluster. It has been participating in terms of incorporating inputs on water and sanitation into the negotiations. The response of FAN to the ‘Zero Draft’ focused on ensuring access to sanitation as a priority. Nevertheless, the actual text has completely downgraded this important human right for the most vulnerable populations. Recognition of the human rights to water and sanitation and its implementation will help to abridge the accountability gap towards the poor

and marginalized. Therefore, we demand that the UN resolution on the human right to water should be explicitly included as part of the solutions agreed by governments at Rio+20. It will provide a basis for the development of equity indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals being discussed as part of the package to be agreed at Rio.

FAN global is calling on negotiators to ensure the context of rights strongly in the final document. This call is in line with the discussions held at the 2011 Nexus conference organized by the German Federal Government in preparation for Rio+20, which explored how water, energy and food security can be enhanced by increasing efficiency, reducing trade-offs, building synergies and improving governance across the sectors in the run up to Rio+20. FAN members actively participated and they worked to ensure that the human rights approach is integrated into sustainable development and ensuring WASH is accentuated in debates relating to water security at the conference.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have received notable achievements to date; however it has not been devoid of criticism either. The current MDG framework, which comprises of potential post-MDGs cannot or would not completely address emerging issues, such as climate change, energy security, loss of biodiversity, disaster preparedness and resilience. Therefore, it is expected that Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are not an alternative to the past or ongoing frameworks. Rather, it can address the shortcomings and challenges facing MDGs, and broaden their goals to reflect other already agreed objectives of sustainable development.

A final observation of the 5 paragraphs on water in the Draft would be on the lack of political will on cooperation. It is disturbing that, as the need for cooperation within and between countries becomes even greater, especially in a changing climate, the more reluctance certain countries show to accepting the language in the final resolution referring to the importance of cooperation and the specificity of transboundary basins.

A united effort is required from the concerned stakeholders at all levels to deal with challenges of sustainable development not only emphasising economic and technical efficiency, but rather putting social and environmental development at the center of these goals to reinvent the earth we want to live in! ■



People's Summit: Youth and the Earth Charter

Bruna Bernacchio, Júlia Dávila, Leandra Barros and Vania Correia, Youth News Agency and Rio+YOU

Yesterday morning in Plenary 5, Severn Suzuki, who became a symbol of the environmental cause after speaking at the first Earth Summit in 1992 when she was only 12 years old, and Marina Silva, among others, inspired and touched a huge audience, mostly composed of young people.

Severn Suzuki's speech led the plenary to tears when she said: "When we look at the progress made in the last 20 years, it is easy to become discouraged. But today, I am a mother. I have two small boys and I'll do everything I can to make sure my children have great opportunities in a big world". Severn criticised the stagnation since the Earth Summit saying, "it has been twenty years and in that time we were unable to reach the sustainable world at that time we knew we needed".

When speaking at the first Earth Summit, Serven silenced a crowd of hundreds of Heads of State and moved the world. Today she says she understands why; "what has touched so many people from the plea of a child is

the strength of intergenerational love". Now focused on grassroots actions in civil society, she says that globally the agenda of sustainability has receded. "These high-level policy makers will not change the world for us. I realised that if we want change we have to fight, demand and discuss. We are responsible for it". She concluded by appealing to youth to use their voices, because she said "the world is desperate for the voice of young people".

Serven was followed by Marina Silva, who said that she felt embarrassed by having to listen to the young Suzuki saying twenty years later nothing has changed, or worse, that we have in fact regressed in many areas. Marina stated that nothing has changed because we live in such a consumerist society that we have seemingly consumed our own emotions.

MORE INFO

Viração Educomunicação and Rio+YOU are the world's largest youth-led news agency covering all events in Rio de Janeiro. www.rioplusyou.org #rioyouthagency

Sustainable Development Dialogues, 17th June: Food and nutrition security

Rina Kuusipalo, Harvard University

The Dialogue on food and nutrition security had an inspirational start with Hortensia Hidalgo (Indigenous Women's Network of Latin America and the Caribbean for Biodiversity) calling for a holistic paradigm of harmony with nature. She criticised the overtly "economic forms of logic affecting our people" and decreasing sovereignty over territory, finally asking to remember those whose vote couldn't be heard.

Noting that for many centuries food was sacred and respected, Carlo Petrini (Slow Food Movement) said that food had now lost its value, other than price. To overcome the "entropic crisis" concerning food, he said we need to "combat all forms of neocolonialism", "change the rules of world trade", and "place trust in people: local people, rural farmers, elders, smallholders, youth".

Calling for the rebuilding of the local food supply, Vandana Shiva (Research Foundation for Science) spoke for an "agroecology" approach to farming, instead of "empty commodities" that have no nutritional value. She identified genetically engineered food production as a "casino that bets on insecurity and risk, just like Wall Street," and continued, "Life is not an invention: how did we start walking down the road of patenting seeds?"

She said we now need a "declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth, without which there will be no human rights because there will be no humans".

Luisa Dias Diogo, former Prime Minister of Mozambique, emphasised the role of women and local people, while Esther Penunia (Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development) condemned land grabbing and chemical pesticides, calling for diversified farming. Mary Robinson (The Elders) stressed that "hunger is systemic failure of the protection of human rights." Josette Sheeran (World Economic Forum) said that Brazil, under Lula's leadership, "has been defeating hunger faster than any other nation, giving us hope that hunger can be tackled."

Martin Khor (South Centre) focused on the systemic nature of the food crisis and the harmful "world trade system that allows rich countries to continue to subsidise their production and to export their food to poor countries at extremely low prices." According to him, "the scandal of food prices" was due to commodity markets that highly exacerbate food price fluctuations.

Finally, the audience voted 61.7% in favour of the recommendation 'Develop policies to encourage sustainable production of food supplies directed to both producers and consumers,' while the online vote led to 'Promote food systems that are sustainable and contribute to improvement of health.' ■



Sustainable Development Dialogues, 18th June: Sustainable Energy for All

Rina Kuusipalo, Harvard University

Moderated by James Astill (The Economist), the Dialogue on Sustainable Energy for All led to an animated debate centred on access to energy. Christine Lins (REN21) identified that the challenge ahead was to “upscale development of renewables, most importantly, through stable policy frameworks”.

Pointing to the “power map of the world”, Thomas Nagy (Novozymes) illustrated that while “a few countries sit on fossil fuels, agricultural capacity is quite evenly distributed between countries”. This, he claimed, could bring better energy access, eradicate poverty, reduce climate issues, and enable more inclusive business models.

Stating that “technology is not the biggest barrier”, Changhua Wu (The Climate Group) underlined the importance of “an enabling environment for these technologies”, to be achieved through “public-private partnerships”. She also emphasised that solutions “should not be top down”.

Brian Dames (Eskom) echoed that “solutions will have to be localised at a grassroots level to meet the social

need of communities”. Luiz Pinguelli Rosa (COPPE-UFRJ; Brazilian Forum on Climate Change) called “to reduce inequity of consumption between the wealthy and poor, in light of the Brazilian experience”. The audience gave many comments, underscoring the need to give local people the capacity to manage and maintain energy, and to further decentralise supply to achieve higher efficiency.

Sheila Oparaocha (International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy) contemplated on “universal as well as equitable” access to energy, and said that access, especially those of “households, communities, and women, who make up 70% of the world’s poor”, needs to be increased. She urged national energy policies “to be aligned with poverty reduction strategies”, and called for a more equitable reallocation of resources.

The recommendation to ‘Establish ambitious targets for moving towards renewable energy’ received the greatest level of audience support with 42.2% of the vote. The popularity of ‘Take concrete steps to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies’ in the online vote pleased James Astill, stating, “I’m from The Economist, where we hate subsidies and love investments” ■

Sustainable Development Dialogues, 18th June: Water

Tony Siantonas, Stakeholder Forum

There is perhaps no more cross-cutting issue than that of water. It is essential for health and sanitation, biodiversity protection, energy production and our overall wellbeing. However, sustainable solutions for water must overcome monumental challenges.

So where do we start? Simple – access. The overriding consensus among the panel of experts (including Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus) was that access to water and sanitation must be embraced by the UN as a fundamental human right – water simply would not, and could not be commoditised, and legally binding text to secure its universal access was essential.

Among the reasons for this conclusion were clear concerns that privatised technologies for water and sanitation from the Global North could not provide the long term, local solutions needed in the Global South. Whilst private sector innovation and efficiencies were valued, a stronger focus on tackling water demand and consumption was also voiced. In addition, the poor recognition of gender equality in water showed sanitation is fundamental to a dignified way of life.

Another emerging theme was that of traditional water management methods and indigenous peoples. An impassioned speech from one Native Mexican audience member requested the following – if the UN is willing to recognise the human rights of indigenous peoples, then it must endorse its support for mother earth and nature itself, upon which so much of their cultures are based. In simple terms – water is life and its access as undeniable as air – under those rights granted to indigenous peoples water access could be made mandatory. Disappointingly, it seems unlikely that this route is robust enough as a means of forcing stronger working on the final Rio+20 text.

Of ten recommendations put forward during the session, the attendees voted for the following three: (1) Implement direct access to water, (2) Assert the importance of integrated water, energy and land-use planning and management at all scales (the panel also sought to add infrastructure and gender equality to this list), (3) Adopt more ambitious global policies to address water and sanitation needs ■



ECO Corner

ECO Corner is produced by the cooperative efforts of Climate Action Network members at the Rio+20 Conference

The public is clear: End fossil fuel subsidies

Negotiations here at Rio+20 appear to have come to a standstill. Member States cannot seem to agree to much of anything; the multilateral process, intended to promote 'cooperation, compromise and dialogue', has turned into a frantic scramble to produce 'some', nay, 'any' kind of tangible outcome of the conference. So far, compromise has meant the deletion of entire paragraphs of text that countries have been unable to agree upon. There is a real threat here that this enormous global opportunity could be wasted.

At this crucial moment, delegations would do well to take heed of civil society groups, who have had no trouble coming to consensus on some of the most important outcomes from this summit, namely ending the nearly \$1 trillion annual subsidy for fossil fuels.

Over the last several weeks, thousands of people around the world have voted online for their sustainable development priorities as part of the Rio Dialogues process. The No.1 response was 'take concrete steps to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies'. In the lead up to Rio, Avaaz.org, 350.org and many others, collected over a million signatures against these regressive handouts and yesterday, on Twitter, #endfossilfuelsubsidies was a top trending topic worldwide; while hundreds of youth and their allies marched through the Riocentro complex to highlight that incentives for atmospheric pollution and outdated technologies are not part of the future we want.

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), as part of its Vision 2050 report, said that by 2020 governments must 'remove subsidies that encourage over-consumption and resource degradation'. The Trade Union Assembly on Labour and the Environment, held last week, articulated a very different vision than the business community on many issues. However, the two groups agreed on the importance of 'fair and environmentally-sound tax policies' with labor calling for a 'just transition' away from fossil fuel dependency. Over 170 NGOs have co-signed a letter

calling for a socially equitable phase out. Similar calls have been made by the Major Groups for science and technology, and youth and women, to name just a few.

Yet, despite all of this, over the past few days the text on subsidies has become increasingly weak. We have to ask why. One explanation is that civil society has not been given an appropriate space to voice the importance of this issue. In an attempt to move these negotiations forward, the Brazilian government took negotiations on energy behind closed doors at the beginning of the Prep Com. They facilitated discussions that included only a few key States and no representatives from civil society. While this could be seen as a pragmatic move, ECO must dissent. Fossil fuel subsidies are clearly a critical issue for civil society globally and must be brought to the centre of deliberations in the coming days. Bringing in more voices, particularly those who have already come to consensus across ideological divides, enhances the credibility and productive potential of this process.

The Brazilian Presidency and the UNCSO have an enormous opportunity, but they need to act fast. By putting fossil fuel subsidy reform at the heart of negotiations, they can demonstrate a commitment to responsive leadership, and to the global mandate they have received. This would significantly improve the actual, and perceived, legitimacy of this process and would be an important first step toward advancing a more ambitious agenda.

There are no guarantees that subsidy reform will make it into a final text. However, there is a strong case to make that by discussing it openly we can find language acceptable to all parties. For example, it appears that some countries are worried that a phase out would undermine their ability to develop, or would create a domestic political backlash. These concerns can be assuaged by discussion with actors such as Switzerland, Costa Rica or Ethiopia. These delegations will surely be happy to talk about how their countries have removed perverse energy incentives and found more effective ways to protect the poor and reinvest in projects that drive positive feedbacks for sustainable development. Civil Society groups can offer enormous insight based on their research and experience in affected communities.

We have an important choice to make. We can continue to grasp at straws over issues that are stuck in the mud, or we can directly tackle one of the largest obstacles to achieving a green economy that alleviates poverty and strengthens opportunities for development. Civil society has provided a path, now leaders need to take it ■

Rio+20 side event calendar

Date	Time	Venue	Title	Organisers
19/6/12	8.15 - 9.15 am	Hotel Excelsior (next to Copacabana Palace Hotel)	Briefing: Inside Strategies and Groups, UN Perspective, Mapping Government strategies and inside players	V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation
	08:30 - 17:30	Fundacao Getulio Vargas Praia de Botafogo, 190 Rio de Janeiro	Choosing Our Future: Open and Participatory Sustainable Development Governance	The Access Initiative
	09:00 - 12:30	RioCentro Pavilion 6, room 1	Workshop #3- Global Major Groups Community	ECOSOC
	09:30 - 18:30	RioCentro T-2	Leaders' Forum on the Future Women Want: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment for Sustainable Development	UN Women
	09:30 - 13:00	RioCentro P3-6	UN-Water Day (part1)	UN-Water
	09:30 - 11:00	RioCentro T-6	Energy for All and Global Sustainability: new scenarios and governance	Stockholm Environment Institute
	09:30 - 11:00	RioCentro P3-A	Tackling displacement by natural disasters in the sustainable development	Norwegian Refugee Council
	09:30 - 13:00	National Confederation of Trade in Goods, Services and Tourism. Av. General Justo 307, Centro 20021-130	What is at stake at Rio+20? Recommendations from Brazilian and EU civil society. 6th Meeting of the EU-Brazil Civil Society Round Table	EESC and the Brazilian Council for Economic and Social Development (CDES)
	11:00 - 12:30	UN5 (Barra Arena)	Motorcycle Safety at Rio + 20	Ecuadorian Motorcyclists Association
	13:00 - 14:45	UNEP Pavilion	From Resource Efficiency to Resource Potential - The International Resource Panel's finding on Understanding the Hidden Opportunities for People, Planet and Prosperity	UNEP
	15:00 - 16:45	UNEP Pavilion	21 Issues for the 21st Century: Input to the New and Emerging Challenges Discussions	UNEP
	15:00 - 18:00	National Confederation of Trade in Goods, Services and Tourism. Av. General Justo 307, Centro 20021-130	EU-BRICS Civil Society Meeting - Dialogue for Sustainable Development	EESC with Economic & Social Councils & similar institutions from the BRICS countries
	15:30 - 17:00	RioCentro T-5	Human Rights at the heart of Sustainable Development - Honouring Principle 1	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
	15:30 - 17:00	RioCentro T-6	Defying Disasters: A Tri-Continental South-South Dialogue	Philippines
	15:30 - 17:00	RioCentro P3-B	Putting Green Economy into practice	Switzerland
	17:00 - 19:00	UNEP Pavilion	Status Report on the Application of Integrated Approaches to the Development, Management and Use of Water Resources	UNEP
	17:30 - 19:00	RioCentro T-10	Green economy and inclusive growth for a sustainable future	Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
	18:00 - 21:00	Cube de Engenharia (Engineering Club) Av. Rio Branco, 124- 18º - Sala 01 Centro	Advancing a Peoples Movement	The widening circle
	19:30 - 21:00	RioCentro P3-F	The Global Transition to a New Economy- mapping a green and fair world	The New Economics Institute
20/6/12	09:00 - 10:30	RioCentro T-6	The trade dimension in the follow-up to the Rio+20 Summit	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
	09:00 - 10:30	RioCentro T-4	Measure What Matters	A4S
	11:00 - 12:30	RioCentro P3-6	Beyond GDP: Measuring the Future We Want	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
	12:00 - 13:00	UNEP Pavilion	Food Security: The Ecological Dimension and the Sustainability Solution	UNEP
	13:00 - 14:45	UNEP Pavilion	Protecting the Protected Areas: Partnering to expand the most precious 17% of the Planet	UNEP
	13:00 - 14:30	RioCentro T-6	From Rio to Rio: A 20-year Journey to Green the World's Economies	Global Environment Facility (GEF)
	13:00 - 14:30	RioCentro T-5	Sustainable Maritime Development - The Contribution of Maritime Transport to Green Growth and Inclusive Development	International Maritime Organization (IMO)
	13:00 - 14:30	RioCentro T-4	Natural Capital Summit	United Kingdom
	15:00 - 16:45	UNEP Pavilion	Commitments on Gender and Sustainable Development	UNEP
	17:00 - 19:00	UNEP Pavilion	GEO-5 Main Messages for Sustainability	UNEP
	17:00 - 18:30	RioCentro T-2	Denmark and South Africa show the way: Corporate Social Responsibility	Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future
	17:00 - 18:30	RioCentro T-8	Across the Regions: SIDS Solutions for Sustainable Development	Commonwealth Secretariat - United Kingdom
	19:00 - 20:30	RioCentro T-2	Business Solutions for Sustainability: Rio+20 and beyond	World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

Reflections from Rio+20, Monday 18th June

Rishikesh Bhandary
Tufts University

The Brazilian presidency introduced a further refined text on Means on Implementation in the morning of June 18th. The chair encouraged a direct dialogue between parties on areas of disagreement and suspended the meeting until consultations were carried out. After a couple of hours of consultations, mainly in the form of a huddle in the room, delegates provided one further round of feedback to the chair.

The ambition to achieve new and additional finance and a mechanism governing it has visibly weakened. The focus has now shifted to a sustainable development financing framework. There was a general lack of understanding and consensus on what the framework is meant to achieve, its nature, and form of operation. While some parties were averse to the idea of creating new mechanisms, others argued that outputs from the Rio+20 conference need to be supported by concrete means of implementation. These delegates identified that Sustainable Development Goals had been singled out as being the only area for support. Some delegates marked the irony that the only 'additional' resources that have been mentioned in the draft text come from south-south cooperation.

Technology, particularly in the form of technology transfer and involving intellectual property rights, remained a difficult area. Some delegates pointed out that technology transfer was a treaty obligation under the all three Rio conventions (biodiversity, climate change, and desertification), a commitment that was reinforced in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

Views converged on the need to keep the section on trade short and simple. A few delegates were reluctant to single out environmentally sound technologies and called for greater balance by listing agricultural subsidies as being trade distorting as well.

All eyes are on the look out for a 'closed text' as the Brazilian presidency attempts to consolidate the progress made on negotiations in the past few days and receive political guidance to resolve all outstanding issues to finally produce an outcome document ■

Nick Meynen
ANPED, Northern Alliance for Sustainability

Thousands of people at the People's Summit are in the process of formulating alternative strategies to create a fair and sustainable world for all. Kumi Naidoo – a South African human rights activist and the Executive Director of Greenpeace International – made a vibrant speech at a well attended event on the new role of civil society and how it should defend both social and environmental justice.

"We all agree that we cannot continue with business as usual, but we can also not continue with activism as usual. Despite 1000s of civil society members being accredited to participate in UN negotiations and despite being allowed to speak a bit here and a bit there, we have to admit that the result is very disappointing. We confused access for influence, and while doing so, provided them the excuse that they listened to us. But they do not listen. The new civil society should show critical solidarity with good policies and should radically reject bad policies. In South Africa we have NGOs that we call Next Government Officers. But we are growing and we will continue to fight injustices. I'd like to remind the audience of something Gandhi once said, 'first they ignore you, then they laugh with you, then they fight you and then you win'. At present I believe they are fighting us, so that means we are close to winning."

You might agree or disagree with the views of Kumi Naidoo, but it is important to remind delegates that, outside RioCentro, a large and diverse civil society exists – one that is ready to fight for social and environmental justice. It cannot hurt to inform them that this language is totally missing in the text being discussed inside the walls of the Conference ■



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