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EC+10 EVENT REPORT

REPORTS ON THEMATIC SESSIONS

THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS

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1. CSR: New Earth Leaders and Earth Charter Cities (ECC)

Moderator: **Ton Dietz, *director Africa Study Centre Leiden, Worldconnector and Chair "Knowledge Platform "Sustainability, Climate & Energy"***

Presenters:

- Anne-Marie Rakhorst, *Search Ingenieursbureau B.V. and member Club of Rome The Netherlands*
- Niels Koldewijn, *Fair Ground, Initiator New Earth Leaders*
- Gerben van Straaten, *Walas Concepts and Earth Charter Cities*
- Jeffrey Newman, *Director Earth Charter UK*
- Hind Ottmani, *Earth Charter Youth Network, Morocco*
- Jacques Fresco, *The Venus Project*

Reporter: Suzanne Bruins, NCDO

Moderator **Ton Dietz** opened the session highlighting that more and more, cities are becoming the engines of our economy and our world. Most of the resilience and wellbeing of the human community in life is delivered by cities. Already, more than 50% of all people on earth live in an urban environment. The UN estimates that in 2025 this will be at least 75%. The Earth Charter inspires to an eco humanistic approach. Cities play a key role in a sustainable future. They create problems to our environment but also provide opportunities. In the past ten years, over 400 towns and cities in the world have endorsed the Earth Charter. In this session we will discuss the role of the Earth Charter to the development of city life.

Topics of discussion:

1) The Earth Charter has been an inspiration for many cities since its launch, we will exchange some practices.

2) In Earth Charter cities, not only governments play a role, we will discuss the role of bottom-up practices by citizens and other creative approaches in the public sphere.

3) New Earth Leaders project shows how young leaders and businesses can play an important role in the development of urban areas.

1. Launch of the Earth Charter Cities Manifesto and practices

Gerben van Straaten of Walas Concepts shared with participants the *Earth Charter Cities Manifesto*. The document, which is basically an adaptation of the EC for cities, provides an ethical foundation for sustainable urban development. Earth Charter Cities ensure valuable and sustainable (re)development. Excerpts of that are "The Earth Charter City made the choice: the city is an imminent part of a global partnership to care for the Earth, for the whole community of life. We are sensitive to perils and weaknesses in our system and we are ready to bring

substantial changes into our values, institutions and our ways of life. It becomes increasingly important that cities serve as efficient and clean engines". The Earth Charter Cities Manifesto provides a strong base for all of these matters. Walas Concepts has worked on the development of some buildings. Several cities in the Netherlands and elsewhere have already shown their interest in the Manifesto. Gerben stresses that the next step is to generate an instrument for measuring the Earth Charter Cities level, to make the guidelines even more practical.

Several representatives of projects in cities and towns shortly elaborate on the way Earth Charter has played a role:

- Montpellier, Vermont (8000 inhabitants):

They developed a three year plan based on the Earth Charter Community Action Tool, and continue to work with it. The community action plan started with a convinced municipality in 2001. The implementation started in 2007.

- Oslo, Norway:

The Municipality endorsed the Earth Charter in 2002 and have been figuring out ways to use is as an inspiration and reference tool. In 2010 the EU gave the European sustainable city award to Oslo. They also use UNESCO standards: reflect, rethink and react. 175 schools have been renewed.

- Ancient cities in India:

In some cases the law impedes moving to sustainable cities. Urban space is not about single buildings. For example New York has the lowest level of CO2 in the United States because of the subway system. We should change our mindsets.

- Sao Paolo, Brasil:

The city has endorsed the Earth Charter, and is implementing actions through the education and environmental departments. Significant work has been done on teacher training affecting all public schools of the city, this process is supported and led by the secretary of education and environment. The process has spread in a natural manner.

2) The Role of other stakeholders

Creating Earth Charter cities is not only about governments, but also about citizens and businesses. Sustainability must be approached in a holistic manner, not just as something 'green'. There is a social process needed for physical changes. Jacques Fresco emphasises that the monetary system has to come to an end. The problem is the way we think, our minds are being blocked by our consuming culture. The problems we are faced with today cannot be solved politically or financially because they are highly technical in nature. There may not even be enough money available to pay for the required changes, but there are more than enough resources. Intelligent management of earth's resources. With his project "The Venus Project", **Jacques Fresco** proposes a city that would use the most sophisticated available resources and construction techniques.

Jeffrey Newman stresses that in Oxford, United Kingdom, there is a lot of leadership through faith communities, "they have taken action". The role of these institutions should not be underestimated. The Earth Charter is not only about the environment and social relations, but

we should also look at fair trade and other chains that can help cities become more sustainable and social.

In Morocco, according to Hind Ottmani, leaders such as the King are using their prestige to convince the society to take action. Suddenly everyone wanted to be involved. What works differs in each society.

3) The role of businesses and young leaders

Niels Koldewijn introduced the New Earth Leaders program. A leadership and organizational development programme in which young professionals working in the private sector use the Earth Charter as an ethical framework for solving sustainable business cases and to grow as sustainability leaders, to deliver the leaders who are needed today.

The program runs parallel in Brazil and Holland. Participants work on the regional development in the areas: Erasmusveld, The Hague in the Netherlands and Itacare, Brasil. The Earth Charter is providing new insights in this project. It does not only stress sustainability but also issues such as openness to cultural differences and transparency. New Earth Leaders work with the 4 P's: Public, Private, People, Partnership.

For the development of these areas the New Leaders programme are using several rules:

1) Understand the needs of the people who live there: co-planning and working/involving local people

2) Take into account the expectations and needs of the local community, upholding their rights

3) Development of community: creating local environmental and social knowledge

4) Include the role of other businesses in city planning: all part of a systematic approach for sustainable issues

5) Role of the municipality: support and facilitates the community sustainable developement

6) Engagement: all stakeholders working together with ethic and transparency for a common propose

A participant from Dubai comments that the bottom-up approach of the Earth Charter does not work for businesses. He said "we need money to get where we want, to change the old structures. We need guidelines. The Earth Charter cities manifest is a start, but architects need guidelines such as a green building code, that are implemented on a large scale, top-down."

CONCLUSION

The Earth Charter Cities Manifesto guides us to our common goal. It has the aim of bridging all initiatives and at the same time giving examples of policies and actions that can be part of Earth Charter Cities. Today we have heard initiatives of cities that try to be examples. It is not enough for a city to be only green, more is needed. Our task is now to make sure that we bridge all that is taking place effectively and make sure, that cities are approached in a holistic way.

This meeting shows that it's important to bring people together from various backgrounds. Projects such as New Earth Leaders, that promote mutual learning and exchange, provide us new perspectives. The gap between the government and businesses should be bridged. How this is done differs from place to place. It is possible to connect local experiences, such as Oslo and Vermont. To achieve our aim, the whole system has to change. The biggest challenge is not to move away from the local level and formulate operational principles. In ten years we might be criticised that we didn't formulate on the right level. However, we need more time to find the best approach.

2. CSR: WATER, ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Moderator: **Herman Mulder, *Earth Charter Advisor and Worldconnector***

Presenters:

- Tineke Lambooy, *Worldconnector, Netherlands*
- Nelton Friedriech, *ITAIPU Binational, Brazil*
- Eliane Demollin, *Municipality of Heerlen, New Earth Leader*
- Arianne Reis, *Eth Bio energia Brazil, New Earth Leader*

Reporter: Alicia Jimenez, ECI Secretariat

The briefing paper for this session contains background information on the involvement of the Earth Charter with businesses, the purpose of this session and several case studies of good practices of businesses incorporating sustainable practices.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Herman Mulder started the session saying that businesses are a crucial player in the quest for sustainability, and the challenge we face is how to make sure that businesses are going to be sustainable.

As a former banker, he has an interesting yet negative point of view regarding the next world crisis (bigger than the one in 2009). "It might happen on a Monday of September 2015, when we come from vacations, coinciding with the UN General Assembly, the conclusion of the MDGs and the annual report of the World Bank. From this day, there will be a combination of Malthus and Marx wrapped by Murphy... We will be exceeding our natural limits, and the governments won't be able to find solutions. Knowing this, we should recognize that the moment of the Earth Charter has come to avoid this new crisis."

The common denominator is that all these experiences have concrete ambitions to be more efficient and improve the local conditions. Spreading the word about this type of examples can give good signals for banks, to support projects that have this vision.

Nelton Friedriech is the Director of Coordination and Environment of Itaipu Binational, the largest hydroelectric company of the world located between Brazil and Paraguay. He shared about concrete actions Itaipu has been taking to work with all different stakeholders in the micro-watersheds where the hydroelectric plant has an influence, to bring solutions for the environmental problems caused by the plant.

One of the most successful actions is the Cultivating Good Water program, that combines education, capacity building and to make possible the implementation of actions to reduce the environmental impacts of the dam, actions that have been devised by local actors. They also have reforestation programs; have been giving support and training to local people to start organic agriculture and sustainable livestock projects. He presented a video that summarized many of the actions that Itaipu is taking on CSR.

Elianne Demolin and **Arianne Reis** took part on the New Earth Leader's program. This program aims to promote the use of a sustainable framework for businesses.

Elianne is an agronomist and international lawyer who works with the Municipality of Heerlen in the Netherlands. She shared that this city was traditionally devoted to coal mining, and this was part of the inhabitant's identity. When the government decided to close the mines, people found themselves lost, not knowing what to do. So, she works on trying to bring back their identity and respect for themselves. There are new projects coming in to the city, such as a hydroelectric dam, which has helped on the process to recover the people's pride.

Arianne works in a company that produces ethanol. The banks that invest in this company have requested to include different stakeholders in the production process of ethanol. The company decides to work with just community stakeholders or to work in a larger scale, with the whole city. Although it was the bank asking for participation, the company has found that this is helping their effectiveness. They create commissions where different leaders and community members can join and find solutions or common actions, in case they feel threatened by the company's actions. They have been using the Earth Charter as a tool for dialogue with the communities.

QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Q/ About the case of Friesland foods (a company who is supporting the development of local water supplies), I was wondering if they have involved the communities who are using the water wells. Because if the company leaves, who will take care of the wells?

R/ The company is doing this in collaboration with UNDP and other organizations, therefore the company is not the only responsible for the wells. But, it is interesting to check out the legal dimensions of these actions, because there should be provisions to prevent that the company leaves easily.

Q/ Do you know about an example that the EC has helped as business incubator[1]*? Because there are other initiatives such as the global compact, so what is the place of the EC in the business world, is it complementary or competes with the global compact for example?*

R/ Herman Mulder said that the Global Compact and the Earth Charter are not exclusive, they actually complement each other. The EC is more inclusive because it can help to get all employees involved; it can be used for bottom-up processes. It should help an organization to live sustainability rather than only comply with it. The EC has the capacity to bring sustainability in the DNA of the company. According to Mr. Mulder, an advantage of the EC is that it includes information on living wages, something that is absent from the Global Compact.

Other participants of the audience, who work with the private sector, shared how they are using the Earth Charter. For example, Lorna Taylor from Earth Charter US shared that this organization has been offering a sustainable business award, to give incentives to companies that are working in a sustainable way.

She also owns a health care company. They started getting LEED certified, and now they are saving money because of the investments made. Instead of advertisement, they give money to charities. This is to be social responsible. They also like to get employees involved and empowered to define actions for the company.

Tineke Lambooy said that if you have it in the mission statement, the EC is pretty concrete, so any company (including banks) can include it in their mission.

Nelton Friedriech said that in Itaipu, they have come to realize that implementing actions towards sustainability is not about marketing, is actually about thinking on the future of the company, to be able to survive.

For Arianne Reis, the Earth Charter is not a label but are values, that are needed and required for companies to be more accountable.

Q/ How does Itaipu finance their current actions towards sustainability?

R/ Nelton Friedriech said that Itaipu invest only the 2% of their net profits. The reason why they are able to have so many programs is because of the partnerships they have built. Other partners contribute as well to the programs, so Itaipu is not the only source of funding; this helps all to maximize each organization's efforts. And is not only about money, sometimes is more important the resources offered by the partners. Itaipu considers itself as facilitators, not implementators of the sustainability projects carried out in the watershed.

Q/ Is it possible to use the EC in mediation in dispute resolution processes, especially in those involving private companies?

[1] *Business incubators* are programs designed to accelerate the successful development of entrepreneurial companies through an array of business support resources and services. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Business_incubator

Tineke Lambooy said that there are plans to establish an international mediation court in the area of environmental pollution, for conflicts between communities and companies. The EC, as a soft law document, could be used as a possible framework for those types of negotiations.

Not been a legally binding document could make it more difficult to use the EC in dispute resolutions, nonetheless, as Herman Mulder said, there is value in using it, but it'll be better if the UN recognises the Earth Charter.

As concluding remarks, Herman Mulder said that the Earth Charter offers a unique value proposition, which differentiates it with other initiatives. It could be really helpful as inspiration and as tool to find concrete ways to put sustainability into practice.

3. Diversity and Connecting Civilisations

Moderator: **Naema Tahir, *Worldconnector***

Introductory remarks:

- Karen Armstrong, *Charter for Compassion*
- Rick Clugston, *Earth Charter US*
- Lisa Jokivirta, *Finland (Youth)*
- Michael Slaby, *Germany, Earth Charter Task Force on Religion, Spirituality and Ethics*

Reporter: Marina Bakhnova, ECI Secretariat

Naema Tahir invited everyone present to explore how the Earth Charter reflects the idea of connectedness between humans and between humans and nature.

In compliance with the EC+10 briefing paper, she acknowledged the Earth Charter Preamble which strongly emphasized that "in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny". Naema set the main task for the session: to find out how the Earth Charter is linked to the Charter of Compassion and the UN Alliance of Civilizations.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Rick Clugston dwelt on the Earth Charter Task Force on Religion and Spirituality and Ethics. He

with many religious groups: for example, during *The Parliament of the World's Religions* which had been celebrated on December 2009 in Melbourne, Australia, it turned out that more than 50% of participants had been already using the Earth Charter in their educational, youth and other activities.

Karen Armstrong was invited to talk on the relationship between the Earth Charter and the

M.S. told that it is Joan Anderson from SGI and here effort to disseminate the Earth Charter through the exhibition Seeds of Change: 1, 5 million people viewed this exhibition; it was translated in 37 languages of the world.

To Ruud Lubbers: How did the Earth Charter change your life as a politician?

R.L. said that he had been exposed to the Earth Charter values after the end of his political career, but had always tried to follow the ethical path even before he had become involved in the Earth Charter.

Intervention from a participant: It is a common saying that politics and ethics are two opposite notions, however, a former Dutch Prime Minister and a career politician, Ruud Lubbers is a living example of integrity, honesty, and care for public good. R.L has been supporting Earth Charter and its ideals with his unceasing work, inspiring intellectual input and a long standing financial support. He can be called a true example of what "living the Earth Charter" means.

R.L. answered that he feels awkward when praised in public and jokingly reprimanded the participant. He said that being in the midst of the Earth Charter had changed his life and became a powerful incentive for his personal development.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Rabbi Soetendorp said that it was a very special moment for all of the EC community. He was remembering his first meeting with Pauline Tangiora, her words "You do not understand us, we are all the babies of the Mother Earth", and the way the Earth Charter had turned his world. R.S. also quoted a story of an ancient rabbi, who said: "the words of a prayer when they do not come from the heart are heavy as stones". To Manuel Obregon R.S. said that his music together with the visual presentation WAS the Earth Charter itself. R.S. also dwelt on the native Indian story of a feather tradition and the establishment of the Green Gross International. Rabbi Soetendorp said that compassion is in every one of us, it is in the heart of each person, but we need to exercise our souls like we exercise our bodies. He insisted that what the Earth Charter is trying to do is to achieve almost impossible: change hearts and minds of the people. He also added that the Earth Charter and the Charter of Compassion both listen to a melody of the soul without the words. Finishing his intervention R.S. quoted from the Jewish tradition and from Koran: "He who has saved one human being has saved the world. If you have made someone suffer you've desecrated your God".

Naema Tahir asserted that as a Muslim woman who lives in Europe she believes that the Middle Eastern conflict is not a just a regional religious conflict, but a global conflict. The words "fairness and justice" are not used often anymore. She writes books on the life of a Muslim living in the West (a story of a Palestinian boy killed as a terrorist).

Request from a participant to a mediator to try follow the main topics of the group discussion stated in the briefing paper, as the time was closing up.

4. Innovation in International Cooperation and the Use of New Media

Moderator: **Sylvia Borren, *Worldconnector***

Introductory remarks:

- Jos van Gennip, *NCDO, Worldconnector*
- Fernanda Baumhardt, *EC Communication Task Force, Brazil*
- Daniel Fao, *51 Sim, China*
- Anna Chojnacka, *1%Club, Worldconnector*
- Mike Brantjes, *The Power of We*
- Willemijn Kemp, *Vital Interest and Our Common Future 2.0*

Reporter: Anne-Katrien Denissen, NCDO

This thematic session discussed the current state of affairs of International Cooperation and the role New Media could play in innovating this. The session was attended by more than 20 people of all generations and from all regions of the world.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Jos van Gennip pointed out that the situation in the Netherlands is changing. Currently there is less support for international cooperation than 40 years ago. This is due to two changes:

- We had a strong social system that is now under pressure.
- We had a strong mission tradition which was also concerned about education, health and agriculture.

According to van Gennip, when we left our colonies, we felt we had to compensate. That agenda that we have had for 50 years, has been eroded. And we were too late with replacing it with a new paradigm. The Earth Charter could fill this gap because it combines: poverty erasing, dealing with scarcities and humanisation of globalisation process.

Fernanda Baumhardt presented her vision on new media and the results of the campaign of the Communication Taskforce.

New media can help spreading EC. The difference with old media is that it is decentralized, bottom up. What they have in common is that they both require a message that touches the heart. Fernanda Baumhardt believes in 360° communications. We should not only focus on new media, but use it in combination with old media, so we reach, for example, older people as well.

Daniel Foa mentioned the shifting concept of communications. Developing countries are not looking at global institutions per se, he says. They are also looking at institutions where no

western countries are involved. In the field of new media we might even be excluded. New media give us the opportunity for a redefinition of borders.

Before, media existed of one way broadcasting, but now it is a transaction to action. If there is no result than what's the point?

Anna Chojnacka pointed out in her presentation that you need structure in order to get good information. The 1%Club started with an open system where everyone could present a project. But to preserve quality, you need structure. Collective wisdom is not only wisdom of laymen. Actively inviting experts is therefore important. Wikipedia is a good example of this.

Mike Brantjes emphasized in his presentation that it is important to touch common interest points. There is a continuous emphasis on 'let's spread the message'. But it's about implementation. Internet is now looked upon as a way to meet people. But acting on change would really contribute to the Earth Charter. This does not necessarily means putting EC in the centre, but enabling action.

Willemijn Kemp presents her project, *Our Common Future 2.0,* which is based on the use of social media. The first document 'Our Common Future' was written in 1978 by 1500 people without new media. The new version will be started with 400/500 people but this can easily expand using new media. Hyves is piloting with Crowd funding on this project.

Moderator Sylvia Borren recaptures:

The postcolonial Development Cooperation paradigm was based on social values and religion and the north south concept. The new paradigm is not about development but about International Cooperation. We talk about global commons, we are interconnected and need each other. The Earth Charter gives us the ethical framework, which can be lived by an individual or an institution. But how many people even know that it exists? Not enough anyway. We need to get people activated.

Our challenge is to achieve Jos' new paradigm dream with global commons and global connections and to achieve the dream of the Earth Charter: everybody knows the Earth Charter and starts living it. The next task is not only to dream but also to DO it

GROUP DISCUSSION

In the ensuing discussion the following points emerged.

How can the Earth Charter convince people to take action?
For those not yet familiar with the Earth Charter, it is sometimes difficult to see the relevance of it. Initiatives are often too much 'for' the people instead of 'of' the people. Rindert de Groot remarks that there is a difference between institutions for who the Earth Charter is a useful document and individuals for who it doesn't make sense. He proposes to involve people in the principles, instead of the whole document. Different messages should be used to reach different people. Dmitry Savelau agrees. He points out that in the discussion in the Youth Meeting the day

before, it was also said that the Earth Charter should be about partnerships and real actions first and promotion of the Earth Charter later.

Ideas from the group:

- Use the logo 'Inspired by EC' more, especially in business
- Use images that touch the heart
- Make use of change agents
- Highlight what people are already doing and ask them to expand that

The generational aspect

Sylvia Borren says that in her experience, Dutch youth is far more negative about what they can do, than youth in the global south. Why is that? According to Dmitry Savelau, young people see that there are so many problems, that they need a whole network -which they don't have- to really make a difference. That is demotivating. Mike Sheehan sees a generational shift happening. Today's youth knows what the problems are, they have just (too) many solutions. New media should therefore be used after slow media.

Although New Media are often associated with youth, the group has noticed that older people are very active and involved as well. Boeb van der Hoorn, the oldest participant of the session: "I heard more about new media in this session, than I've heard before in my whole life". Diego Baptista adds that it is important not only to use new media but also to provide new media for those who don't have access, especially in developing countries.

Idea from the group

- Develop a tool for elderly people to make new media accessible for them.

Which language should be used?

Fernanda Baumhardt brings up another issue: language. In reality English is the business language, but not necessarily in China or India. The Earth Charter is translated in many languages by volunteers. This can be done for other platforms as well.

Alette de Groot remarks that you can solve the problem by using more images, and picutre stories.

Ideas from the group

- ask volunteers to translate platforms and websites
- Use many positive images

What has happened in 5 years from now in the most positive case?

This is what the group dreams of:

- R.G: In five years we have thrown the Earth Charter away because it has been internalised by everyone. This has happened because a great community has been created.
- A.C.: The 1%Club has expanded with E-GLO and many other movements
- S.B.: There is a GCAP and Earth Charter connection!
- M.B.: on all social network profiles there is a part on what you do for the common good. And a meeting like this where a list of participants is online in profiles. It's not about us, the Earth Charter, but about all activities that are taking place
- W.K.: The Earth Charter is translated in international sign language.
- Mirjam Nagel: And translated into music and images (Manuel Obregon was so inspiring!)
- D.F.: Today is a working day. That is difficult. In five years business should be involved more, so it is easier to justify to your boss why you're here.
- F.B.: I would like to give a mandate to the youth, take over the EC through using social media and present results in 5 years. (M.S.: Ok, but give us time and mentoring relationships. F.B.: But it's the Youth who need to reach out.)
- Bill Rigby: in 5 years there is a shift in fundamental relationships. At the moment, we are just recycling our problems. Culturally we are not changing as fast as we should. `It's the economy stupid' is an appropriate slogan. In five years a value based element will be standard.
- Alex Hattinga Verschure: new media will be shared globally, and a Skype connection with Uganda will be better.
- B.H.: The Earth Charter, the Declaration of Human Rights, and the Charter for Compassion will be interconnected and inspiring all. As Jos van Gennip said, we have failed to find new inspiration, so this could be it.
- D.B.: in 5 years all media experts in all companies, give access to media to those who don't have it now. Ask ourselves if we want new media as another thing we need to 'consume' fast. Could it be in the way? We should stay critical as well. We are not going to put new media aside, but we also need to be on the ground and in touch with each other.
- S.B.: I hope the principle of the EC will have become a value driven way of working with old and new media. Media itself using EC as well. I hope the gender gap in new media will disappear. And we will use environmental friendly new media.

Some final ideas from the group:

- use a different background colour when you are an ecofriendly website
- go to www.dcbv.eu, a website explaining how to save energy in alternating current greenhouses and datacentres work together so lost energy will be used.
- Fitness clubs could provide energy. There already is one that charges your mobile phone when you're exercising.

5. Global Governance, the UN and Climate Change

Moderator: **Jan Pronk, Earth Charter Special Advisor**

Introductory remarks:

- Esther Agbarakwe, *Earth Charter Youth Group coordinator, Nigeria*
- Yolanda Kakabadse, *WWF and* ***Earth Charter Commissioner***
- Hans Opschoor, *ECOSOC Committee Development Policy*
- Nico Schrijver, *United Nations Intellectual History Project (UNIHP)*

Reporter: Jaana Laitinen, ECI Secretariat

The focus of the discussion was global governance and what are its operating instruments. As a conclusion it was emphasized that the decisions and actions have to be done at the global level, in the political regime, which ultimately is intergovernmental; nothing can be done without governments. We have to reach intergovernmental agreements; resulting in treaties / charters which have to be implemented.

However it was acknowledged that there are many deficiencies in the international political regime, one of them being fragmentation. Too many international organizations are working with overlapping issues and not communicating well. This causes a problem where governments say completely different things in different international organizations; due to the fact that they have different representatives in different organizations. A challenge of meeting the promises was discussed. Many agreements have been reached by governments in the international arena, but in many cases little implementation has been demonstrated.

The thematic session agreed that these deficiencies must be addressed particularly in the national level, by actions within nations. This is where a civil society, and specifically the young generation, comes in; they are to be given a role in international decision making, in one way or another. It was stated that civil society has a vital role in bringing their governments to the right decisions at the international level and keeping them to implementing these decisions.

Importance of youth in shaping the direction of global governance was widely accepted. It was said that four conditions need to be met to enforce that: education, inspiration, trust and national orientation towards action.

Thematic session's participants also concluded that it is necessary to have regulations on the international economic regime. This together with political regime is setting limitations to the market mechanisms (in terms of gaps and quota, prizing regulations, international taxation etc.). These regulations are important or other vice, particularly in the field of international biodiversity, climate etc., the desired results are not reached.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Esther Agbarakwe's main points:

- Youth as a growing and sustainable resource are needed for sustainable development at local, national and international levels and should be supported in areas of climate change adaption and mitigation;
- Global north-south partnership should be recognized at all international forums and this partnership should inspire and support youth participation. Africa is always the most under-represented and African youth are not supported in UN discussion;
- National government should learn and support youth participation at local and national level in order to UNFCCC to recognize youth as moral stakeholders in the climate negotiations;
- Youths, whom were united as a global youth movement, were deeply disappointed by the outcomes of COP15. There is a great avenue to advocate for the Earth Charter among the youths to prepare for COP16 in Mexico. Earth Charter has a platform where the youth can come together and share.

"In 1992 governments have been negotiating on my life! For future we must be included to the discussion, youth do have the knowledge! In the future, with the new technology, young people are even more united! The youth must begiven voice!"

Yolanda Kakabadse:
"I have more questions than answers".

International Governance: Representatives of governments in international organizations are not accountable to anybody. Different governmental leaders participate in international forums, each one of them with a different position, which often is contradictory, often without coordination or integrated view of government's development plans or vision. We see bad human behavior in these institutions that should be examples of transparency.

On environment: UNEP is a program, not an agency, which has no budget. It is not present on the field and therefore has no capacity to get involved in national processes and thus cannot be there where it needs to be!

Conventions: climate, biodiversity, desertification, species, wetlands, etc. Each convention has its own secretariat in a different part of the world, isolated from each other. There is overlap in agendas, competition for spaces, recognition and funds.

Civil society involvement: 1990-1992 UN allowed civil society into its discussions. We have moved ahead, but civil society must be also included into discussion in finding answers. This is important in defining environmental policies. Although in some countries civil society actors are seen as key actors in the implementation of projects, their spaces for involvement in multilateral forums has been reduced. Civil society should be considered as an enormous strength.

Poverty and Environment: Gap and inequity between poor and rich have grown and multilateral agencies have not been able to address this nexus in their development programs. We have experienced insufficient investments within international organizations to build capacity of their teams to understand the whole versus the parts. Different agencies have different mandates to take care of, and they are highly separated although the problems are interrelated!

All these organizations have failed in collaboration to take care of our planet. All of them have to address the impact of human action on the environment, on specific ecosystems, on specific resources or processes…We continue to produce and consume more and more. Is there a need for a world environment organization, to create some balance to the driving forces of the World Trade Organization?

Hans Opschoor:

Climate Change Strategies after Copenhagen: International Governance Towards a Low-Carbon, Climate Resilient Global Economy

We are confronted with human activity induced climate change posing crucial developmental, social and environmental problems. The problems are typically to do with the provision of global and regional public goods. Addressing them requires international cooperation and governance. Solving the issues calls for another development path everywhere; changed patterns of production and consumption; new priorities and lifestyles; and institutional and systemic changes in our socioeconomic and political order. Therefore, what are needed are political will and political clout, plus a pervasive change in mindsets and ethics.

Climate change will negatively affect the provision of global environmental goods and conditions. It stems from economic activities, and decisions made on these activities do not reflect the full social and environmental repercussions they give rise to. The prevailing economic system shows serious imperfections or flaws in this respect. It does not generate the right incentives to prevent global warming and in the absence of a regime powerful enough to prevent that, warming will continue and generate problems and a need to adapt to these climate impacts.

In terms of international cooperation and economics, what we have is a globalizing world economy, markets-based and market forces oriented. In that context the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development gave us: an Agenda plus Principles of sustainable development and UNFCCC. This is all to prevent dangerous levels of anthropogenic disturbance of the climate system. However, Kyoto-Bali-Copenhagen has not been able to respond to the needs regarding this issue. Hopes are now up for Mexico 2010 meeting, which had its preparatory meeting in Bonn, June 2010. The main outlined issues are: medium-term targets (top down) or bottom up approach; Kyoto protocol and / or long term cooperation agreement; andfunding.

As solutions to the challenges, we have to focus on regime issue; international negotiation should result in a binding policy framework based on:

- Goals, time-bound targets, commitments, MRV compliance or sanctions, dispute arrangements
- Clear provisions for cooperation on goals achievement in adaptation support, technical development, capacity development etc.
- Compensatory mechanisms for remaining adverse social and environmental externalities

Dealing with the problem requires international regime and regime change and another type of economic growth and in a way another economic model. The climate change problem is an economic and political one with sociocultural roots and overtones; world views and ethics are involved as much as power structures. Analytical approaches aretoo meager to motivate basic rethinking and political reorientation needed. We need global public spiritedness, and the Earth Charter may help in finding that.

Nico Schrijver:

Professor Schrijver discussed on management of global commons, i.e., the areas and natural resources beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. During the twentieth century an enormous expansion of state economic sovereignty took place. This resulted in bringing under 'national' control the management of many natural resources which were hitherto in areas beyond national jurisdiction. However, this is not to say that states are free to do whatever they like with 'their' natural resources. In modern international law, sovereignty over natural resources has come to entail, apart from rights, a considerable number of duties. The duties are recorded in hard core documents such as treaties but also in numerous soft law documents such as the Earth Charter, which have inspired certain new legal directions, also at a domestic and regional level.

Furthermore, the twentieth century also witnessed the emergence of international regimes for areas and natural resources which remained beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, such as the deep seabed and its mineral resources, two polar regions, ozone layer and the climate system; areas which have been proclaimed as 'common heritage of humankind' or as 'common concern of humankind'. These areas are crucial to the global environment, and therefore increasingly the object of specific international regulation aimed at co-operation for nature conservation. All these areas imply a strong international dimension and the need to take into consideration the interests of future generations. In addition to the rules that are specific to each of these regimes, global commons are also subject to general rules and principles embodied in important multilateral treaties.

As a result, a host of relatively new principles and concepts of contemporary international law apply to the distinct international regimes governing the global commons, albeit still emerging, fragmented, and incomplete. Apart from common heritage of humankind and common concern of humankind, these principles include the precautionary principle, sustainable use of natural resources, intergenerational equity, common but differentiated responsibilities, and the principle of interrelatedness and integration. The specific rights and duties derived from many of these principles have still not fully crystallized, but this does not affect their now firm status in modern international law.

To a certain extent the global commons are used as the laboratories for the testing of new legal principles and the rights and corollary duties emanating from them. The international regimes that have emerged for the management of the global commons created different institutional structures and various systems for monitoring compliance. In some cases ground breaking regulatory innovations were introduced and in some cases novel solutions were devised for resolving and avoiding conflicts.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Richard Jolly:"There is a need for political will and ethics but also institutional structures; we need to reinforce government structures!"

Parvez Hassan, Earth Charter Advisor, Pakistan: Civil society can be the change we need and thus it needs to be brought to the global level as it has a huge pressure power. However, so far this power has been able to function only on the national level, not on the international level. Civil society was highly active in Copenhagen, but did not succeed in its demands. Hassan claims that civil society always fails on the global level, and thus it cannot be blamed in the COP 15's case either; there were just purely too much expectations on the civil society's side. Hassan asks if in this regard the re-nationalization is necessary as in national level civil society has a chance to effect the decision making, but not on the global level.

Michaela Hogenboom: "Even civil society did not have voice in the COP 15's negotiations, it did gain a lot from the event: inspiration, knowledge, contacts! All these are supporting the civil society's possibilities to be more effective in the national level and affect the decision making".

Jessica White: "Youth need to be in included to the decision making, they must be trust in carrying out projects. For this we need mentorship! Thus we need intergenerational trust and mentorship!"

Richard Jolly:" Do not underestimate the power of civil activism!"

Leonardo Boff:"Should scientists have a greater role? The task is on scientists is to offer un-biased base for politicians to make and take decisions."

Karine Danielyan: "We (Earth Charter Initiative) should work also with other UN agencies, not only with UNESCO. I have been trying to convince people from UNEP to work with the Earth Charter and no one knew about it (about the EC)."
After this discussion it was concluded that "Endorsement is not an 'amen' itself! We need active adaptation of the Earth Charter".

Yunhua Liu: "USA and China are doing a lot for Climate Change even though they do not agree with the international agreements on the Climate Change."
"Earth Charter as a soft law document is empowering people to do things they want to. The Earth Charter indeed encourages people to take action!"

Mirian Vilela: It is normally recognized that one of the reasons why international agreements fail, their implementation or commitment to move ahead on a sustainability agenda is the lack of political will and fragmentation of the institutions and system. Vilela was asking help from the participants of this thematic session: "How can we address this lack of political will? We probably need to infuse strong ethical values to motivate and inspire political will. How can we make sure that this time there will be political will?"

Esther Agbarakwe: "Power of young people is an answer – they have the capacity. Lack of political will should be changed by giving voice to young people!"

Yolanda Kakabadse: "We will have to address the fragmentation in our governmental systems.

Who are the ones taking votes in the UNESCO or UNEP? Our politicians! Let's focus on youth and citizens participation to put pressure on our national governments. If those will be better, the UN institutes will be better."

KhayalaMammadova:" In Azerbaijan the civil society has managed to put pressure on its government and in 2010 government has taken actions for environment according to its priorities and policies. "

Jan Pronk: "We say 'it starts with one' but that one has been active for decades! Link between that 'one' and international global decision making is massive!"

Yolanda Kakabadse: "The unwillingness to make changes in regards to natural resources, such as tuna and whale, has to do with money and private interest. This has to do with the way of life, exploitation of the resources. Do we want to change our ways of living?"

Richard Jolly:"G20 would be good target for the Earth Charter."

ParvezHassan: "Outcomes of Rio and Stockholm got internationally accepted and adapted because governments were part of them. What is going to happen in RIO+20? This is important, we need governments support."