

CSD-11 Builds Implementation Track for Johannesburg Outcomes

In its first session since the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, see *NGLS Roundup 96*), the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) agreed to a 14-year programme of work that will focus on the issues of water, sanitation and human settlements in its first two years. Meeting from 28 April-9 May 2003 in New York to establish a work programme for the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), and Agenda 21, the CSD was faced with the challenge of maintaining the momentum generated from the WSSD, producing a work programme that was both focused and flexible, as well as re-establishing itself as the preeminent forum on sustainable development in the international system.

By many accounts, this Commission lived up to its task of creating a "New CSD," in the words of its Chair Valli Moosa, Environment Minister of South Africa, and of harnessing some of the innovations from Johannesburg, through a well-mediated ministerial dialogue, interactive sessions between ministers and Major Groups, a session on Major Group recommendations on the draft decisions, a partnership fair, side events, a learning centre, regional implementation fora and the presence of Major Group representatives in negotiating rooms. The CSD attracted some 40 ministers and other government representatives, heads of UN agencies and other international organizations, as well as over 900 representatives of Major Groups, indicating that there is still widespread political support for the CSD.

CSD RESTRUCTURES

The task of CSD-11 was to create a new structure and work programme that would put it on track to implement Agenda 21 and the JPOI. Ministers early on set the tone for discussion by expressing their support for changes; however, negotiations proved more difficult than expected, as delegations disagreed over the degree of focus and flexibility to be built into the new work programme as well as the nature of intergovernmental negotiations in an "era of implementation." Finally, dele-

gates agreed to organize the new CSD in a series of two-year action-oriented "implementation cycles" which will include a "review session" and a "policy session." Each two-year cycle will focus on a thematic cluster consisting of three to six issues. This framework strikes a balance between the approach of the United States that preferred looking at one issue over a two-year period and the approach favored by the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China) to be more comprehensive in each cycle, looking at up to eight issues. The draft resolution is explicit, however, that "the selection of some issues for a given cycle does not diminish the importance of the commitments undertaken with respect to the issues to be considered in future cycles."

The review sessions of the "New CSD" will be held in April/May for a period of two to three weeks in the first year of the cycle, and 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. The focus of the session will be to identify constraints and obstacles to implementation with regard to the selected thematic cluster of issues for the cycle. This session will include a high-level segment, an exchange of regional experiences, dialogues with experts, sharing of best practices and lessons learned, as well as learning centres and partnership fairs.

In the policy year, or second year of the cycle, the CSD will convene an intergovernmental preparatory meeting for one week in New York. The meeting, to be held in February/March, will discuss policy options and possible actions to address the constraints and obstacles as identified during the review year. Based on these discussions, the Chair will prepare a draft negotiating document for consideration at the policy session to be held in April/May of the second year. This session will take policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation related to the selected thematic cluster of issues.

The CSD was clear that effective implementation would necessitate greater involvement from the regions in the

implementation cycle. In this regard, the UN regional commissions have been invited to organize "regional implementation meetings." These meetings may be planned in collaboration with other regional and sub-regional organizations and bodies, as well as regional offices of funds and programmes of the UN system, and international finance and trade institutions.

THEMATIC CLUSTERS

Perhaps the most difficult area on which to reach agreement was the issue focus of the two-year cycle and annual CSD meetings. The input of ministers during the high-level segment provided firm guidance in this respect and reflected a widespread belief that water and energy issues required urgent attention, as they have no other institutional home in the UN system. In the first cycle (2004/2005), water, sanitation and human settlements will form the thematic cluster. This will be followed by energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change in the second cycle (2006/2007); and agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa in the third cycle (2008/2009). The following four cycles are regarded as indicative and could change in order to accommodate emerging issues: transport, chemicals, waste management, mining, and a ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns in the fourth cycle (2010/2011); forests, biodiversity, biotechnology, tourism and mountains in the fifth cycle (2012/2013); oceans, seas, marine resources, small island developing States (SIDS), and disaster management and vulnerability in the sixth cycle (2014/2015); and in the seventh cycle (2016/2017), the overall appraisal of implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation has been scheduled.

Cross-Cutting Issues

During negotiations on the thematic clusters, the G-77/China expressed concern that by focusing on selective issues for two years, the CSD ran the risk of diverting attention and momentum from key issues in the JPOI. In the words of the G-77/China Chairperson, "at the rate of one issue per year, it would take 50 years to cover all the issues in the JPOI." However, they were able to secure agreement on crosscutting issues such as means of implementation and poverty eradication to be discussed every year. The group of cross-cutting issues reflects key concerns of all negotiating partners and includes: Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production; Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development; Sustainable development in a globalizing world; Health and sustainable development; Sustainable development of SIDS; Sustainable development for Africa; Other regional initiatives; Institutional framework for sustainable development; Gender equality; and Education.

REPORTING

The issue of reporting mechanisms was debated at length by delegations, some of which were in favour of establishing a new system for reviewing, evaluating and monitoring purposes, while others favoured keeping the existing framework. The resolution calls for an "effective system of reporting for reviewing, evaluating and monitoring progress" in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the JPOI. Countries will be asked to submit reports on a voluntary basis and will focus on concrete progress in implementation. These reports should consider the social, environmental and economic aspects of sustainable development and focus on the appropriate thematic cluster of issues. Inputs for these reports should come from all levels: national, sub-regional, regional and global.

These reports as well as contributions of UN agencies, programmes and funds, the Global Environment Facility, Major Groups, regions and sub-regions and international financial and trade institutions will form the basis of the Secretary-General's State of Implementation Report. This will present a detailed review of progress of implementation in the selected thematic cluster of issues for the cycle at all levels and will be prepared in advance of the review session.

MAJOR GROUP DECISIONS

The presence and involvement of Major Groups representatives was evident throughout the CSD, as several hundred organizations were registered and a variety of dialogues were built into the programme to consider their views. The nature of their involvement, the extent of their impact, and the definition of Major Groups itself formed the basis of much of this dialogue and discussion during negotiations.

The CSD decided that the contributions of Major Groups to the CSD should be further enhanced. It laid out the following ways in which this could happen: through their involvement in the interactive dialogue during the high-level segments; making the multi-stakeholder dialogues more action and implementation-oriented; striving for a better balance and better representation of Major Groups from all regions at the Commission; as well as through their active involvement in partnership-related and capacity-building activities organized as part of the CSD. The resolution also made a provision to enhance the participation and effective involvement of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the JPOI, and to promote transparency and broad public participation. Some delegations wanted to see the terms "civil society and other relevant stakeholders" connected explicitly to the work of the CSD. Others said that while they supported their involvement in general in implementation efforts,

tying them to the work of the CSD would fundamentally open up Agenda 21 and the definition of Major Groups and their stated relationship to the Commission. As in the JPOI, the CSD-11 resolution does make particular reference to the role of the scientific community and its contributions to the CSD, and to the role of educators.

Status of WSSD NGOs

The CSD agreed on a separate decision regarding the status of NGOs and other Major Groups accredited to the WSSD. Going into CSD-11, there was a question of whether or not those NGOs and other Major Groups already screened and accredited to WSSD would be extended CSD roster status as had occurred following the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). According to the European Union (EU) and some other delegations, this would allow the CSD and WSSD follow-up process to maintain the interest and involvement of hundreds of NGOs in a more expeditious way than through the backlogged Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) NGO accreditation procedure. The US made it clear that it did not see the post-UNCED arrangement as a precedent and did not want ECOSOC to establish a new mechanism in this case; it preferred that the NGO Committee of ECOSOC deal with the entire matter. After much deliberation, delegates agreed "to recommend to ECOSOC, in accordance with established UN rules of procedure and taking note of the ongoing work of the NGO Committee, the status of NGOs that were accredited to the WSSD so that the Commission can benefit from their contributions as soon as possible." As with the other outcomes of the CSD, this decision will be further dealt with at the substantive session of ECOSOC, to be held in Geneva from 30 June-25 July 2003.

PARTNERSHIPS

As it hosted a partnership fair and showcased over 40 partnerships, the CSD also took up the issue of guidelines for existing and future partnerships. In the JPOI, the CSD is given the responsibility as the intergovernmental focal point for discussions on partnerships. The CSD stated that these are to be seen as a complement to, but not intended to substitute for, intergovernmental commitments. The criteria and guidelines established by CSD-11 build on the Bali Guiding Principles, circulated during the 4th preparatory committee meeting for the WSSD, and include the following: partnerships are voluntary initiatives undertaken by governments and relevant stakeholders; they should not divert from commitments contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the JPOI; partnerships should have concrete value added; and they should be based on predictable and sustained resources for their implementation. The

CSD also agreed that partnerships should be designed and implemented in a transparent and accountable manner, as well as be publicly announced with the intention of sharing the specific contribution they intend to make to implementation.

Reflecting concerns of the G-77/China, partnerships should be consistent with national laws, national strategies for the implementation of Agenda 21 and the JPOI, as well as the priorities of countries where their implementation take place. Since partnership arrangements emerged in the context of the WSSD, many NGOs and other Major Groups have called for a clear framework of reporting in this regard. The CSD-11 resolution takes these concerns into consideration and states that reporting should be transparent, participatory and credible. No mandatory mechanism was put in place, but the CSD suggests that partnerships should submit a regular report, preferably at least on a biennial basis.

At the conclusion of CSD-11, the Government of Italy announced its willingness to host and organize, in cooperation with the CSD Secretariat, an international forum on partnerships, to be held in Rome in Spring 2004.

DECISION ON SIDS PREPARATION

In 2004, Mauritius will host the International Meeting to Review Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS, see *Go Between 95*). In keeping with G-77/China preferences to raise the visibility of SIDS, the CSD decided that during its twelfth session in 2004 it will undertake a three-day preparatory meeting, which will, among other things, finalize preparations for the international meeting, including its agenda. The meeting will consider a report prepared by the Secretary-General that will be based on national assessment reports from SIDS, expert thematic workshop reports, and the reports of regional and interregional preparatory meetings.

The regional preparatory meetings will be held on the following dates: Pacific SIDS, 4-8 August 2003, Apia (Samoa); Caribbean SIDS, 18-22 August 2003, Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago); Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Seas SIDS, 1-5 September 2003, Praia (Cape Verde). An interregional preparatory meeting, with ministerial participation, for all SIDS, will also be held in Nassau (Bahamas), from 26-30 January 2004.

The UN Secretary-General has also been requested to utilize the resources previously devoted to the CSD's former Ad Hoc Inter-sessional Working Groups to support the SIDS preparatory process.

In order to benefit from the political direction from attending ministers, a high-level segment was held at the beginning of the CSD session, from 28-30 April 2003. It included ministerial statements on the future modalities and work programme of the Commission, three interactive high-level roundtables with government, Major Group and agency representatives on the theme "priority actions and commitments to implement WSSD outcomes," and five regional implementation forums on initial regional steps taken to implement the JPOI.

Delegations renewed their commitment to ensure a more integrated approach toward implementing national strategies for sustainable development (NSSDs) by 2005, and highlighted the mutual benefit of a more action-oriented CSD work programme. All the participants reaffirmed that the WSSD theme of sustainable development for poverty eradication would guide the work of the CSD in the coming decade, and emphasized the importance of addressing sustainable consumption and production patterns, the means of implementation, sustainable use of natural resources, and health as cross-cutting issues for future two-year work cycles. The needs of Africa, SIDS and the least developed countries (LDCs) were also identified as integral to future work.

In proposing water as the overarching theme of the first cycle of work, many government representatives recommended that this include a cluster of water and sanitation, water and agriculture, water and health, and water and land issues. Energy was proposed as the over-arching focus for the second cycle of the CSD work programme, including a cluster of issues such as access to energy, energy efficiency, enhancing industrial productivity, climate change, diversification of energy supply, natural resource management and renewable energy. Cross-cutting issues would include financing and resources for implementation, capacity building, technology transfer, gender related issues, governance, and legal and regulatory frameworks and policy coherence.

Much discussion focused on the linkage between unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, and poverty. Delegations stressed that education and awareness are crucial for changing attitudes and behaviour, and that research and technology are integral to driving change. The issue of natural resource management was also highlighted by many delegations, given its role in poverty eradication and the dependence of the majority of people in developing countries on these resources for their livelihoods.

Ministers also emphasized the financial requirements of attaining sustainable development, calling for a significant increase in the flow of financial resources, including a doubling of official development assistance (ODA) flows, as well as private investment and partnerships.

There was marked consensus among delegations concerning the importance of increased market access for the mobilization of resources, including the removal of trade-distorting and environmentally harmful agricultural subsidies in developed countries.

Regarding the CSD's future organizational arrangements, many countries highlighted the importance of Regional Implementation Forums, which they said would offer an opportunity for building relevant partnerships that could be replicated and monitored to deliver the JPOI and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, see *NGLS Roundup 100*). China and the Czech Republic stressed utilizing the comparative advantages of existing institutions such as the UN regional commissions. Belgium and the Netherlands emphasized the importance of NSSDs, and France supported peer-review mechanisms. Côte d'Ivoire and Libya both underscored the New Economic Programme for African Development (NEPAD) priorities and termed it an appropriate framework for regional implementation.

Participants also called for broader participation of Major Groups in the CSD process, as well as better geographical representation and gender balance. Kenya suggested that educators and scientists be involved in panel discussions. Mongolia recommended that CSD include an exchange of best practices, information dissemination and capacity-building activities. Iran said that developed countries should report on the implementation of financial and technical commitments. Others felt that the partnership segments of future CSD sessions should extend to reporting on the progress of existing initiatives.

Interactive Roundtables

The roundtable discussions provided ministers and representatives of Major Groups with an opportunity to engage on priority actions and commitments to implement the outcomes of the WSSD.

On the subject of poverty eradication, many participants highlighted the Millennium Declaration Goal of halving by 2015 the proportion of the world's people earning less than one dollar a day, the proportion who suffer from hunger, and those without access to safe drinking water. The linkage between poverty and water was underscored. Trade Unions, with support from South Africa, expressed concerns about the increasing privatization of water. Australia linked access to water with good governance issues. Norway and Switzerland proposed that an institutional entity be created to develop and monitor a global programme of action concerning water, which would include the energy, environmental and health sectors.

Discussions on consumption and production focused on the need to implement plans to change current unsustainable patterns. Venezuela and Brazil said that developed countries had a high degree of responsibility

ty on this issue, while Canada argued that such patterns were universal and not a North-South issue. Japan urged a common recycling target, while Indonesia called for investment in cleaner production. Youth groups stressed the need for increased focus on education for sustainable consumption and production. Renewable energy was also highlighted in this context, with Brazil underscoring its proposal for a global initiative for a 10% renewable energy target by 2010. Norway also stressed environmental considerations in the use of hydroelectricity.

On protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development, Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) President Hans Hoogeveen (Netherlands) suggested that ministers address how the CBD and other conventions could contribute to the implementation process and proposed that the CSD create a mechanism that the Conferences of Parties (COPs) could report to. NGOs suggested that the CSD assist governments in valuing natural resources, while Kenya emphasized the need for financial support to implement national biodiversity protection strategies.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) stressed the importance of linking water resources, sustainable agriculture and food security. Venezuela stressed the negative impact of pesticides and agro-chemicals on water resources and human health. Croatia noted the transboundary nature of water and ecosystems and stressed the development of regional strategies for sustainable development.

Regarding health and sustainable development, women's groups stressed that gender issues were critical in addressing human health and access to health services. Indigenous peoples emphasized health concerns related to persistent organic pollutants (POPs), mining, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Kenya and other delegations called on the CSD to address the causes of ill health, including pollution, over-crowding and inadequate water supply and sanitation.

Discussions on the means of implementation and creation of an institutional framework for sustainable development included ODA, private sector investment, partnerships and collaboration, NSSDs, governance and transfer of technology. Regarding ODA, the US said that resources could not come from governments alone, and supported a framework encouraging private sector investment. Germany and Japan stressed increased foreign direct investment. UN Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator Mark Malloch Brown confirmed that a "quantum jump" of ODA—some US\$50 billion per year—would be required to meet the MDGs, stressing that "we cannot pretend the private sector can substitute for that." Attention was drawn to a proposal from the United Kingdom to borrow money to meet agreed targets, which would be repaid after 2015.

One issue that emerged during the multi-stakeholder dialogue was whether some delegations were trying to draw a distinction between "policy" NGOs and "implementation" NGOs. Some suggested that this was an effort to weed out those NGOs adopting a critical stance on policy issues and erect barriers to their participation.

Some governments like Finland, Hungary and Japan offered assurance that this was not the case and that any effort to draw a distinction between NGOs reflected an oversimplified view of the many and interconnected roles they play. Australia supported greater participation of NGOs with "practical implementation experience", but said that in a similar vein governments should try to bring less professional negotiators to the CSD.

As part of the CSD session, both governments and the nine Major Groups were encouraged to contribute to an interactive multi-stakeholder dialogue session held on 1 May 2003 to address ways in which to better aid implementation of the JPOI. Key themes emerging from the dialogues were a renewed commitment to addressing sustainable development within a multilateral framework, and the central role of human-centred and rights-based approaches to sustainable development.

Participation and Representation

Regarding participation and representation of Major Groups, several government delegations expressed concern at the small number of stakeholders in attendance from the South. In order to address this imbalance, there were calls and pledges by northern and southern delegations to avail resources from donor agencies and other organizations to support increased developing country participation among Major Groups representatives.

Many speakers supported strengthening the involvement of Major Groups and other stakeholders. Women's groups emphasized the importance of appropriate gender balance; Youth groups emphasized the importance of the political contribution of youth to decision-making, especially at the national level. Farmers, with the support of NGOs and Hungary, advocated the inclusion of consumers as a Major Group. Hungary and India highlighted the media, and with Canada, identified educators as a key group meriting a greater role in the CSD. The US suggested harnessing existing national and international networks of scientists, while Senegal sought increased participation of parliamentarians.

Trade unions, women and youth all called for a mechanism to ensure greater involvement of Major Groups in policy making. Farmers referred to the CSD's Work Programme as a "list of good intentions," and stressed that language outlining a specific role in implementation for Major Groups was needed, which would also help in the raising of funds for capacity building.

Implementing Agenda 21 and the JPOI

In discussions concerning the contributions of Major Groups to the implementation of Agenda 21 and JPOI, there was consensus that such implementation was not the responsibility of governments alone, but that stakeholders had a crucial role to play. Business and industry underscored voluntary partnerships as a key to mobilizing business support for achieving CSD objectives. The scientific and technological communities stressed their dual role as providers of authoritative scientific information for decision making as well as educators of the public. Local authorities noted that more resources needed to be allocated toward local-level initiatives. The need to strengthen stakeholder networks, particularly at the country, regional and sub-regional levels, was seen as important to making concerted efforts on issues related to implementation targets of the JPOI.

Future Work Programme

Regarding the future work programme, organization and methods of work of the CSD, Major Groups indicated support for the proposed two-year cycle of the new work programme, and for water and energy as priority areas for the first two cycles. There was also general support for the proposed regional implementation forums, which were seen as ways to increase Major Group participation in the monitoring and implementation efforts.

Several Major Groups proposed the inclusion of stakeholders in expert groups of sub-committees that may be created in the future work of the CSD. While some of these mechanisms were seen as potentially involving specific Major Groups sectors, others were seen as multi-stakeholder.

Sweden and the US also highlighted the potential of taskforces and subcommittees as a way to strengthen the contribution of Major Groups. Canada said opportunities for stakeholders to contribute throughout the entire CSD work cycle should be maximized. Barbados proposed establishing NGO regional coordination councils, and highlighted their potential as catalysts for implementation, partnerships and resource mobilization. Belgium described how sustainable development councils have promoted multi-stakeholder participation. NGOs encouraged all governments to establish such councils.

Indigenous peoples and NGOs proposed a rights-based approach, the use of prior informed consent, and respect for cultural diversity as general principles that should underlie the future work of the CSD. Indigenous peoples underscored protection, restoration and renewal

of ancestral lands and said the CSD should engage and fund indigenous groups at all levels of monitoring and implementation, since such involvement was critical for biodiversity protection.

Business and Industry encouraged the CSD to address ways to stimulate innovation through competition in the marketplace, to open market access for developing countries, and to inform consumers in those countries of product and service choices.

Local Authorities noted the need for relevant legislation, guidelines and governance at the national level and for enhancing human and financial capacity. They raised concerns over development, particularly in mega-cities, where integrated water resource management is crucial to sustainable development. They called for the CSD to play a stronger role in streamlining guidelines for development.

Farmers and NGOs stressed the need to distribute responsibility for JPOI implementation across the UN's institutional framework. The Scientific and Technological Community supported the CSD's focus on water and energy, but suggested expanding that focus to include sustainable production and consumption. Trade Unions felt that there was an over-emphasis on the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and stressed social development.

Accountability and Responsibility

Regarding the accountability and responsibility of Major Groups in implementation, Major Groups called for a special arrangement to allow for civil society or Major Groups reporting to the CSD. As the CSD was moving towards a more implementation-oriented focus, they said, it needed to ensure that non-State actors were also brought into the implementation framework.

Women's groups proposed that the CSD develop gender indicators for monitoring the implementation of the JPOI as well as reporting mechanisms to demonstrate the mainstreaming of gender issues in the CSD. Delegations supported the participation of all stakeholders in monitoring and assessment, and emphasized the value of using sustainable development indicators.

Contact: Ms. Federica Pietracci, Major Groups Focal Point, Division for Sustainable Development, United Nations, Room DC2-2262, New York NY 10017, USA, telephone +1-212/963 8497, fax +1-212/963 0443, e-mail <pietracci@un.org>, website (www.un.org/esa/sustdev/index.html).

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