

Part 11: Responses in FULL

[Teresa Flores](#), Bolivia
[Justin D. K. Bishop](#), UK
[Dr J G Ray](#), India
[Eric Belvaux](#), Canada
[Rongming Wu](#), China
[Nzoa Gervais](#), Cameron
[James Greyson](#), UK
[Tim Garbutt](#), UK
[Nurjemal Jalilova](#), Turkmenistan
[Sarah Atkinson](#), Australia
[Amitava Mukherjee](#), Thailand
[James Greyson](#), UK
[Iyad Abumoghli](#), Lebanon
[Daniela Piffer](#), South Africa
[Dr J G Ray](#), India
[Michael Massey](#), London
[Rongming Wu](#), China
[Mary Ennis](#), Canada
[H.M Ibrahim](#), Malaysia
[Henry Ekwuruke](#), Nigeria
[James Greyson](#), UK
[Graham L. Twaddell](#), USA
[Robson Mello](#), USA
[Matilde Gomes Mendes](#), Guinea Bissau
[Tim Garbutt](#), UK
[Yusef Alhadri](#), Yemen
[Kathleen O'Halleran](#), USA
[Heiner Benking](#), Germany
[Mrs. Rachel Mamba](#), Central Africa
[Rongming Wu](#), China
[Ulrike Maschke](#), Germany

Dated: February 27, 2008

Teresa Flores, Environmentalist, Bolivia

Dear All,

Many thanks for this important discussion. I would like to present some of my reflections resulted from this forum contributions, and answer the first question of this week. This forum reflects the two prevailing views on development. The first view, hold by most governments and development practitioners, puts first people and societies, and therefore they prioritize economic and social issues, and sees that economic growth is the key of human prosperity. The second view, hold by the ones who have background in ecology, understands that human wellbeing depends on environmental conditions and life supporting systems, and if they are destroyed, human societies cannot prosper.

Belonging to the second group, I would say that the environment is not one of the tree mentioned pillars, but should be understood as the basic layer in which all economic and social processes take place, and therefore all development interventions should consider the human impacts on the environment. That is SD. The most important contribution of the Rio Summit was the realization that economic development, without the integration of environmental issues, results in the destruction of the processes that make possible life. For instance, global warming. Sustainable development has not been adopted by the vast majority of governments because it is a very radical standpoint that implies changing the economic framework that has created so much wealth in the last 60 years, while eroding the biological bases of the Earth, and the livelihoods of the poor. The contradictory results of economic growth challenges our traditional mindset that tends to think that things are good or bad, while most of processes have positive and negative outcomes at the same time, and the question here is to outweigh what has more positive effects for all living beings at the long term.

1. How can the international community ensure that more funding for advancing sustainable development is made available on a predictable basis?

Experience shows that it is not just question of funding but to have more consistent policies at the international level, and to advance towards global environmental governance. The UN bodies, with the UNEP exception, have not been supporting Sustainable Development in a consistent way, and either most of the international cooperation agencies. They every so often come with new policies, discarding the formers without enough reflection of what has failed. To exemplify this, I can mention that in Rio + 5, the countries agreed to design a National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS), but when the countries were in this process, the HIPC initiative has come, and we were asked to elaborate our Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSP), therefore the NSDS were abandoned.

The PRSP have not been very successful in most of the countries because they focused in helping and protecting the poor, rather than in broadening the economic base of development and in mechanisms for wealth redistribution. Then, the UN and International Cooperation focused on the MDGs, therefore the countries had to design their MDG-based national development strategy. Although the MDGs approach with its indicators and timetables, was a more effective tool to follow progress than the Plans of Action of the UN Summits. The MDGs have resulted in a very sectorialized approach to development. Each MDG has been assumed by the different sectors in a very isolated manner, and therefore the broad context of development has been dissolved. In addition the MDG 7 (ensuring environmental sustainability) has been the most neglected goal, many countries did not report progress regarding to this goal. Moreover, in fact the MDG 7 has meant a drawback because environmental issues were dealt again as if they could be resolved in a sectorialized manner, and not as the fundamental basis to achieve the other MDGs. (Besides that this goal has weak indicators that not measure if the countries are making progress towards sustainable development).

Currently the fact is that due to global warming, climate disasters in many developing countries are wiping out the progress made towards the MDGs. For instance in 2007, about 20 million people have lost their homes in South Asia. In South America, the last two months, due to floods poor people have lost all their assets and crops. In Bolivia floods damaged many schools and destroyed infrastructure, including water services, hence people are drinking contaminated water, health is deteriorating, children cannot go to school, and women are the more affected not having the resources to even feed their children. Therefore, I believe that this effort of discussing sustainable development is a hope that a more integral approach to development is regained. However, after 15 years after not making meaningful CO2 reductions, situation is worse than ever and the hopes for improving living conditions of the poor are further away. That is why sustainable development approaches at this stage should be based in mitigation and adaptation measures, transferring clean technologies and avoiding deforestation, among others. But the most important task now is to set the bases for environmental governance without which we cannot manage the climate crisis. Thus I would suggest creating a Global Environmental Organization that can address development issues in a sustainable way, and “with the same power as the WTO”, as somebody said in this forum. If the mindset that environmental issues are a secondary concern is going to prevail, and the governments are not going to do substantial CO2 reductions, we can expect the collapse of our global civilization due to climate disasters.

Kind regards,
Teresa Flores

tflores@accelerate.com, proderna@gmail.com
Environmentalism from Bolivia
www.proderna.org

Dated: February 28, 2008

Justin D. K. Bishop, Doctoral Research Student, University of Cambridge, UK

Dear Moderators,

1. How can the international community ensure that more funding for advancing sustainable development is made available on a predictable basis?

The international community can ensure more and regular funding for advancing sustainable development if it agrees on a development horizon, recognizes that sustainable development is not synonymous with economic loss and if they possess the moral desire to do what they can to bring all fellow citizens of the world to a basic standard of living. It can be shown through economic assessments that the performance of a project is largely tied to the period of time in which it can perform what it was intended to do. Therefore, if the international community decides on a time period of sustainable development 10 years long, the measures taken will be different than if the period is 100 years. The longer the horizon, and the wider the boundaries for economic analysis, the better the sustainable development argument becomes, since the concept of "sustainable" possesses the innate notions of perpetuity and holism. Best-practice displays in product manufacturing, financial markets, and social schemes indicate that designing for sustainability is always more profitable than the least-cost approach. Which country(s) funds what other states is dependent on the "haves" possessing the moral desire to see the "have nots" live wholesome, healthy lives befitting of human beings. This level of lifestyle should not be at the level of the G8, since it is clear that the first world lives unsustainably. However there is a level of human consumption which lies between extreme poverty and the wastefulness of today's richest countries which donor nations can help developing world states attain. Without the moral desire to bring our fellow world citizens out of their current, deprived conditions, I believe that each and all attempts at aid will be ad hoc, irregular and not accomplish the goal of sustainable development.

What steps by which actors can be taken to facilitate, on a concessional and preferential basis, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, especially to developing countries?

The transfer of environmentally sound technologies must come within the constraints of what is determined to be sustainable development by each state, requiring extensive dialogue with local officials and recognition of local limits to growth. In the past, aid programmes operated on the basis of direct drag-and-drop of technologies and deployment methods suitable for the first world into the developing world. Those aid pounds counted in the national accounts, but did not fulfill the people's needs. Better programmes utilize extensive local dialogue to establish where the particular government/citizenry wish development to take their state. The international community should recognize and respect that not every country wishes to be "just like the first world." This is a particular reference to Bhutan. That government has an idea of development which, to some in the international community, is considered backwards.

An aid programme for Bhutan for example would therefore have to respect these wishes explicitly or it would not succeed.

The second step would be to determine the local limits to growth. As can be observed across the first world, there is a culture of living on consumer debt, which is in stark contrast to the ethos of two generations ago. Similarly, in the first world, we live in environmental/ecological debt and use other nations' resources to meet our needs. Any aid programme to a nation needs to account for its local limits and respect them, as opposed to finding ways for the countries to develop which requires them to live in debt and use another state' resources. We as people and as countries know that we should not live beyond our means, even though we do. We should not encourage others to follow our bad habits.

2. How can we promote equity in the distribution of benefits from environmental resources?

Environmental resources are always attributable to a particular country, as opposed to nebulous products sitting on a world market exchange. Promoting equity in distribution of these resources requires the local governments to acknowledge their environmental services as local treasures and meet their local needs first. Referring to the time horizon argument, each local government can ascertain how long a particular crop of food, spring of freshwater or reserve of oil can last based on rates of consumption. If they apply a 10-year lifetime, the rate is much higher than a 100-year span. True equity in the distribution of these benefits means that access is granted to all citizens, at a not-necessarily-financial cost which all nationals can afford.

Is it advisable to promote payment for environmental services? If so, what is/are the most effective way(s) to do so?

Payment for environmental services automatically means that those who are able to pay the market price will succeed over those who cannot. As typically happens, those in rich countries with fewer resources are able to fuel their ecological debt by buying the services in other countries, where the local populous cannot compete.

Referring to the previous response, once a government has portioned its national, natural resources so that each citizen has his fair share, if there is a remainder, then that can be priced. Or, in well-managed environmental services, the interest on the natural capital may be sold once local needs are met. The key is not to price the capital stock, and not to sell a national treasure to the highest bidder to secure short term benefits.

Sincerely,

Justin D. K. Bishop

Doctoral Research Student

University of Cambridge

Department of Engineering

9, JJ Thomson Ave

Cambridge CB3 0FA

United Kingdom

Dr J. G. Ray, Reader & Director of Environment Studies, Kerala, India

Dear all,

I am quite happy to place my views at this third phase of discussions. For the third set of questions placed, I have the following answers.

1. How can the international community ensure that more funding for advancing sustainable development is made available on a predictable basis? What steps by which actors can be taken to facilitate, on a concessional and preferential basis, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, especially to developing countries?

Efforts for Sustainable development shall not be a separate set of Programme, but it shall be the main agenda of humanity in all levels of future actions; otherwise the yet to be born new generations will be drawn to unprecedented consequences. Therefore, instead of finding some funds for sustainable development, we need to convert all our currently available funds towards developmental activities of sustainable nature.

However, to ensure sustainable development, better and new eco-technologies shall be developed (for correction and remediation of the already done mistakes and also for safe advancing from the existing levels) and such technologies shall be made available to all nations and people of the world at a cheaper rate. Therefore, the Research and Developmental efforts of all nations shall be focused towards this goal. The UN may direct all nations (irrespective of developed or developing) to utilize the whole amount of their Research and Development activities towards sustainable developmental efforts at national or global levels in future.

Developed nations may pool a new global 'fund for sustainable developmental research' for assisting developing nations either in the indigenous collaborative development of technologies themselves or in helping them through the transfer of the advanced technologies. UN may direct all nations to set apart at least 1 % of their annual budget towards global sustainable efforts. Private agencies and individuals in all nations may be given incentives such as tax exemptions for spending their funds towards activities leading to sustainable development of the world. But such activities need a broader perspective and definition. Eradication of poverty, epidemics and illiteracy and democratization at all levels of governance in all nations shall be considered as global emergency actions towards sustainable development. Such efforts of all nations shall also be recognized as true activities towards sustainable development. Certain amount of global funds shall be set apart as 'Emergency funds for sustainable development' towards such programmes as well. Internally, all nations shall take decisions not to permit either private or public spending on traditional activities involving environmental damage of any kind. There shall be rules and regulations to undergo Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) to ensure environment sustainability before installation of all the major and minor projects, including the building of even private houses, large scale cultivations and adoption of different cultivation methods. In developed nations the EIA has become already mandatory at least for all mega projects. But the EIA shall be made mandatory for all the major and minor, private as well as public projects globally. There shall be a public system to support the EIA process easily for the small scale entrepreneurs. Global norms shall be made available to all nations in this regard. Global assistance shall be extended to only such developing nations which are strict on EIA in their developmental activities. This would not be a difficult process, especially when poverty eradication,

literacy, hygiene programmes, and democratization of political environment of nations are if included under the emergency measures of sustainable development.

There shall be global political and economic pressure to all nations for insisting EIA at all the national and local developmental activities. In such a circumstance, all the already available national and global funds shall be available for sustainable developmental activities.

2. What specific initiatives can ECOSOC promote to be launched to facilitate realization of the goal of sustainable development? How can we foster human and institutional competencies to execute supportive policies?

ECOSOC may help in the formulation of sound policies to promote sustainable developmental activities. Global networks of environmental and development experts may be prepared and through conducting e-discussions the potentials of such experts in developing policies and principles in this regard may be identified. Afterwards, formal meetings of the identified experts may be convened at different places – regionally and globally - for developing concrete guidelines to support sustainable development activities at the global and national level.

3. How can we promote equity in the distribution of benefits from environmental resources? Is it advisable to promote payment for environmental services? If so, what is/are the most effective way(s) to do so?

Equity in the distribution of benefits from environmental resources is a very complex question, because the definition of environmental resource itself is a highly relative and complex issue. Even the human resource too is environmental; isn't it? No natural resource is equally distributed in the globe and since prehistoric times humans have been plundering and accumulating the best of valuable natural resources to their private localities and nations. Are the present generations in any country ready to return or even share some of those precious resources in their custody for the underprivileged elsewhere, at least inside among the members of the same nation? This is a serious dilemma. Do all people believe in the science (Ecology) that life in individuals is imperfect and the true life is an interrelated infinite phenomenon?

Currently environmental problems force sometimes people to care for others, because otherwise they find it difficult to exist themselves. Say for example, in many parts of developing nations such as in my country, India, even the richest cannot keep drinking water resources in their fenced territory safe from bacterial contamination without caring for the sanitation facilities of the poor around. At global scales also rich nations cannot enjoy environmental safety without caring for the poverty and other pressing problems of humanity in poor nations. Thus caring for the poor or resourceless has become a scientific issue to advance safely and survive, and no more a spiritual issue to meditate and practice charity. In other words ecology is becoming the ultimate religion and science of people. Therefore, the concept of equitable sharing either at the individual, local, regional, national or global level is a spiritual as well as scientific question.

But recognizing the rights and needs of the yet to be born generation will always remain a spiritual question. Policies without convictions will not be fruitful. Life is a continuous

and infinite phenomenon, in which humans have to ensure the sustainability of their forms. Only humans are given the talent to understand and work for this right. It is through research and education we can come to such strong convictions. Until and unless the current generation recognizes this fact as an inevitable and inherent quality of every human being for progress and sustenance of the race, the problem of sharing of environmental resources cannot be solved. Science and spirituality are two sides of the same coin.

We shall be able to make policies of promoting payment for environmental services. But who will follow them strictly? Is the UN system strong enough to force strong and rich nations to follow such policies of sharing? If we carefully look into the currently available policies and formulas of sharing of natural resources in the world, we can find a lot of loopholes either safeguarding the interests of the 'intelligent' and the 'strong' societies or nations and exploitation of the less privileged. Therefore, such actions without conviction and commitment are not just needed.

Therefore, to teach and practice such principles of sharing, humanity shall utilize the political will of the current world, recognizing spirituality as a science for successful survival of humans on the earth. We must therefore, replace the current materialistic philosophies with the true science that unites humankind unconditionally. All terrorism and theocratic fundamentalisms in the current world will then vanish automatically.

Polluter's pay, excess tax on excessive consumption of resources and incentives such as subsidies and tax exemptions to environment friendly technologies and development activities are all effective measures to protect the interest of human race as a whole; but all at national levels only. At global levels, these may not be very effective. But, for the cause of future generations we have to act responsibly at global levels because no nations can claim that the future generations even within their own territories will be safe by the balanced and eco-friendly activities currently going on in their territories alone.

Dr J. G. Ray
Reader & Director of Environment Studies,
St Berchmans College Changanacherry, Kerala, India.
(Full Member of the Ukrainian Academy of Ecological Sciences).

Dated: March 3, 2008

Eric Belvaux, Programme Officer, Biodiversity for Development Unit

Dear all,

The Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) team is pleased to contribute to the third phase of this eDiscussion and would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the moderators for their impressive work to manage this challenge.

In order to feed the debate on the third bullet “How can we promote equity in the distribution of benefits from environmental resources? Is it advisable to promote payment for environmental services? If so, what is/are the most effective way(s) to do so?” we would urge everyone interested on this issue to read the two following notes written by the Executive Secretary of the CBD for the 11th SBSTTA meeting:

1- Incentive measures: An analysis of existing and new instruments that provide positive incentives:

<http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-11/information/sbstta-11-inf-11-en.doc>

2- Incentive measures: proposals on the application of positive incentive measures and their integration into relevant programmes, policies or strategies:

<http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-11/official/sbstta-11-08-en.doc>

In addition, we would like to inform the eDiscussion participants that a recent initiative, initiated by UNEP and IUCN, in cooperation with the CBD Secretariat, is currently seeking to provide answers to these questions. At a discussion of leading technical experts on payments for ecosystem services, hosted in September 2006 by UNEP and IUCN, a need was identified to analyse options for scaling up payments for ecosystem services with a sharpened focus on biodiversity conservation. Experts also identified the major technical and policy challenges where further analytical work is needed, such as the relationship between biodiversity and ecosystem services, the valuation and pricing of ecosystem services, social equity considerations, assessing the potential of international demand for biodiversity-related ecosystem services, and the willingness and capacity to respond to this demand.

The CBD conference of the Parties encouraged UNEP to continue its work on pro-poor markets for ecosystem services. Since then, through an ongoing international consultative process, analytical work is being undertaken to address these salient technical and policy issues associated with the development of pro-poor markets and payment systems for ecosystems services, with a focus on the international dimension. A study on these issues is expected to be published in late 2008.

Best regards,

Eric BELVAUX
Programme Officer
Biodiversity for Development Unit

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800
Montreal QC - H2Y 1N9
Canada
Email: eric.belvaux@cbd.int

Dated: March 5, 2008

Rongming Wu, Senior Policy Researcher for Fujian Provincial Government, China

Dear All:

Warm greetings from Fujian, China for the successful launching of Phase II e-discussion on achieving SD and success is expected for the March 6 preparatory meeting. I would like to express my ideas upon the questions raised for this phase of discussion as the follow up contribution of my previous one posted on February 2nd. .

1. How can the international community ensure that more funding for advancing sustainable development is made available on a predictable basis? What steps by which actors can be taken to facilitate, on a confessional and preferential basis, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, especially to developing countries?

The answer to this old problem had been well rooted in both Chapter 33 and Chapter 38 of Agenda 21 with the titles as “Financial Resource and Mechanism” and “International Institutions Arrangements” respectively. See, <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21chapter33.htm>. and <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21chapter38.htm>

However, the objectives of the both two chapters have been far from enough to be achieved. In particular, it seems still difficult to make one of the most international agreed target for the finance resource of global SD be reached, which is said, “Developed countries reaffirm their commitments to reach the accepted United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA and, to the extent that they have not yet achieved that target, agree to augment their aid programmes in order to reach that target as soon as possible and to ensure prompt and effective implementation of Agenda 21.” The problems of mechanisms (one is the mechanism for financial resource and the other is the international institutional arrangement) mentioned in the both two chapters should be stressed for new solutions in soonest possible time and it is expected eagerly to get a new ,creative , sound , comprehensive and decisive policy initiatives which ill be adopted by all stakeholders of the international community though the effective joint efforts of the AMR,CDF and Substantial Session of ECOSOC in coming July UN Events in New York. Great changes of the overall world situation including economic growth, social development and environment protection have taken place since 1992 when the Agenda 21 was adopted as the internationally agreed goals for the global Sustainable Development. One of UN’s strategic blueprints aspiring the world is what Mr. Kofi Anna, the former UN SG raised in the early of the year of 2002 in London with the famous slogan “From Doha to Johannesburg by way of Monterrey”. However, both the international and national levels are lacking integrated institutional arrangements for coordination of the three most internationally agreed commitments which are the most important pillars for MDGs in the approach of overall consideration.

It is suggested that Chapter V of JPOI with the title “Sustainable development in a globalizing world” should been taken as the top priority for the overall consideration of

the international community for establishment of the expected integrating institutional arrangement. The five urgent actions cited Section 47 of Chapter V of JPOI for all levels should be turned into reality as soon as possible. See:

http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POIChapter5.htm

I have found that the Report of the Secretary-General with the title ““Impact that, inter alia, international commitments, policies and processes can have on the scope and the implementation of national development strategies” as the outcome of Sixty-second session of the UN Assembly on Item 58 (a) of the provisional agenda* Globalization and interdependence is very important for both the national and international level decision making bodies to have overall consideration of on establishment of integrating institutional arrangements framework for turning the strategic blueprints or the strategic road map raised by the Mr. Kofi A. Annan six years ago in London which is well known as “From Doha to Johannesburg by way of Monterrey for MDGs” into the overall consideration of the national policy for SD keeping pace with the times. See: <http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/GlobalizationReport%202007.FINAL.website.pdf>. And also latest progress achieved from the 8 pilot countries for UN Reform on the issue of Delivering as One should be as adequately as possible absorbed in the outcome of this coming Substantial Session of ECOSOC. See: <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=568>. The Concept of System-wide Coherence should be further enhanced for the overall international community

2. What specific initiatives can ECOSOC promote to be launched to facilitate realization of the goal of sustainable development? How can we foster human and institutional competencies to execute supportive policies?

According to my experience in promoting capacity building campaign for local sustainable development for many years I would like to make two suggestions for answering this question.

Enhancing local sustainability should be suggested to be listed on the top priority in the agenda of ECOSOC. The objectives and tasks set officially in Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 are far from enough to be accomplished. Although the special terms of “all governments” or “governments at all levels” appear here and there in the UN documents related in SD and other international greed goals, local authorities are still facing serious institutional barriers in accessing directly to the international support. For example, ICLEI which was the draft unit of Chapter 28 and has been endeavoring in promoting localizing SD Campaign worldwide for more than 18 years and has been taken as the representative organization to deliver the voice of local governments of the world in the annual CSD conference, however it is always taken as one of the major groups. ECOSOC should establish a special functional unit for dealing the affairs of localizing SD with ICLEI as its authorized supportive organizations, and ICLEI should be upgraded as the real Global Agency of the world local governments for sustainability. See the relevant websites as follows:

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21chapter28.htm> and <http://www.iclei.org/>

Only in this way can make the governments and authorities who are closest to the people to let those marginalized from globalization in the grass root organizations of all the developing countries in the world benefit from the achieving the internationally agreed goals. Another suggestion from my view for decision making bodies of the international community is Scaling Up UNDP Capacity 2015 initiative as the Initiative of ECOSOC. During the ten years between Agenda 21 and JPOI UNDP Capacity 21 Campaign worldwide had been proved as one of the most strongest and effective policy instruments and tools of the international community to facilitate realization of the goal of sustainable development in comprehensive approach. However the limit constraints of Capacity 21 have been found for the 9 kinds of gaps which were well noted in my previous contribution for this e-discussion. It should be always highly appreciated for UNDP's continual efforts from the preparation of the concept of Capacity 21 to the official launching of the Partnership/ Initiative of Capacity 2015. C2015 has been aspiring to almost all the people in the developing countries for its unique advantages that feature benefiting from globalization while achieving the goals of MDGs and SD with the overall consideration of integrating international, national and local levels. However, 6 years have passed since the WSSD, Capacity 2105 has not undertaken as well as that expected when it's launching. In the database of projects of Capacity 2015 the reported projects directly related with C2015 is only 17, taking only 21.5% of the total, while other projects are still related with Capacity 21. See:

<http://www.capacity.undp.org/index.cfm?module=Projects&page=ProjectSearchResults>

The leap from Capacity 21 to Capacity 2015 should be enhanced with the joint efforts of all stakeholders of international, regional national and local levels to a larger extent and grounded into grass root organizations, in the developing countries. The easiest way to do so is expected that UNDP'S Initiative Capacity 2015 be upgraded and scaled up as Initiative of ECOSOC and let this point be imputed in the outcome document of this coming AMR and the Substantial Secession of ECOSOC in July.

3. How can we promote equity in the distribution of benefits from environmental resources? Is it advisable to promote payment for environmental services? If so, what is/are the most effective way(s) to do so?

This question is wholly relevant to international environmental regime. I would like to express my ideas upon this question in the following two respects:

In the general speaking, the six principles stressed in the Rio Declaration should be further enhanced in integrating way for the decision makers of the international community, which are listed as follows: Prevention, Precaution, Subsidiary, Common but differentiated responsibility, Openness, and Polluter-pays principle.

In particular, the most important principle among the six ones mentioned above is the principle of Common but differentiated responsibility. I do completely support the call raised by Mr. Ban Ki-moon the SG of UN in his statement delivered at the United Nations General Assembly which took a first step toward furthering the goals of the Bali Action Plan on climate change at a special two-day debate—"Addressing Climate

Change: The United Nations and the World at Work"—that was held in New York on 11-12 February, which is quoted as follows:

“Developed countries need to take a clear lead, but success is possible only if all countries act. The more ambitious the commitments by developed countries, the more actions we can expect from developing countries. The more developing countries engage, the more ambitiously the developed countries will commit”. Only this call from the top leadership of UN should be completely implemented into real actions and Bali Road Map goes smoothly with the better achievements for the goals of global SD.

Rongming Wu

Senior Policy Researcher for Fujian Provincial Government,

Head of the Special Research Group of Fujian P

Pilot of UNDP CAPACITY 2015

Associate Member of ICLEI

Standing Deputy Director of Fujian APEC Finance & Development Research Institute

Deputy Secretary-general of Fujian Association of Overseas & Returning Scholars

Member of the Experts Team of Fujian's Local Sustainable Development

Advisors of Local Governments of Longyan Municipal, Dongshan County, Changtai County and Zhangping City

Nzoa Gervais, CAALD Coordinator, Cameron

Dear Members,

There are often few links between policies and on -the ground realities, so that policy debate is unable to learn from the field, and people in the field can not participate in debate. Old notions of strategies as perfectionist "master plans" which are invariably imposed from outside, are being dispensed with, and new thinking recognizes the need to build approaches that actually work. The particular label applied to a national sustainable development strategy is not important as long as the common characteristics of the strategy are adhered to. Putting a national sustainable development strategy into operation would, in practice, probably consist of using promising existing processes as entry points. There are limits to what even the best corporations and NGOs can do on their own, especially in the absence of a forum to debate integration and trade-offs with one another, and with government.

Sustainable development strategies offer a way of managing and structuring a national response to the challenges of the MDGs in general, and to MDG 7 - Ensure environmental sustainable in particular.

Kind regards.

NZOA Gervais,
CAALD, Coordinator
BP 2441 Yaounde Cameroun
Tel:(237) 99 88 58 06
Email: nzoager@yahoo.fr

Dated: March 6, 2008

James Greyson, Sustainability Analyst, BlindSpot, UK

Dear All

Please accept my apologies for the length of this contribution. I've tried to be brief but a certain amount of explanation is needed to suggest the potential for a policy response which matches the scale and urgency of global problems. Please feel free to ask where more explanation would help.

1. How can the international community ensure that more funding for advancing sustainable development is made available on a predictable basis? What steps by which actors can be taken to facilitate, on a concessional and preferential basis, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, especially to developing countries?

This question is a good starting point but doesn't quite address the scale of funding needed for sustainable development. We don't need just more funding, we need to be absolutely certain of sufficient funding to achieve sustainable development globally - and fast. We don't just need technological solutions in developing countries, we need reforms at all levels, everywhere. In fact the whole idea of some countries 'developing' towards the dominant model of high waste and high energy use is obsolete. All countries should now consider themselves as (sustainably) developing countries. Countries without a large unsustainable infrastructure and deeply-entrenched expectations of unsustainable lifestyles may even have some advantages compared with so-called developed countries.

In 1543 the Polish astronomer Nicholaus Copernicus challenged the view that the Sun revolved around the Earth, arguing instead that the Earth revolved around the Sun. His alternative model led to a revolution in thinking, to a new worldview. Today we need a similar shift in our worldview from treating the environment as part of the economy to treating the economy as part of the environment. Strategically this means the economy should be adapted to support the environment (not the other way around). The absence of broad sustainable development over the past 35 years may be seen as society's failure to make this switch in worldview.

I do hope that everyone can agree about the abundant evidence that the old worldview hasn't worked, either for protecting nature's capacity to support people or for creating stable markets that meet all people's vital needs. There are understandable misapprehensions that a new worldview would sacrifice economic success. As described in my 21st Feb post, the old worldview created only the illusion of economic success. The new worldview, if applied, would not need to prioritise ecological and social ahead

of economic goals, nor would it seek to constrain the level of economic activity. All three goals can be integrated in a win-win-win strategy by adapting economics to make this possible.

The outcome of this strategy would be to 'turn on the taps' of sustainable development funding. Today funding relies on small flows of voluntary contributions by industry and hand-outs from governments. The level of investment is totally inadequate compared to the vast investment flows supporting unsustainable technologies, infrastructure and lifestyles. There is only one adequate funding mechanism available - market economics, which can be adapted to make sustainable development an automatic consequence of future lifestyles and economic activity. Governments would be freed from (half-heartedly) promoting sustainable development to the more exciting role of overseeing this sustainable market transformation and other tasks which markets cannot do for themselves (eg international cooperation, land use planning, adaptation to climate change, wealth redistribution, etc).

Due to the economic impacts of unsustainability (social, ecological and financial volatility) economic growth is no longer viable with the old worldview. But it is with the new - so a sustainable market is good also for business and the economy. In future people may wonder how it ever seemed to make sense to run the economy as a closing down sale.

2. What specific initiatives can ECOSOC promote to be launched to facilitate realization of the goal of sustainable development? How can we foster human and institutional competencies to execute supportive policies?

Four specific initiatives that can be promoted by ECOSOC are given here. Given the urgency of a global sustainable transformation these initiatives should progress in parallel, rather than one at a time. A further initiative for environmental resources is given for question 3 below.

(i) Correct the glitch in the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm (see previous post). A new international treaty is needed to rebalance the unintended transfer of responsibility for sustainable development away from markets and towards nation states. No amount of regulation can make up for an absence of effective economic incentives. In accordance with the 'polluter pays' principle markets should remain fully responsible for their impacts. Nation States and the international community should be responsible for ensuring markets accept this responsibility, which is necessary for the protection of all people and the environment on which they depend. The old way uses a large volume of prescriptive regulation to achieve a small reduction in unsustainability. In the new way, very few regulations and very few economic reforms could stimulate unimaginably vast and rapid implementation of sustainability.

(ii) Economic, ecological and social goals should be integrated by global adoption of the goal of 'circular economics', which is market reform that allows material resources to

meet people's needs without systematically accumulating as wastes in the air, land and waters. The practice of 'linear economics' should be recognised world-wide as obsolete due to persistent undermining of the ecological, social and financial stability needed for humanity to survive and thrive. Most of the problems caused by linear economics can be prevented by a single new market-based economic instrument applied globally, which obliges producers to 'insure' against the risk of their product becoming waste. Premiums would be invested in environmental, community and industrial capacity to meet people's needs whilst joining up the resource loop. (Please contact me for the explanatory paper, which was developed in a European Advanced Research Workshop, or see a summary at <http://www.blindspot.org.uk/briefing.html>).

(iii) International security and cooperation should be arranged by reversing a historical economic disincentive which causes national income statistics to undermine non-combative problem-solving. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) currently includes weapons-related spending, which gives nations with high dependence on military 'solutions' higher economic growth and the illusion of greater economic success. Since a global culture of close cooperation and decreasing weapons spending is essential for sustainable development it is necessary to reform the way that economic growth is calculated. The international removal of weapons-related spending from GDP would provide a strong signal to politicians that lower military spending is desirable, without dictating how much they should spend. (Please contact me for the explanatory paper, which was developed in a European Advanced Research Workshop, or see <http://www.grosspeacefulproduct.org.uk>)

(iv) ECOSOC could also promote an initiative throughout the UN and beyond to explore and define the characteristics of the revolution in worldview which is necessary for any serious attempt at continuing human habitation on this planet. The UN has developed a wealth of expertise on sustainable development and the UN would seem to be the ideal institution to finally make it happen, if it is to happen at all. However those in the UN should be aware that they are unlikely to be immune from the global sustainable development delusion - over decade's humanity engages in a multitude of initiatives without any prospect of sustainable development actually happening globally. For example we can question whether incrementalism works; is less bad good enough? Can indivisible global problems really be managed by splitting them up into institutional compartments? Will humanity perish from complacency or will it explore the opportunity of a renewed worldview, renewed economics and renewed aspirations?

3. How can we promote equity in the distribution of benefits from environmental resources? Is it advisable to promote payment for environmental services? If so, what is/are the most effective way(s) to do so?

The above initiatives would make a vast difference to the protection of ecological capital (non-renewable resources, biodiversity and the stability of ecosystems) and the distribution of ecological services (the 'revenue' from undiminished ecological capital). The material requirements of the economy would fall rapidly as material cycles were

joined up (old resources becoming new resources rather than wastes). Producers who require the services of ecological 'sinks' to process the dispersed residues of their products would be responsible either for creating sufficient new ecological capacity or paying for its creation. These payments provide an opportunity to raise both social and ecological capacity simultaneously, in effect to create a pro-poor market for ecosystem services. The key to promoting equity is for these payments to be channeled not to wealthy land-owners but to communities who are helped to meet their own needs whilst working to raise ecological capacity (productive biodiverse areas). One approach to net positive impacts of communities are described here <http://www.earthscan.co.uk/?tabid=4390>.

The new worldview, of human society and their economics adapting themselves to survive as a part of nature, carries an implicit message that we must live on ecological revenue, not capital. It is us who must adapt to nature, not the other way around. Since the planet is overstocked with people, it is imperative not just to slow the rapid loss of nature but to halt and reverse it. This would create more ecological services, supporting more people's needs and opening the possibility for future net negative greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The latest scientific understanding of positive feedback dynamics show that cutting emissions is no longer enough - the task for the future will be to cut GHG atmospheric concentrations. (See <http://www.apollo-gaia.org/BaliandBeyond.htm>).

It should be clear to anyone familiar with biodiversity issues that existing instruments are ineffective against the scale of the challenge. The above proposed instruments create the necessary circumstances for international cooperation and large investment flows designed to support a reversal of the loss of nature. However those who control land and waters would continue to attempt to extract ecological capital and convert it to private monetary gain. Governments would continue to be susceptible to weak controls over such extraction. Unavoidably increasing resources prices will make this problem worse. So a further instrument is necessary.

In answer to the above question, the most effective way to protect ecological capital whilst promoting equity would be for all land, sea and non-renewable resource ownership title to be interpreted by international treaty as a title of guardianship of the ecological capital on behalf of future generations. All licences for access and use of natural resources would be interpreted as applying only to the renewable harvest, which neither diminishes ecological capital nor causes resources to accumulate as wastes. The remedy under international law for failure to safeguard ecological capital would be access to the resource being transferred to a community-based trust. This need not affect the ownership of the resource, though it would affect its market value. So this creates an economic incentive for resource owners to protect ecological capital, and a legal basis for communities to gain access to resources (in particular, to land) whilst expanding ecological capital and services.

Resource owners and licensees which were interested in the resource only for the purpose of extraction could have the opportunity to bid for a proportion of available investment flows which would compensate them for the transfer of title to a community-based trust.

This scheme could run as a 'Dutch auction' with lowest bids winning a share of available funds. An existing example of a bid is Ecuador's proposal for compensation to keep their oil in the ground (see <http://www.chinadialogue.net/article/summary/1424-Ecuador-s-startling-oil-proposal->)

James Greyson
Sustainability Analyst
BlindSpot, PO Box 140, LEWES, BN7 9DS UK
Tel: 01273 401 331
<http://www.blindspot.org.uk>

Tim Garbutt, Managing Director, Integrity Agency Limited

I think the points from Rongming are very interesting:

Funding and transference of technologies

Should there be a programme to define by region and sub-region the likely technologies required eg mobile phones for Africa or bio-fuels for South America with the required green specifications and forecasts for uptake and carbon reduction and a specified budget.

Much of the debate seems to revolve around the greening of technology in general and the relative merits: I think we need to move forward from that debate into some practical measures by region.

I'd recommend a 3 month working party perhaps led by the World Bank to create such a template.

The point here on ensuring "all governments" and "governments at all levels" I think is crucial to the development of the MDG – here in the UK the MDG are relatively well-known but are not as far as I can see incorporated specifically into national and regional policy. Doing so would both enhance understanding of the MDG and provide a working framework for all national, regional and local policy.

I'd recommend a specific Minister in each nation is custodian of the MDG and cascades the measures into national and regional policy.

Environment services – in some ways payment is already a factor though "polluter pays" and tax investment – the cross-border areas of major pollution seems to be aviation, maritime and power plants. Aside from these, road transport is the most visible domestic polluter. Tolls and satellite charging have met resistance within the UK as have road-building programmes as they reach saturation point. Point 1 above should help mitigate against this situation in developing nations through specifying green technologies.

I'd recommend an EU initiative on aviation, maritime and road transport – perhaps led by a Nordic region Transport Minister

The issue for ECOSOC and MDG seems less about political will and more creating some specific templates of technologies and economic policies that can create a framework for implementation.

Bali seems to demonstrate that the policy procedures have run their course.

Best wishes.

Tim

Tim Garbutt
Managing Director

Tel: 01227 765 025

Web: www.integrityagency.co.uk

Mobile: 07879 631 550

Dated: March 10, 2008

Nurjemal Jalilova, UNDP Turkmenistan

Dear Colleagues,

Thank a lot for this opportunity to make contribution that might be considered by ECOSOC. I have been following all responses, and just managed to make my own contribution.

The transition to environmentally sound and sustainable development has become a high priority for the development process in Central Asia. Numerous initiatives have been undertaken in the region to tackle sustainable development issues at local, national and regional levels. However, their impact is still low mostly because these initiatives have been undertaken in an isolated and piecemeal manner.

A major challenge facing the region is the inclusion of the environment as a central component within its economic transition and recovery planning framework; linking issues such as public health and productivity, risks of irreversible damage to natural resources, and the diversification of its industrial base.

A region-wide economic slow-down resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 has hindered the Central Asian countries' capabilities to advance with sustainable development programmes. To date, the economic declines over the transition period have

contributed to cooperation for environment management mainly through the facilitation of donor investments. While the states themselves donate a great deal to this process, it has been proposed that without such third party action, the level of environmental cooperation in the region would be minimal.

Ecological conditions in Central Asia have become critical. The acute and persistent environmental problems are trans-boundary and global in character. At the present stage of economic development, many of the abovementioned problems require attention and financial support from international organizations. Many countries in the region have found it difficult to raise the necessary investment for improving environmental infrastructure. Securing financial resources for the implementation of Agenda 21 remains a problem for the countries.

Increasing public awareness of environmental issues is a fundamental means for tackling environmental problems. Equally important, however, is translation of the information on environmental issues into action. There seem to be two constraints in this respect. The first is that the information required as a basis for adopting sound environmental policies is not available. The second is the lack of political commitment necessary to translate public awareness of environmental issues into action. The lack of public awareness of environmental issues leads to human activities that put burden on the environment.

One of the key achievements in the Central Asian countries since becoming independent states has been the creation of a hopeful legislative and institutional framework in the sphere of sustainable development. Further definition of the jurisdictions, responsibilities, and authorities of the various sustainable development institutions still needs to be established. In addition, institutional capacity building is required to assist the countries in developing and implementing integrated sustainable development programmes, particularly at the regional level. Clarification of the regional and national institutional arrangements is crucial to move from the planning stage to the implementation stage of sustainable development projects. Regional agreements even when accompanied by political will from each of the signatory countries, face obstacles in implementation when there are not clear mechanism in place.

Most Central Asian countries has policies and/or legislation relating to poverty, but few have explicit policies on poverty eradication alone, or policies linking environment, poverty, trade and social development. In addition, few environmental policies specifically target equity or poverty issues. Health policies and programmes are still mainly formulated in isolation, with no linkages with related sectors. The policies focus on curative rather than preventive measures, particularly in terms of environmental issues. It is often the case that people and countries make an explicit trade off, accepting long-term environmental degradation to meet their immediate needs. In many marginal rural areas population growth inevitably leads to degradation of the environment as people utilize their environment for subsistence. This deplete not only current resource base, but also future resource availability. Long-term sustainability of resource use in degraded areas with high population is an urgent issues that government of the countries and international donors have to address through the promotion of appropriate policy instruments.

Role of international community is to provide technical support to pilot innovative ideas, to work with countries to develop alternative strategies, and to listen and partner with private sector which is going to provide much of the engine in innovation and financing.

A long term equitable global regulatory solution is needed –one in which rich countries exercise real leadership to provide support to developing countries in exchange for the global benefit of greener, smarter growth, a solution that provides certainty to stimulate research development investment in transformational technologies, a solution that facilitates financial flows to developing countries. The specific recommendations for international community, basing on lessons from past success and shortfalls of the Central Asian countries, would be: i) intensify the focus on environmental issues whenever engaged in supporting national programmes in these sectors; ii) explicitly integrate environmental concerns in all regional initiatives on water, energy and transport. National environmental experts should be involved in these efforts as a way to strengthen national environmental capacities; iii) work with private and official partners to help analyze the prospects for regional water and energy infrastructure development, and find creative financing solutions for worthwhile investment programmes and projects; iv) offer support and encouragement to Central Asian countries for joining and implementing global environmental conventions.

Best regards,

Nurjemal Jalilova

Programme Analyst,
Poverty Reduction, Social Inclusion and MDG
UNDP Turkmenistan
nurjemal.jalilova@undp.org

Dated: March 11, 2008

Sarah Atkinson, Environmental Science Graduate, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

A brief comment in regards to questions two and three of part II
A positive initiative would be to fund and promote studies in traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) with indigenous people, incorporating both TEK and western science with an aim to increase sustainable development globally. In Australia, though much traditional knowledge still exists, our relationship as a whole, with our local indigenous people does not necessarily allow us as westerners to learn from and appreciate what is and can be done, in terms of sustainable living. Change in our management of the environment is occurring globally which allows for this opportunity for us all to gain from the vast amount of local knowledge across the planet and implement this knowledge in a positive way.

I realise that many people already understand and agree with what I have written, but I felt that we all need a reminder that it is up to everyone to participate in our goal of

achieving sustainable development, and up to us to make sure that those who are held back due to various circumstances are also heard.

Sarah Atkinson

Environmental Science Graduate
Macquarie University
Sydney, Australia

Dated: March 12, 2008

Amitava Mukherjee, United Nations, Thailand

Dear Colleagues,

I am an incorrigible supporter of born "community based interventions" for Achieving Sustainable Development. So to me the path to achieving sustainable development is enshrined in the following quotes:

Go to the people,
Live with them,
Serve them,
Respect them,
Plan with them,
Start with what they know,
And build on what they have
(Mass Educator, Jimmie Yen of China)

Warm regards

Dr. Amitava Mukherjee
United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Bangkok,
Thailand
Phone: 66-2288-1939
Fax; 66-2288-3007

James Greyson, Sustainability Analyst, UK

Dear All

With three days remaining of this e-discussion now is the time for anyone with further thoughts to email to mdg-amr@groups.dev-nets.org. There seem to be fewer contributions in this second phase so it would be great to see more of people's creative

and practical ideas for action. Some of the choices that face us as an international community can be drawn from the 10 comments recently circulated. (Apologies if I inadvertently missed anyone.) I will be grateful for all reflections and criticisms.

Teresa Flores describes the environment as a life support system for all human well-being. Despite all economic and social activity being utterly dependent on the environment, humanity has failed to align its economic framework with sustainable development and instead has pursued a succession of inconsistent sectoralised policies. For example after 15 years of no meaningful CO2 reductions, hopes for improving living conditions of the poor are further away. Humanity now faces economic, social and ecological collapse.

If a serious response is to be made, should it be managed from 'the top' or at all levels? Should there be a new Global Environmental Organization, to balance the World Trade Organization? Or should the institutions of the economy and of markets be adapted to align economic, social and ecological goals?

Eric Belvaux presented documents outlining some of the options for scaling up positive incentives for supporting ecosystem payments. Any new markets and payment systems would have to be pro-poor, in order to avoid worsening inequalities.

Can payments for environmental resources and sinks be built into everyday buying and selling? When ecological capital is being used up, should access be transferred to Community Trusts which protect and regenerate the resource?

Justin D. K. Bishop points to symmetry between financial debt and ecological debt. Individuals and governments take part in a global culture of living beyond our means. This is creating accumulating instabilities that are so complex that the social, financial and ecological consequences are unlikely to be noticed until it's too late to go back. There is a reminder for cash-poor, resource-rich nations not to sell their irreplaceable natural capital and to sell the 'interest on the capital' (sustainable harvest) only after their population's needs have been met. 'First world' aspirations are unsustainable, even for the first world.

Can unsustainable development be avoided by following the local wishes of government and citizenry? How can local choices add up to global sustainability?

J. G. Ray emphasized that all funding should be sustainable development funding. Anything less invites unprecedented consequences. A global emergency effort at sustainability should include eradication of poverty, epidemics, illiteracy and democratization at all levels of governance in all nations. The spiritual value of equitable sharing has become a scientific necessity since there is no fenced-off territory where the rich can avoid pollution, resource depletion and climatic instability, for example.

Sharing can replace materialism by reshaping the economy to meet environmental and human needs but can this be done effectively with different economic instruments in different countries? Or would a global agreement allow faster and more coordinated action?

Nurjema [Jalilova](#) uses the acute environmental problems of Central Asia to highlight the ineffectiveness of isolated and piecemeal initiatives. Policies must work preventively as part of a long term equitable global solution.

Is more regulation within clearer institutional mechanisms able to avoid swapping long-term environmental degradation to meet immediate needs? Or can the environment and people's needs both be looked after by reforming unsustainable price signals in markets?

[Rongming Wu](#) proposed more effort with local sustainability using existing institutional arrangements. Developing countries will follow a clear lead by developed countries.

Is the language of 'development' at risk of perpetuating habits of addressing poverty by industrialization rather than by sustainable development?

[Nzoa Gervais](#) notes a disconnection between policy and on-the-ground realities, with a need for a broad forum to join the two. Strategies with imposed 'master plans' don't work.

What can we say about sustainable development that applies everywhere and what decisions can only be made with local hands-on knowledge?

James Greyson looked at the first international agreement in 1972 covering sustainability issues, which placed responsibility with nation states, leaving markets free to operate unsustainably ever since. A new international agreement could rapidly implement circular economics, to meet more people's needs whilst protecting both the environment and economic growth.

Are international agencies such as the United Nations capable of discussing change on the scale of the problems?

Tim Garbutt considers a template for specifying green technologies for each region, to be determined in a 3 month study.

Is it possible for anyone to know what's best for every region? What could be done with such a plan?

[Sarah Atkinson](#) reminds us that indigenous ecological knowledge offers insights of sustainable living which are valuable for modern cultures which are anything but sustainable.

What values and skills should we learn?

James Greyson
Sustainability Analyst
BlindSpot, PO Box 140, LEWES, BN7 9DS UK
Tel: 01273 401 331
<http://www.blindspot.org.uk>

Dated March 13, 2008

Iyad Abumoghli, UNDP Lebanon

Dear All

I would like to share with you a few suggestions without too much theoretical background. I am sure that these suggestions can be elaborated in pages of study, but let's consider some of them:

- 1- We need to create a World Sustainable Development Forum in the shape, level participation and enthusiasm as the World Economic Forum. The Sustainable Development Commission CSD is good, but it is not working.
- 2- The UN needs to create the Sustainable Development Council as opposed to the ECOSOC.
- 3- Sustainable Development Tax should be imposed on weapons manufacturing and use. The known cost of war on Iraq alone, up to date, is around 510 billion US \$. This could have been used to solve and face tremendous global environmental and poverty disasters and challenges.
- 4- Payment for Environmental Services should be applied. However, this should be considered along with a human rights based access to environmental services, i.e. minimum of 40 l/capita/day of safe drinking water, minimum of 1500 cal of nutrition, minimum of x meter square of shelter, etc. The scheme should consider "No payment" from the poor based on the previous human rights and then incremental increase depending on how much is used or utilized.
- 5- Creation of National Sustainable Development Funds financed from taxes imposed by the Polluters Pays Principle and the revenue generated from the payment for environmental services. These SDFs should be integrated into national budgeting and national development planning.
- 6- A strengthened and capacitated Global Environment Organization is essential to work on normalization of environmental issues with no on the ground activities which should be left to other organizations to ensure global reach and impact. Countries should

be accredited to the GEO based on their policies and strategies to achieve sustainable development and application of SD principles.

7- Creation of a Global Early Warning System funded by developed countries, managed by the WMO and accessible free of charge to all countries.

I hope the above is useful.

Best wishes
Iyad Abumoghli
UNDP Beirut

Daniela Piffer, Johannesburg South Africa

Dear Colleagues,

Charity starts at home, so does respect for the environment, recycling, alternative ways of growing, community help etc. Until we have an imposition of what could be the best practices on developing countries it is not going to work. Most of the technological advanced tools are not applicable in rural areas in Africa and unless local people are not going to be given the right skills projects are not sustainable. The point is that more than often rural communities in Africa have known for a long time what they need and their traditional methods worked until the outsider came along and told them that their technique was obsolete. Rural communities are often forced out of their initial income because of environmental factors, because of political and economical blunders. Poverty is often created and the status quo maintained.

Once we look at poor communities in a different way we realise that they represent an economical asset, if we recognize that they have the ability to buy and to produce. CSR is not about window dressing, but about accepting that a corporate needs to intervene in a society together with government and civic society to change the fate of people who are looked down just because they can not prove that they have an address. We have thousands of feasibility studies, environmental studies, yet where we fail is at understanding that rural communities have already got an answer. There is very little point in having all these so called shelf studies, when the only thing that underpowered people need is a kick start, a little help that allows them to market their produce, sell it on the local market, some insight in education for their children etc. All some of the donors or international NGO's are worried about is the image, the statistics and the results. While a lot of research is being done it seems to me that also a lot of money is made out of poor people with the pretext that we are helping them.

Who is helping whom? Administration costs often are a lot higher than the real project implementation and both so called benefactors and other intermediaries along the way reap the benefits. The poor remains poor.

Why is it otherwise that we have not yet reached any of the goals? To achieve sustainability Africa needs to look at regional integration first, a strategy from inside Africa has to be put in place. Until the solution is sought outside it will not be sustainable. Many Zimbabweans, Nigerians, Rwandese etc have studied in Europe or the States, many of them have joined the high ranks of corporate, many of them are geniuses, so who says that African countries can not find their own solution? Until we assume that Africa is the little economy which needs help and that the West is the only solution we will not go anywhere. There is a need for strong political leadership and economical initiatives but there is also a need for Europe and the States to relook at their policies and agreements and look at Africa more as a trade partner and not an aid recipient.

Daniela Piffer

DMC
7 Harrison Avenue
Douglasdale Ext 4
2021 Johannesburg
South Africa
Tel.: +27(011) 706 62 52
Fax: 0866592141
Cell 27 82 377 3256
E-mail:dmc_@telkomsa.net

Dr J G Ray, Reader and Director of Environment Studies, Kerala, India

Dear All,

To get involved in a global discussion on Sustainable Development was really a great experience.

What I feel is that the great Carl Rene's advise of 'Think Globally and act locally' shall be the basic principle of solving problems of the present day developmental crisis.

We need a continuous global thinking process. We shall think of developing certain global norms for all resource consumptions at all levels; we must try making common policies for safe resource utilizations everywhere; we shall find true principles of governance.

Let us do all these, taking into account the ecological fact that humans are really a global infinite species existing as the face of the complex earth system responsible for its stability and sustenance.

Let the 'Heavenly Love' binds us all towards one goal with strong commitment to find out the truth of Nature, to be happy forever.

Thanking all once again,

Dr J G Ray, Reader and Director of Environment Studies,
St Berchmans College, Changanacherry-1 Kerala, India

Michael Massey, Associate Fellow, Energy, Environment and Development Programme, London

Colleagues,

Some comments on the first pair of questions:

1. How can the international community ensure that more funding for advancing sustainable development is made available on a predictable basis? What steps by which actors can be taken to facilitate, on a concessional and preferential basis, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, especially to developing countries?

These two questions, in addressing the major ones of the roles of finance and technology, encompass so many issues and debates that they are very hard to respond to in a succinct and substantive way. Perhaps the key general if trite comment is that there are few one-size-fits-all answers. Getting the most effective mix of public/private domestic/foreign finance and making sure it supports sustainability will mean and require very different things in different places. Should the emphasis for the international community be on encouraging ways of “sustainability-proofing” investment wherever it comes from rather than on the complexities of questions about required/desired levels of different sources? So for example, it would generally encourage actions that encourage partnership working, that encourage subsidiarity (that is to say decisions should be made as locally as possible); and that encourage application and streamlining of sustainability appraisal, assessment and indicator techniques.

It seems to me that the second question’s focus on technology transfer is not the best line of approach. I suggest one framed in terms of how to encourage the most rapid and widespread diffusion of sustainable technology.

Since before Rio there has been much time and energy spent in international policy debates and diplomacy on the “transfer of environmentally sound technology to developing countries on preferential terms”. And in that time there has also been staggering growth in the rate at which technology has developed and its applications multiplied as it has spread around the world. We have an increasingly globalised, networked world that technology has been instrumental in stimulating and enabling. That

has included very rapid uptake, including in developing countries, of applications of satellite-and computer-related technologies.

But it is hard to see many ways in which that long diplomatic debate has had a clear influence on the real world experience. In a few specific and narrowly-drawn examples like the Montreal Protocol it has had an effect. But in the main, the world has passed it by. So I suggest we shift attention to what I believe is what we are really looking for: rapid development and quick and widespread deployment of technologies that are more efficient and environmentally and socially acceptable – innovation and diffusion of sustainable technologies.

Different countries will have different priorities, depending on strengths and weaknesses in natural and human resources, infrastructure, governance and so on. So there is no universal model. But we could draw up a menu of the steps that need to be encouraged including identification by countries of their priorities for improving scientific and technological capabilities (and integrating sustainability thinking in that); and ways of providing support. That may include many things such as improving links between universities and business within and across countries; encouraging creation and development of SMEs; encouraging inward investment; identifying opportunities for moving up the value chain eg exporting processed rather than raw materials.

Michael Massey
Associate Fellow
Energy, Environment and Development Programme
The Royal Institute of International Affairs
Chatham House
10 St James's Square, London, SW1Y 4LE
M: +44 (0) 7846015232
F: +44 (0) 20 7957 5745
E: mmassey@chathamhouse.org.uk
W: www.chathamhouse.org.uk/press

Independent thinking on international affairs

Rongming Wu, Senior Policy Researcher for Fujian Provincial Government, China

Dear All Members:

Revisiting the points issued in the background note for Phase II discussion by the moderators once again, it seems necessary to say more relevant the notion that “The second part of the e-discussion aims to propose concrete initiatives – by ECOSOC, by governments, by the UN system, and by multi-stakeholder partnerships – that can

facilitate realization of the goal of sustainable development. In order to fill the competency gaps which exist, human and institutional capacity-building is an area which should be given particular consideration when developing pilot proposals or recommending existing programmes for replication or scale -up.” Here I would like to express three points of view listed below.

1) Highest possible attention deserves the international community to pay on the latest top national policy initiatives on SD in China. I don't agree at all the opinion raised by Mr. Ajmera that “We cannot allow China (and most definitely the United States) to continue to grow at the expense of the world's environmental resources. Yes, we have to give them a chance to develop but they have to develop differently from how the United States and Europe did. We have to find different "vehicles" for different people in different times.” It maybe forgiven only because that he knows too little about China. However, all those who have the similar opinions as Mr. Ajmera will no doubt get rid of the out of dated ideas upon China as soon as he or she knows well the following latest policy initiatives issued officially by the top leadership of China .

2) A completely new revolution on development outlook happened in China. The Party Report of the 17 Central Committee of the CPC makes the clarified definition for Scientific Outlook on Development as “The Scientific Outlook on Development takes development as its essence, putting people first as its core, comprehensive, balanced and sustainable development as its basic requirement, and overall consideration as its fundamental approach.” See: <http://www.idcpc.org.cn/english/cpcbrieff/17rep.htm>. You can find no gap between the goals of China's leadership set in the new blueprints for thoroughly applying scientific outlook on development and the new requirements for the goals of overall Xiaokan Society and the internationally agreed goals including MDGs and SD. It can be expected with full confidence that few fragmented barriers of institutional mechanism will exit for the international cooperation on achieving the global SD. Those messages mentioned on the two website: (<http://www.idcpc.org.cn/english/events/080227.htm> and http://english.gov.cn/2008-03/11/content_916738.htm) will let you know the deepening reform of China's administrative systems and the reshuffle plan for the governmental institutions have been put into implementation for the purpose of let Chinese grass roots people to benefit from globalization while achieving MDGs and SD during the current situation of China's wholly involvement of globalization.

3) The general principle of “peace, development and cooperation”for China's diplomacy policy and new strategic blueprint for China's opening to the outside world noted “Benefit each other for common prosperous” for China's opening to the outside world which is well stressed in the 2008 government report delivered by Premier Wen Jiabao on March 5th will create a better and more sound environment for China's upgrading international cooperation for achieving SD. See: website: http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-03/05/content_7719556.htm
It is strongly proposed that China be determined as Ideal Pilot Country for UN Reform and Example Country for Capacity 2015. I am sure it is just a new starting point for the new revolutionary scientific outlook on development put into reality with the newly

administrative system serving the people for achieving the internationally agreed goals including MDGs and SD in China. China is in urgent need of the help and support from the international community. Therefore it is suggested that China should be determined as the ideal Pilot Country for UN Reform as these 8 pilot countries featuring deliver as one with system wide coherence have proved success since last year. Extension these successful experience into China and let China produce good practice impacting the world should be listed on the agenda of both the international community and Chinese central government. Capacity 2015 Initiative with the unique features including emphasis on enhancing local sustainability, integration of goals of Doha Agenda, MDGs and JPOI, integrated partnership networking among international, national and local levels with joint efforts of all stakeholders is no doubt the best instrument and tool for the international community to help vast local government to implement three official documents issued by the State Council in integrated approach. Those three official documents can be well known in the website of China's National Focal Point for global Sustainable Development:

<http://www.un.org/esa/agenda21/natinfo/countr/china/index.htm>. The three authorized official documents include <China Agenda 21>, (see <http://www.acca21.org.cn/ca21pa.html>) <Program of Action for Sustainable Development in China in the Early 21st Century> (see: http://en.ndrc.gov.cn/newsrelease/t20070205_115702.htm) and <China National Climate Change Program> (see: <http://en.ndrc.gov.cn/newsrelease/P020070604561191006823.pdf>). China has not only the largest population among the developing nations but the largest number of local governments with 2800 counties with diversified conditions including economic growth, social development and environment. If only the commitments of Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 be translated into reality in all the countries in China can the internationally agreed goals and commitments be fulfilled worldwide? China was the example country for Capacity 21 for being first developing country making out national Agenda 21 and is also the example country for being the first developing country making out national climate change program. In Premier Wen's 2008 government report, implementing in overall way of China's national climate change program has been listed on the agenda of national government work this year. All the local governments are accounted for responsibility to reduce emission and energy conservation in restrict with other responsibilities on fuller employment, education, health care, and improvement of livelihood standard with the emphasis on poverty reduction. It can be concluded that all the local governments and the people in grass root organizations are much eager than ever before to benefit from Capacity 2015.

Call for more global supporters and partners for launching Capacity 2015 in Fujian for China. Here I would like to share with all members the following two documents reflecting the work process of the special research group on Fujian as Pilot Province of UNDP Capacity 2015.

Turning Commitments into Action and Working Together in Partnership without Failure as an Option-----Proposal for Launching Capacity 2015 in Fujian for China with No Time to Lose Once Again (Outline)[No.14 of Series Working Papers of 2007] This

report written in English with Chinese summary has been circulated for both e-discussion and face to face discussion with UNDP/ China, the relevant national institutes and our provincial departments by the end of last year. It is expected to get comments and suggestion from all members.

2. Selective Documents Relevant to Application for Fujian as Pilot Province of UNDP Capacity 2015

Inside these selective documents you can see what progress we have got and what mechanism barriers we have met for launching Capacity 2015. We are in urgent need to get comments and suggestions from the global friends to readjust and revise those documents keeping pace with the times. Those two documents mentioned above seem too long and are uploaded in my blogger

<http://www.blogger.com/posts.g?blogID=5333727879083825224>. Please allow me to make call for global supporters and partners for Capacity 2015 into China's once again on this occasion.

Rongming Wu

Senior Policy Researcher for Fujian Provincial Government,

Head of the Special Research Group of Fujian P

Pilot of UNDP CAPACITY 2015

Associate Member of ICLEI

Standing Deputy Director of Fujian APEC Finance & Development Research Institute

Deputy Secretary-general of Fujian Association of Overseas & Returning Scholars

Member of the Experts Team of Fujian's Local Sustainable Development

Advisors of Local Governments of Longyan Municipal, Dongshan County, Changtai County and Zhangping City

Mary Ennis, Executive Director, DPI

Dr. Amitava Mukherjee summed up the path to achieving sustainable development quite wisely in the quote shared with us yesterday. We will never achieve sustainable development unless we foster meaningful consultation with, and inclusion in decision-making processes of all relevant stakeholders. ECOSOC should use its convening power to bring stakeholders together to ensure capacity-building. This would be a concrete measure towards achieving sustainable development. This would be particularly important for marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities, whose views and context expertise are often ignored to the detriment of sustainable development as a whole, and those groups in particularly.

Mary Ennis, Executive Director

Disabled Peoples' International (DPI)

847 Topsail Road, Mount Pearl, NL

Canada A1N 3J9

Tel. 709-747-7600 Fax. 709-747-7603

Email: mary@dpi.org
Website: www.dpi.org

Dated: March 14, 2008

H.M. Ibrahim, Director Maritime Research Institute, Malaysia

Dear friends, colleagues and concerned environmentalists,

First and foremost I would like to say that I am a “Johnny-come-lately” to this discussion group and therefore may have missed some of the earlier discussion on the six very important items discussed. Perhaps I can just touch on those items that were not mentioned in the recent discussion pertaining to the part I and II.

Topic 1:

From my experience, I find that the political leadership more often than not has a very limited or little knowledge on Sustainable development. Many seem to like the use of the term but find it difficult to put it into practice to achieve the three pillars of Sustainable Development. Often economic growth and social development take precedent over environmental protection especially when people have to grapple with when or if there is a next meal. Therefore I think there should be a major effort for public education aimed towards people but particularly the political leadership the world over.

Topic 2:

There should be big efforts and PR campaigns to thrust for various instruments for development planning such as NSDS, PRSP, UNDAF etc and these should have local and in country coordinators to carry the information and flag to excite the local population who must buy in into these efforts.

Topic 3:

As a Marine policy Research Institute, The Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA) can and have had programs to support SD through our MAP talks. A global network of like minded institutions can go a long way towards developing SD awareness and action with little funding support.

Topic4:

Developing and developed countries must realise that Environment encompasses all. Funding must filter down to the masses that can see the benefits of SD, transfer of environment sound technologies especially on bread and butter issues such as solid waste, sewage and environment consideration in planning and development.

Topic 5:

There is a need to develop more public education packages, info exchange, courses and portal. This can assist to foster human and institutional competencies.

Topic 6:

Economic instruments have proven to be the most effective way to infuse environmental approach to development and development. More and more effective and people friendly ways to be developed to incorporate financial instruments to achieve SD.

I know some of these have been mentioned but if I have been able to help reinforce these thoughts then it would have been worth my two cents worth of contribution.

Thanks.

Prof. H.M. Ibrahim
Director of Research
Maritime Institute of Malaysia

Henry Ekwuruke, Executive Director, Development Generation Africa International, Nigeria

There are six parts to the answers in transforming Africa for sustainable development in the 21st century. First we have to ask the question,

1. Where we have come from;
2. Then, where we went wrong;
3. Where we are right now;
4. Where we want to go, and what we are up against;
5. What we have to do or are doing;
6. Finally, the big question of whether or not we can make it happen – sustainable development.

In my publication tagged "Can Africa claim the 21st Century?" I was candid that it is when we reposition poverty reduction at the centre of our development efforts that we will experience the 'hopeful' and asked the international community and African partners to work more smarter towards raising strong awareness among developing countries towards understanding of concepts, that stabilization policies are not the same as structural adjustment and involve more youth and children as partners in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) being prepared at the Country level for sustainable development.

ECOSOC can promote programme and initiatives that articulate young people's views and aim to realize the potential of young people as sustainable development actors in their communities, supporting existing initiatives like the Creating Local Connections – West Africa (CLCWA) project of TakingITGlobal.org and Development Generation Africa International (DGAi)'s programme on 'What Children and Youth Feel and Think – Nigeria and West Africa about issues of Millennium Development Goals, etc.

ECOSOC can enable communication, and develop a strong compact with young people in Africa, not for young people in Africa and around the world, this compact will be linked to performance indicators agreed by both parties.

Presently, participating in a UNITAR Course in International Environmental Law, I want to turn first to the concept of sustainable development and ask us to help ourselves, it is a phrase that's frequently thrown around but not always grasped. Basically, it is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It requires systematic and carefully coordinated policies that will improve lives in a truly progressive way.

Our sustainable development policies must have three dimensions: economical sustainability, environmental sustainability, and institutional sustainability. HIV/AIDS is not making the work easy. The youth must be put at the heart of the response against HIV/AIDS. Let's increase payment for environmental services and advocate the Polluter Pay Principle to the later.

I will not conclude without appreciating your wonderful opinions and ask for strong collaboration with you for young people's development. We are publishing a report on: "The Power of the Rising Development Generation Africa" and requesting for your grant to make the book see the light of the day and also seek your support for our programmes.

Finally, I continue to see great opportunities and wonderful platforms that enable the turning of these opportunities into realities. ECOSOC will have to say we Can for young people and for Africa!

Thank you.

Henry Ekwuruke,
Executive Director,
Development Generation Africa International (DGAi)
189 Aguiyi Ironsi Crescent, Umuahia 440001, Abia State - Nigeria.
Phone: +234(0)802 524 9923, 07039791470

James Greyson, Sustainability Analyst, Blindspot, UK

Dear All

May I endorse the comments of Rongming Wu regarding the potential of China for innovation in achieving sustainable economic growth. The disagreement with Mr Ajmera can be resolved by seeing that economic growth under the obsolete unsustainable model was possible only because the damage to society and the environment frequently involved costs which added to growth, giving a false impression of success in most national economies. Hence many people argued that further growth should not be allowed, when as Mr Ajmera seemed to be saying, it is the vehicle for growth which must

change, not the opportunity of growth itself. The necessary vehicle is circular economics. China's current 5 year plan contains a national goal for establishing circular economics, which is reinforced in Mr Wu's linked documents. Circular economics is the key to future growth and for enabling the concept of sustainable development to be finally implemented as an alignment between economic, ecological and social goals. For those who are unfamiliar with the difference between yesterday's linear economics (waste-making) and tomorrow's circular economics (resource-making) I warmly recommend an entertaining and thoughtful short movie which is freely available for everyone to watch at <http://www.storyofstuff.com>. This shows that circular economics is not just about resource efficiency, it covers all aspects of development. It also demonstrates how the continuation of linear economics would be a disaster, not least because the accumulating damage is now undermining economic activity so badly that future economic growth will be restrained in most countries. Over time, with worsening financial, climatic and societal instability, the potential for economic growth-as-usual will be wiped out everywhere.

I agree that China is very well-suited to providing valuable case-studies of regional progress with circular economics. However it should be noted that, due to the urgency of change and the harm of international market distortions, circular economics must be practised globally. Any international institution could take up leadership on this issue, which ties together many vital challenges including climate, poverty, biodiversity, economic stability and international security. I am already working on these topics in NATO Advanced Research Workshops. However it would be pleasing to see the United Nations demonstrate leadership here, which would satisfy the faith of the world's people in its visionary charter.

With best wishes to all and thanks for this dialogue.

James Greyson

Rongming Wu 1) Highest possible attention deserves the international community to pay on the latest top national policy initiatives on SD in China. I don't agree at all the opinion raised by Mr. Ajmera that "We cannot allow China (and most definitely the United States) to continue to grow at the expense of the world's environmental resources. Yes, we have to give them a chance to develop but they have to develop differently from how the United States and Europe did. We have to find different "vehicles" for different people in different times." It maybe forgiven only because that he knows too little about China. However, all those who have the similar opinions as Mr. Ajmera will no doubt get rid of the out of dated ideas upon China as soon as he or she knows well the following latest policy initiatives issued officially by the top leadership of China .

James Greyson

Sustainability Analyst

BlindSpot, PO Box 140, LEWES, BN7 9DS UK

Tel: 01273 401 331

<http://www.blindspot.org.uk/unitednations.html>

Graham L. Twaddell - Northern Ireland - currently residing in Arizona, USA

In order for countries to achieve sustainable development, industry must be fully committed to developing in a sustainable manner.

Often viewed as the harvester, rather than the planter, industry has much to offer in terms of social advancement. Chapter 30 of Agenda 21 reminds us that by creating jobs, industry provides an enormous opportunity to eradicate poverty, offer health care, and provide gender equality and education to communities where these basic human rights are not currently available.

Either through consumer demand or stringent regulation, industry must adhere to the pillars of sustainable development (social, environmental, economic and institutional) to survive and prosper in future markets.

An internationally (or at least nationally) recognized, straight forward, ranked (i.e. bronze, silver or gold) recognition of an individual company or facility's continuous endeavor to become sustainable is a must for countries to achieve sustainable development.

Companies should be able select a variety of agreed indicators and strive to attain more sustainable results in social, environmental, economic and institutional realms of their business. Companies could use the attained sustainable accreditation to competitively compete for market share while touting the positive impacts of sustainable industrialization.

Whether at a global, national, state, county or local level; sustainable accreditation is a marketable recognition of a company's dedication to developing in a sustainable manner. Once industry begins developing sustainability, countries are one step closer to achieving sustainable development.

I have adapted the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development baseline sustainability indicators for countries to fit many industries within the state of Arizona, USA. Companies who have adopted this sustainability program have informed me that they would like a nationally recognized accreditation, similar to the internationally recognized ISO 14001.

Graham L. Twaddell
Environmental & Sustainability Manager

Envirosure Solutions, LLC
1979 East Broadway Road
Tempe, AZ 85282
Tel: 480 784 4621
Fax: 480 784 2207
www.envirosure.com

Robson Mello, Chairman International Renewable Energy Organization, UN Center, New York

Dear All

1. How can the international community ensure that more funding for advancing sustainable development is made available on a predictable basis? What steps by which actors can be taken to facilitate, on a concessional and preferential basis, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, especially to developing countries?

The only way is to create an international tax system on oil. I suggest an "excise" tax of that 1 % /barrel of oil across the board.

This is the only way to have some predictability of income to fund sustainable development initiatives. Specially with focus on agriculture through Renewable Energy projects. The U.N. in the form of its member states must come forward with measurable and applicable projects around the globe. A treaty with specific deadlines and measurement systems must be implemented, monitored and rewarded. Developed countries must support these initiatives and share technologies at 1/4 of its regular price.

2. What specific initiatives can ECOSOC promote to be launched to facilitate realization of the goal of sustainable development? How can we foster human and institutional competencies to execute supportive policies?

ECOSOC should create awareness of key players in the private sector and governments to the benefits of synergies and PPPs. The work frame should come from the U.N. The member states must take a leadership role (read developed countries). This leadership role has come through solidarity by means of transfer of technologies at 1/4 of the price. Without solidarity we won't go anywhere.

3. How can we promote equity in the distribution of benefits from environmental resources? Is it advisable to promote payment for environmental services? If so, what is/are the most effective way(s) to do so?

Developed countries and the emerging markets must help the "drowning world" –read islands and small territories of the world.

An "excise" or "green tax" should be applied to oil. We already know the answers and have the resources to save the planet, we just have to leave the egos and self-interests aside. Whatever initiatives should be implemented, they must focus on Africa first, as the most visible form of the deplorable state of our inability to work together.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite all of you to join our goal thru renewable energy. Please go to our website www.ireoigo.org to learn more about our goals.

Sincerely yours,

Robson Mello
Chairman
International Renewable Energy Organization
I.R.E.O.
mello@ireoigo.org
www.ireoigo.org
www.bfausa.org
884 Dag Hammarskjöld UN Centre
#20050 New York, N.Y. 10017
516. 790.0310 - Cell.
212.647.7000 - Office
212.202.4100 - fax

Matilde Gomes Mendes, Technical Advisor on Gender and Market Chain Development, Guinea Bissau

Dear all,

I have appreciated by line the latest contribution. The indicators of sustainable development achievement are objectively evident at community based living condition, their social and economic improvement. The rural communities' inclusion/empowerment is critical success factor for wide sector development and consequently for a country development, if the development vision and strategy is not properly localized there will be less probability of assuring its ownership and sustainable achievement. Community based intervention is crucial for achieving sustainable development- the community embodies the impact preconditions.

Let's give some attention to community based approach,

Matilde Gomes Mendes
Technical Advisor on Gender and Market Chain Development
SNV Guinea Bissau
Tel: + 245 22 28 82

Tim Garbutt, Founder and MD Integrity Agency Limited

These are terrific ideas Laid and I'd add an armaments tax on landmines etc which should be banned, and heavy armaments e.g. bombers, aircraft carriers and tanks. The polluter pays tax would again be a dividend on key sectors e.g. aviation.

Also worth considering:

- closer budgetary control between UN and World bank for economic and environmental protection
 - renewable technology focused in underdeveloped nations e.g. solar mirror technology
- Kindest regards.

Tim

Tim Garbutt

Founder and MD

Tel: 01227 765025

Web: www.integrityagency.co.uk

Mobile: 0787 963 1550

Snail mail:

Integrity Agency Limited

78 Broad Street

Canterbury

Kent

CT1 2LS

Yusef Alhadri, Health Care Manager, SSFD, National NGO, Yemen

Dear Colleagues

The first thing we should keep in our mind is that

1. Plan with People; do not plan for them
2. Plan in the community, do not in office
3. Set with people and ask them what they want?
4. Let people themselves collect the data that you want. Do not collect it by your self or other people outside of community.

Thank you all

Dr. Yusef Alhadri

Health Care Manager

Alsaleh Society Foundation for Development - SSFD

San'a - Yemen

E.mail:- yusef_alhadree@hotmail.com

Dated: February 17, 2008

Kathleen O'Halleran, Northwestern Oklahoma State University

Hello colleagues in sustainability. I have thoroughly enjoyed the high quality of exploration on this most crucial topic. I am a college instructor and am presently working on my PhD in Sustainability Education. My work is aimed toward a dissertation constructing a theoretical (GIS-based) model for sustainability, hopefully

capable of addressing (and measuring) its many dimensions. As well noted throughout this forum, there are many competing agendas, stakeholders, dimensions and thus, interpretations. Yet, from such tensions may yet emerge a viable and authentically dynamic framework.

I would like to add my thoughts to the dialogue.

1. How can the international community ensure that more funding for advancing sustainable development is made available on a predictable basis? What steps by which actors can be taken to facilitate, on a concessional and preferential basis, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, especially to developing countries?

I suspect that such effectiveness requires cooperation and commitment, at key stakeholder levels. This cannot be done without the commitment of the elites to the core values of a sustainable planet, according to all three pillars—environmental, economic and social. They must want it, if it is to succeed. They are the ones that must be ready to sit down at the table and move their State institutions, NGOs, academe, media, and market mechanisms from fragmented, self-interested, weak sustainability models (at best) to strong sustainability models that will resonate with the vast majority of all populations. Values of inclusion, tolerance and justice occur at the level of popular movements, but without every country's key elites agreeing to common core values and practices of sustainability governance in the first place, it would be difficult to ensure commitments for sustainable development predictably, much less to assure that such efforts target those who need those most.

2. What specific initiatives can ECOSOC promote to be launched to facilitate realization of the goal of sustainable development? How can we foster human and institutional competencies to execute supportive policies?

I would suggest that the ECOSOC must take a bold and challenging approach—a leadership role. First, with (a) research: leading the way in participatory research and decision-models in all regions of the globe that aim toward measuring sustainability across region-specific economic, environmental and social dimensions; Secondly, (b) in the establishment of programs that require inclusion of disenfranchised populations and that set legitimizing benchmarks (sticks and carrots) of institutional competency; and Thirdly, (c) in establishing policies for continuing participation in ECOSOC programs that fold in mechanisms for equity in the distribution of benefits from environmental resources. Such specific mechanisms would be defined by the first two initiatives (research and decision-modeling, and inclusion).

3. How can we promote equity in the distribution of benefits from environmental resources? Is it advisable to promote payment for environmental services? If so, what is/are the most effective way(s) to do so?

With respect to the final question, as I see it, competing claims to the meaning of sustainable development (weak or strong economic models, in particular) confuse at best and taint at worst the legitimacy of the cause. The ECOSOC must take steps to prevent

such powerful co-opting. The ECOSOC can incubate positive change, if it imbeds within its practices and programs the core values and standards of a strong sustainability model. Such a model would necessitate promotion of payment for environmental services. It is the only effective approach, because it is the only one that successfully captures the problem of runaway development, unsustainable practices and the rampant social inequities that result from these forces. Carrots and sticks again seem a viable approach. Promote those projects and initiatives that are building strong sustainability models, and sanction those that do not. Find strength in the middle, or rising income countries for such endeavors. Any political analyst will tell you that any initiative consisting of a small contingency of rich and a large mass of poor—without a substantial middle to buffer their extremes—is doomed to fracture and fail, over and over. Each, for their own reasons, attempts to impose its will on the other. But the middle—ah—the middle, it wants both a fair game (accountability) and economic security. Though these are more on the idea level than practical policy approaches, I offer them as ideas upon which perhaps, those more policy-minded may find inspiration. I have learned much from the dialogue thus far, and humbly hope I have made even the slightest of contributions to the quality of input this forum has generated.

Respectfully to all,

Kathleen O'Halleran
Northwestern Oklahoma State University
Alva, OK, USA

Heiner Benking, Consultant and Facilitator, Berlin, Germany

Question 2:

What specific initiatives can ECOSOC promote to be launched to facilitate realization of the goal of sustainable development? How can we foster human and institutional competencies to execute supportive policies?

First:

Revisit the mandate: Harmonisation of environmental Information.

The Environmental Experts of the Economic Summit of the G7 (EEES) issued in the 80s a mandate for the Harmonization of Environmental Information. (We remember that in 1975 the G7 was founded in Rambouillet, France, to tackle issues of global responsibility, and this can surely be seen in view of the “Problematique” raised a few years earlier (see below)).

Unfortunately, the idea and project to bridge incomparable information and to link information from a high level and agreed-upon reference schemas were not followed up on in the early 1990s. Central is the concept that information with different granularity--

from different sign-systems and cultures, in different languages, and from various spatial and temporal scales--can be related in “common frames of reference”.

Pls. see the “manager” Noel Brown of Rio’92 re “common frames of reference” and ideas behind tHe Earth Summit.

Noel Brown 1994 requested from scientists (surveyors and remote sensing specialists in particular) to: establish common frames of reference to better gauge the human prospectus, develop a common understanding of the state of the environment,

Quoted from: <http://www.ceptualinstitute.com/genre/benking/melbourne.htm>

Unfortunately, in the early 90s technology only allowed one to develop “meta-data” systems and so the concept to maintain “[information about environmental information](#)” (meta-information) was discarded in favor of the technological “quick-fix” of handling just “hard and dead data. “ Every organization was in this way encouraged to develop and maintain their own repositories, instead of looking into bridges between sectors, times, and scales. Remember that the Internet was not yet on the horizon, and it was very typical to keep and maintain ones “own” data. But what is needed is the in-between, the how-to of dynamic patterns, overlap and interactions. Storing only “compatible” data, not comparable information, was what was possible, but not what is needed. See [Patterns and Scales](#) in the International Encyclopedia of Systems and Cybernetics. But this has changed in the last 20 years! We have collected ways and means for an International Council of Scientific Unions, CODATA conferences: please follow the papers from 2005, but also go back to annual CODATA symposia from 1994, and 1992:

<http://benking.de/systems/codata/>

Second:

Revisit the Original Prospectus of the Club of Rome, and our present Dialogue and Decision Culture. Consider how we today include minority views and come to consensus and shared actions, options and strategies.

Why? There is more to Future Studies than looking into prospective futures (scenarios, models). There are also participative and normative dimensions to be included. Creating models is good and needed, but to be relevant, they have to “touch base” by checking the norms and values, what is said, written, and meant and how it is done by some against the odds. Please revisit my AMR 2008 section I (“Challenges” contribution, part (A, B) as there are intersectoral strategic dilemmas and problem clusters as we know, not only from the studies for Rio 1992, but as have been revisited by Christakis as a review of the Original Problematique, or Prospectus of the Club of Rome 1969-1970 (see A).

Please compare this with research and curricula done in Germany in the last years is to look into syndromes, see: [SYNDROME CONCEPT](#)

http://www.wbgu.de/wbgu_syndromkonzept_en.html, These syndromes give good examples but provide no context or help to see the issues in relation and perspective, and do not check vicious-problem cycles and how their feed-back. Even more recent work on a global orientation frame for education (2008), outline only for example the challenges of vertical and horizontal integration (across scales and sectors) but do not give a clue on how to tackle the issues in a coherent, concrete and repeatable way for learners and

policy makers. See new German report “Orientierungsrahmen” [KMK-BMZ 2008](#) (translation in progress). It appears to me that the consideration of any Big Picture view is neglected and avoided by all means – but can we create, compare, and relate various “big pictures and stories”? Isn’t man a “model-making” being?. Any approaches in this direction over the last 20 years have been ignored, but I feel should be revisited by a body in charge for a higher stand. Above examples by institutions are symptomatic for staying on the surface – not questioning relations, depth, interactions, leverage or tipping points... Examples on how to make a difference was presented since the late 80’s in the papers below. I feel there are many more examples when we can search for common patterns “between” the ivory towers of our artificial scientific enterprise, which cuts with artificial “boxes” and walls into living, dynamic matters. Pls. see: [Geo-Eco-Dynamics](#): - [Geo-Object-Coding](#): - [Global Change](#): - [Emergence and Systems](#): - [Spatial or Spatial](#): - [Show or Schau](#): - [Global Covenant](#):

The dilemma why above concrete proposals, even when done for premier institutions worldwide seems to be in the avoidance of anything “beyond the box” providing overview, and the known “quick-tech-fix” solutions which are readily available and modern in their times, but focus only on what is technically feasible and “state of the art”, instead of what is needed and wanted.

The above two proposals for the AMR 2008 are examples to look into deeper connections, and not get distracted by beautiful pictures or numbers. The author has worked for 20+ years on visualization and media demagogy; he feels that any argument and issues need to be “rooted” in their specific situation and context. Maybe check: [Environmental Data Visualization](#) and Visual Demagogy, Springer Scientific, 1987.

The core issues seem to be [overclaims and oversimplification without overview and orientation](#) and the [accelerated use of technology](#) as a way to ignore looking into the “Problematic”. See [ROBUST PATHS TO GLOBAL STABILITY, Section I](#), the Global Challenge and the elements for Section I of this [AMR 2008: \(A, B, C\)](#).

Instead of lamenting over obsolete reality maps we should establish also “externally related workplaces of the mind” ([please see](#) this paper - [\[more\]](#) and see how exploring alternative dialogue and decision cultures ([N](#)) possibly can help us to go deeper.

It is a moment to question central assumptions--like how we outline and share a commons and allow us to expand our reality maps and open the door for new approaches to the environment and our picture of our and other’s places in the greater commons. Pls. see a proposal for a conference in June 2008 [Exploring & Negotiating Old & New Reality Maps/Models, New Ideas and Spaces](#) for the Council of Europe in 1996, and the Elements outlined in the Challenges Part I of this AMR 2008.

Subscript:

The above two Initiatives proposed are central and critical ones, because the moment you start questioning “everybody knows” standards, the door is wide open to address diversity, quality, trust and fidelity issues, how we include vague data, minority views and other ways to speak, think, express, display, and share and what this has to do with creativity and cognition, and bigger, shared, and negotiated commons which can be placed between categorical extremes, the dualistic approach of higher versus lower, good or bad, given or not-given, material-immaterial....

Heiner Benking
Consultant and Facilitator
Berlin, Germany
Maybe visit: www.quergeist.info, www.benking.de, www.in-between.org, www.open-forum.de
E-mail: heiner@benking.de

Mrs. Rachel Mamba, Member of the Executive Committee of the International Network for Cultural Diversity, Central Africa

We wish to thank you for the opportunity given to us to share our views on the "Sustainable Development" Forum.

Sustainable development implies the improvement of living conditions, the progress achieved by a given population, society or community over an unlimited time span. Indeed, all countries do not enjoy the same level of development. Developed or industrialized countries have reached a high level, whereas emerging countries are in the process of developing, and at an even lower level the 3/4 of African countries plagued by war and strife are lagging far behind as concerns their economic welfare.

The first part of our debate focuses on the challenges facing these countries when they try to streamline economic growth targets, social development and environment protection.

Economic growth cannot be achieved unless all activity sectors are integrated into national development policies because they are linked together and constitute a vital interest for the economy. The 2nd part of the debate covers political efforts undertaken in the countries to achieve development results; the question was to show how the different instruments for the planning of sustainable development and for support to framework such as the National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and those of the United Nations for development aid (UNDAF) can effectively contribute to the integration of the three pillars of development.

Since, as we underlined in the 1st part of the debate, all countries do not share the same reality, it is vital that each and every one should be able to implement a strategy which fits the planning mechanisms while taking into account the three above named pillars with a particular emphasis on the PRSP that embodies the first objective of the MDGs and on Goal 7 related to environment. There is need to review the existing dialogue so as to take into account the engendering component both at national and international levels, upscale the funding allotted to NGOs, non governmental bodies that are closer to grassroots populations who are development actors and that are not properly assisted since most of the funding is directed towards the level of the state.

As far as stakeholders are concerned, the monitoring and follow-up mechanism has a special importance to ensure that the targets set in the development plans are achieved. Governments have to deliver.

This is my feedback concerning the 2nd part of the debate;

Thank you

Mrs Rachel MAMBA
Member of the Executive Committee of the International Network for Cultural Diversity,
Head of Department of Regional Museums,
Founder of the Women's Museum of Central Africa

Rongming Wu, Senior Policy Researcher for Fujian Provincial Government, China

Dear All Members

I feel very glad to get the messages of the last day e-discussion. I have to make my fourth contribution including the following three points listed below.

1. Thanks for Mr. James Greyson's endorsement to my point of view.
2. Thanks for the smart summary the moderators have done for the Part-I e-discussion. However, it seems necessary to omit such phrase "China given as an example" in the first paragraph of the summary. Without such omitting it would make out some harmful impact. Indeed, the concept of development for GDP first and then the environment protection has been strongly argued against from top to down in China. Those two websites deserve to be recommended to all the international communities:

1) Full text of Hu Jintao's report at 17th Party Congress See:

<http://www.idcpc.org.cn/english/cpcbrie/17rep.htm>

2) China's 'two sessions' to use "scientific outlook on development" to tackle problems
See: http://english.gov.cn/2008-02/27/content_903296.htm

I would like to reiterate again that a real revolution of scientific outlook on development which is completely in the line with internationally agreed goals which integrate MDGs, Doha Agenda and JPOI has started to be translated into grass root organization with stronger than ever political will and administrative measures in China, which needs urgently the highest possible attention for the whole international community to pay on.

Best Regards to All Participants!

Rongming Wu

Senior Policy Researcher for Fujian Provincial Government,

Head of the Special Research Group of Fujian P

Pilot of UNDP CAPACITY 2015

Associate Member of ICLEI

Standing Deputy Director of Fujian APEC Finance & Development Research Institute

Deputy Secretary-general of Fujian Association of Overseas & Returning Scholars

Member of the Experts Team of Fujian's Local Sustainable Development

Advisors of Local Governments of Longyan Municipal, Dongshan County, Changtai

County and Zhangping City

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Ulrike Maschke, Executive Director, Center for PROFS, University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Dear Colleagues!

Thank you for this opportunity to make concrete suggestions for “best practice” strategies to help reach the goal of sustainable development.

I

1. Sustainable development requires the reduction / eradication of gender-based violence on all levels and in all fields of society (please see the statements in the UN Secretary General's “In-depth study on all forms of violence against women”).
2. The successful reduction of gender-based violence leads to an increased appreciation of women.
3. Where the appreciation of women increases, an atmosphere develops in which men – now – want their women's innovative potential to be implemented in family, community, environment

II

How can we achieve the changes necessary for this process in respect to consciousness/ thinking and feeling/ emotions and behaviour?

- Sustainable/ lasting successes in this sense can be achieved by enabling men to abandon with dignity those old / traditional structures in which contempt and disrespect for the female gender have their roots.
- The path will then be open to consider / create / live new structures that want/that include appreciation / respect for women as a matter of course.

III

The strategy developed by the Center for PROFS, the Value-Centered Approach, (of which the EU-Commissioner for Health, speaking at the European Parliament on the occasion of the opening of the exhibition, “Win Power – Stop Pain”, on 6 Nov. 2007 said, that this methodology accomplishes what it sets out to do) is equal to the challenge.

Our large-scale experience in the field in Kenya (since 2002) has demonstrated the efficacy and the transferability of the programme. See: www.fulda-mosocho-project.com/ – English version – Link “More about the Fulda-Mosocho-Project”

The application of the Value-Centered Approach has set in motion such a process of change in relations between men and women, including and particularly with regard to the population of a ‘developing country’, so that experts have referred to it as a ‘full-scale cultural revolution’ (please see, for instance, the reports by the major German television channel, ARD).

Where women are brought out of a position of inferiority by their men, the way is clear for the implementation of the Millennium Goals: The causes of poverty can then be tackled systematically and on the other hand Environmental, climate and technological problems addressed by tapping the new potential for innovation that women represent.

IV

In order to initiate such processes of change / of transformation, and to move them in the direction of sustainability, experts are needed – highly qualified psycho-social specialists with further qualifications in the Value-Centered Approach.

The Center for PROFS conducts such training schemes.

V

The focus of this “specific initiative” is on MULTIPLIERS (50% m, 50% f), who have either gone through formal academic further education - e.g., teachers of all kinds of schools or acquired their skills in non-formal education - e.g., community leaders / opinion leaders (of all ages – from young people to senior citizens).

VI

The training schemes could be extended (from Kenya) to other countries, in order to demonstrate the creative effectiveness of this methodology – in comparison to others – in the unique context of each culture. This would be a “specific initiative” that could be promoted in cooperation with ECOSOC in order “to promote to facilitate realization of the goal of Millennium Development.”

VII

Making training available to multipliers (m and f) at all levels / in all fields would help create the “human and institutional competencies “needed to “execute supportive policies“– that is, to implement the Millennium Goals.

Thank you!

Yours faithfully,

Ulrike Maschke
Executive Director
PO Box 2318, 36013 Fulda, Germany, Phone
Mail: center-for-profs@web.de
www.fulda-mosocho-project.com
