



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the
First Round of 'Informal-Informal' Negotiations on the Zero Draft of the
Outcome Document *and* Third Intersessional Meeting of the UN Conference
on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20)

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
in cooperation with the European Commission (EC)

Online at <http://www.iisd.ca/uncsd/ism3/enbots/>



Issue #1 | March 2012 UNCSD Meetings | 19-23 and 26-27 March 2012 | Tuesday, 20 March 2012

Events convened on Monday, 19 March 2012

Socio-Environmental Protection Floor

Presented by the Brazilian Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger



Rômulo Paes de Sousa, Deputy Minister of Social Development, Brazil, supported the inclusion of the socio- environmental protection floor concept as part of an outcome in Rio.

This meeting addressed the concept of the 'Socio-Environmental Protection Floor,' including key aspects and lessons learned from programmes implemented at the country level.

Underscoring the need for a smoother transition to a greener economy and for providing a "safety net" to those whose livelihoods are under threat. Magdy Martinez, UN Development Programme (UNDP), introduced the debate explaining that the "Socio-Environmental Protection Floor" is a concept currently under development and highlighted examples of country-level programmes related to this concept.

Christine Bockstal, International Labour Organization (ILO), stressed the relevance of the social dimension of sustainable development, including the provision of essential social services, healthcare, water and sanitation, nutrition and good-quality education. Highlighting that the implementation of a social protection floor should be country-led and adapted to national circumstances, she said the concept has been increasingly recognized as a key development instrument.

Rômulo Paes de Sousa, Deputy Minister of Social Development, Brazil, stressed the need to create policies that focus on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. He described the positive experience in Brazil, in particular the Green Grants programme (Bolsa Verde) intended for families living in extreme poverty that are already participating in the "Bolsa Familia" programme. He said families sign an agreement to be involved in environmental protection activities and receive additional income in exchange.

Radhika Lal, International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG), drew attention to the particular circumstances of developing countries, such as extreme levels of inequality and informal labor markets. Through describing experiences in India, Brazil and South Africa, she highlighted the need to, *inter alia*: establish large-scale high-impact programmes providing medium-term "safety nets" for vulnerable sectors; ensure the right to access to information on implementation of these activities; and reduce transaction costs through measures such as creating a single registry.

In the ensuing discussion, participants covered, *inter alia*: promoting coherence between environmental and economic policies; whether the concept could be part of the deliverables for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD or Rio+20); and ensuring the sustainability of these programmes.

More information:

<http://www.mds.gov.br>

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20 Years of the Rio Conventions: Opportunities and Challenges for Synergies

Presented by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

This event provided an overview of the Rio Conventions Pavilion (Rio Pavilion) as a tool to highlight the synergies between the three Rio Conventions, namely the CBD, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Neil Pratt, CBD, noted that the Rio Pavilion is a key collaborative outreach activity for the Rio Conventions. He highlighted the use of the Rio Pavilion in awareness-raising, exchange of experiences and realizing the co-benefits of implementing the conventions, including on water security, sustainable land management, sustainable forest management and the involvement of indigenous peoples and local knowledge in environmental protection.

Noting that the Rio Pavilion can enhance synergies among core stakeholders, he said that hosting the Rio Pavilion at Rio+20 will present a crucial opportunity to address linkages between the three Conventions, as well as enhance cooperation and increase synergies between biodiversity, land management and climate change actors.

Providing an overview of the positive experiences from the Rio Pavilion at the tenth Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD, Melchiade Bukuru, UNCCD, underscored that projects under one convention, such as land management projects, will benefit the other conventions, and this should be highlighted to delegates and stakeholders to "break down the silos" when implementing the Conventions at the national level.

Sekou Toure, Global Environment Facility (GEF), underscored GEF's continued support for the Rio Pavilion, and invited broad participation from interested parties at Rio+20. Dan Shepard, UN Department of Public Information (DPI), said that the Rio Pavilion is also vital in bringing forward cross-cutting issues such as gender.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed: the additional implementation-level work, aside from awareness-raising, that took place at the Rio Pavilion; the establishment of thematic days and highlighting cross-cutting issues within the programme; and the increased emphasis on biodiversity management plans.



L-R: Sekou Toure, GEF; Melchiade Bukuru, UNCCD; Neil Pratt, CBD; and Dan Shepard, DPI.



Neil Pratt, CBD, said that possible thematic days to be held at the Rio Pavilion at Rio+20 include "Cities Day," "Oceans Day," and "Africa Day."



Sekou Toure, GEF, highlighted GEF's interest in improving national level reporting of the implementation of the Rio Conventions.

More information:
<http://www.riopavilion.org>

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The Role of Technology in the "Green Economy" and the Need for Technology Assessment

Presented by the Women in Europe for a Common Future, ETC Group, Consumers International, La Via Campesina, and Centro Ecológico

This meeting, moderated by Kirubel Teshome, ETC Group, addressed the need to strengthen global, regional and national capacity to monitor and assess the technologies required to face climate change and the environmental crisis.

Silvia Ribeiro, ETC Group, said the need for technology assessments is not adequately addressed in the current zero draft of the Rio+20 outcome document. She noted current risks include companies' practice of bringing to market inadequately assessed technology, and the need for an independent and international institution capable of carrying out these assessments. She cited examples of commercially available technologies that were released despite early warnings of potential negative consequences, such as asbestos, or nano-technology.

Michael Hansen, Consumers International, underscored the need for technology reviews, focusing on examples of negative consequences caused by genetic engineering. Noting that technology with inadequate assessments is currently in use, he emphasized the need for technology oversight.

Jessica Roe, La Via Campesina, underscored that the promotion of sustainable and traditional small farmers' practices should be further emphasized in the context of the green economy, rather than focusing on industrial agriculture. She underscored examples where traditional and indigenous knowledge have provided valuable adaptive capacity for climate change.

Sascha Gabizon, Women in Europe for a Common Future, highlighted women and children as actors that are at risk of suffering from irresponsible technology use. She also underscored the lack of knowledge on the substances people are exposed to and the long-term consequences, providing examples such as baby products made with nano-particles.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed, *inter alia*: increased emphasis on the consideration of technology assessments in the zero draft; and risks associated with nano-particles and synthetic biology.



L-R: Jessica Roe, La Via Campesina; Silvia Ribeiro, ETC Group; Kirubel Teshome, ETC Group; and Michael Hansen, Consumers International.



Jessica Roe, La Via Campesina, said that, in the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation, agroecological practices and traditional knowledge can provide useful tools.



Sascha Gabizon, Women in Europe for a Common Future, called for the inclusion of technology assessment in the zero draft of the Rio+20 outcome document.

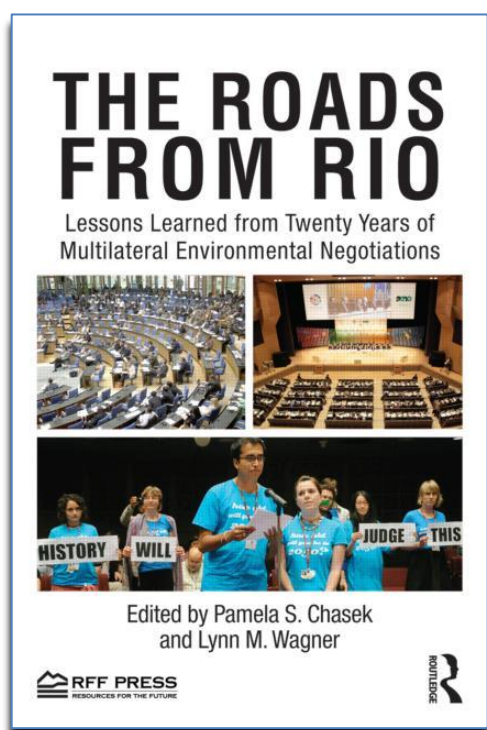
More information:

<http://www.etcgroup.org>

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IISD Reporting Services invites you to a book launch for:



In commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Earth Summit and the 20th birthday of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, this book provides a review of multilateral environmental negotiations from 1992-2012, with a focus on the changes that have taken place over the past twenty years.

CONTENTS

1. An Insider's Guide to Multilateral Environmental Negotiations since the Earth Summit, Pamela S. Chasek and Lynn M. Wagner

PART 1: EVOLUTION OF PROCESS

2. Raising the Tempo: The Escalating Pace and Intensity of Environmental Negotiations, Joanna Depledge and Pamela S. Chasek
3. Earth Negotiations on a Comfy Couch: Building Negotiator Trust through Innovative Processes, Deborah Davenport, Lynn M. Wagner and Chris Spence
4. Informing Policy: Science and Knowledge in Global Environmental Agreements, Pia M. Kohler, Alexandra Conliffe, Stefan Jungcurt, Maria Gutierrez, and Yulia Yamineva

PART 2: EVOLUTION OF ACTORS

5. Global Alliances to Strange Bedfellows: The Ebb and Flow of Negotiating Coalitions, Lynn M. Wagner, Reem Hajjar and Asheline Appleton
6. Singing the Unsung: Secretariats in Global Environmental Politics, Sikina Jinnah
7. Witness, Architect, Detractor: The Evolving Role of NGOs in International Environmental Negotiations, Stanley W. Burgiel and Peter Wood

PART 3: EVOLUTION OF ISSUES

8. What's in a Name? Pamela S. Chasek, Maria Gutierrez and Reem Hajjar
9. Trade and Environment: Old Wine in New Bottles? Kati Kulovesi, Sabrina Shaw and Stanley W. Burgiel
10. Climate Change Bandwagoning: Climate Change Impacts on Global Environmental Governance, Sikina Jinnah and Alexandra Conliffe
11. Implementation Challenges and Compliance in MEA Negotiations, Elisa Morgera, Elsa Tsioumani, Soledad Aguilar and Hugh Wilkins

CONCLUSIONS

12. Lessons Learned on the Roads from Rio, Pamela S. Chasek, Lynn M. Wagner and Peter Doran

**The book launch will be held at the UN Bookstore at UN Headquarters
Friday, 23 March 2012, 1:00-3:00pm.**