

Message from [Ms. JoAnne DiSano](#),
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Preparations for the 12th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-12)

This message is intended to clarify the preparations that are being undertaken by the Secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development in advance of CSD-12, to be held in New York from 14-30 April 2004.

Programme of work: The first three days of CSD-12 (14-16 April) will serve as a preparatory meeting for the ten year review of the Barbados Plan of Action for the Small Island Developing States that will take place in Mauritius later in 2004.

The following two weeks (19-30 April) will serve as the CSD-12 Review Session. The Review Session is not a negotiating session. As agreed at CSD-11, the review session will undertake an evaluation of progress in implementing Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), while focusing on identifying constraints, obstacles, successes and lessons learned in the process of implementation with regard to the thematic cluster of issues for the session: water, sanitation and human settlements. The high-level segment will be held from 28-30 April.

Format of the CSD-12 Review Session: Sessions will be held in a variety of formats including panel discussions and interactive debates. There will also be regional sessions, one for each of the UN regions.

Attendance: It is expected that a wide range of experts will attend the Session from governments, inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and the [Major Groups](#) to ensure that the debate is informed by a rich mixture of experience and knowledge.

Parallel Events: A Partnerships Fair and Learning Centre will be organized by the Secretariat as parallel events to the CSD-12 Review Session. The DSD website (www.un.org/esa/sustdev) contains information about these events and will be updated with the latest information as it becomes available.

Side Events: CSD-12 will continue the tradition of side events to allow stakeholders from governments, IGOs and Major Groups to showcase initiatives, hold debates, and/or facilitate discussions on any theme related to sustainable development.

Inputs: The principal inputs for the CSD-12 Review Session will be a series of Secretary-General reports (discussed in more detail below), reports from the Regional Implementation Meetings taking place in the months leading up to CSD-12, the results of other meetings organized in support of the work of CSD, discussion papers and other inputs from Major Groups, and other documents, such as more comprehensive regional analyses.

Secretary-General's reports: _As decided in CSD-11 ([CSD-11 decision](#)), the Secretariat will prepare a series of Secretary-General (SG)'s state of implementation reports. An overview report will reflect overall progress in the implementation of actions, commitments and targets dealt with in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, as well as the decisions of the Commission. Other reports will contain a detailed review of progress of implementation for the selected thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements, taking into account the cross-cutting issues identified at CSD-11.

Since CSD-11, the Secretariat has been working with other parts of the UN system to gather the latest information together. A scoping exercise has been carried out to identify the commitments made in Agenda 21, the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation for the three key CSD-12 areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. The UN specialized agencies dealing with the CSD-12 thematic issues have been reviewing data and information that they currently have available related to the status of national implementation of commitments for consideration in the Secretary-General's reports. The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) has been reviewing the information contained in the 2002 Country Profiles and National Assessments related to the three CSD-12 thematic areas and will feed this into the preparation of these Secretary-General's reports. Reports are currently being prepared with inputs from the UN system that assess how far the international community has come towards implementing those commitments.

CSD-11 delegates were clear that the UN system should reduce overlap and duplication in its requests for country reports. They decided that Secretary-General's reports should be prepared on the basis of information already provided, and that existing reporting systems should be used to the fullest extent possible. With a view to trying to reduce the reporting burden on countries, the CSD Secretariat has been undertaking action on several fronts. No new surveys or information requests were specifically generated for this process, but rather relevant new or updated information that agencies have obtained since that which was reported at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) should be optimized. Related to national reporting, country profiles on these three thematic areas distilled from the 2002 inputs will be sent to countries with an abbreviated list of focused questions for review and update. They should prove helpful in countries' preparations for the CSD-12 Review Session in April 2004.

DSD's internal deadline for completion of the Secretary-General's reports is the end of December 2003. These will then go through an approval process within the UN system. It is currently expected that advance, unedited copies of the reports will be made available for delegates (in English only) in early February 2004. These will be edited and translated into all six UN languages, and the official reports will be issued at least six weeks before the CSD-12 Review Session.

Outputs: The main written outputs from the CSD-12 Review Session will be a report including the Chairman's summary, aimed at identifying constraints and obstacles and

possible approaches for implementation, the inputs from Major Groups, records of the regional discussions and activities held as part of the Partnerships Fair and Learning Centre.