

Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2003

The Message from WSSD: translating resolve into action for a sustainable future

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From the Director-General, TERI . . .

If any public endorsement was required on the validity of selection of a Nobel laureate, it was available in plenty this morning at DSDS when Prof. Sherwood Rowland gave a stirring keynote address on issues of depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer, photochemical smog, and climate change. His presentation was a model of scientific rigour delivered in simple and understandable words for any person not familiar with scientific facts. Prof. Rowland, using outputs of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), highlighted the growing scientific evidence on human intervention with the earth's climate system with each successive assessment report of the IPCC. Dr Prodipto Ghosh, Additional Secretary to the Prime Minister of India, chaired Prof. Rowland's session and developed the right context for the keynote speech in his introductory remarks.

The second keynote address was no less eloquent and thought-provoking. Mr Ian Johnson, Vice President, The World Bank, focused on the Millennium Development Goals arrived at during the Millennium Summit of September 2000, and highlighted the rapid progression of thinking and collective resolve that has taken place in the last three years that lie at the core of sustainable development for the world. This progression culminated, of course, with the Johannesburg Summit. He highlighted environmental sustainability on the argument that nearly 1.3 billion people derive their livelihoods from natural resources with environmental incomes often constituting 30-40% of their total incomes. Hence, they are the ones who suffer the most when water and air get polluted. In the same vein, he emphasized the fact that improving health is not merely about service delivery, but combating the root causes of ill health. Mr M S Ramachandran, Chairman, Indian Oil Corporation, as Chairman of the session, provided an overview of energy for the poor and pricing strategies that can be used in this direction.

The first plenary session dealing with WSSD goals for water and sanitation had speakers who covered a range of issues, but there was agreement that inadequate

water and sanitation account for a large share of the burden of illness and death in developing countries. Self-sufficiency in food production depends essentially on the supply of water. While municipal and industrial water is valued differently from that of agriculture, water for sustainable ecosystems is not valued at all. Hence, it is overused and often abused. The session recommended integrating water resources management through priority action in mountain watersheds, eliminating disparities in up and downstream linkages and decentralization in decision-making. The key to effective management of water lies in public-private partnerships. Projects geared to supply water on a large-scale should be implemented and not ignored, of course, with due concern to ecological and social issues.

The second plenary session on 'Meeting basic needs and protecting the environment' also referred to the Millennium Development Goals. It highlighted the importance of economic growth, which remains an essential route to decrease poverty and improve environmental conditions. Appropriate governance structures are essential to promote and encourage the tackling of environmental degradation by the poor of the world in their own interest, since they are directly victimized by environmental degradation. Refugees from environmental disasters outnumber those for other reasons.

The final plenary session to a large extent reinforced the messages from the earlier plenary sessions, because at the base of actions required for improving environment, health, and education is the creation, packaging, and delivery of knowledge. These, of course, have to be carried out with adequate local involvement and local content. Rapid strides in the field of information technology make it possible to deliver and transfer knowledge today at a rapid rate and at low cost in different parts of the world.



(R K Pachauri)

In brief . . .

KEYNOTE ADDRESS 1

Chairperson Dr Prodipto Ghosh
Speaker Nobel Laureate
Prof. F Sherwood Rowland



Prof. Rowland's address traced the earth's atmospheric vicissitudes. Changing concentrations of trace gases cause three major problems: stratospheric ozone depletion, photochemical smog, and, perhaps the most topical, global warming.

The Earth warmed by about 0.6 °C over the 20th century. A natural greenhouse effect caused by trace

gases (carbon dioxide, water vapour, methane, etc.) warms the Earth's surface. The current concern is not whether there is a greenhouse effect (indeed there is one) but what its magnitude could be due to additional accumulation of such gases.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has developed many scenarios for future GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions.

Prof. Rowland observed, 'Changes over the last several decades are likely mostly due to human activities, but it cannot be ruled out that a significant part is also a reflection of natural variability.'

Answering a query about hydrogen fuels, he said that the hydrogen economy would take 30-40 years to become commercially viable.

PLENARY SESSION 1

WSSD goals for water and sanitation: making it happen?

Chairperson Prof. Hans J A van Ginkel

Speakers Ms Preety Bhandari • Dr Kristalina Georgieva • Dr Maritta R v Bieberstein Koch-Weser • Dr Bindeshwar Pathak • Ms Radha Singh • Mr Christian Stoffaes



In light of Johannesburg's call for providing clean water and sanitation to the poorest by 2015, this session focused on relevant institutional issues, indigenous solutions, and inter-sectoral coordination.

The discussants recognized that inadequate water and sanitation account for a large share of the burden of illness and death in developing countries; food self-sufficiency targets of many countries are closely linked with demand for agricultural water; and water for municipal/industrial uses has separate value from that of agriculture, while water for sustainable ecosystems is not valued at all. Water management should involve users, planners, and policy-makers.

The session recommended integrated water resources management by prioritizing mountain watersheds, eliminating disparities in up/down-stream linkages, and decentralization, such that national policy meets community needs. Communities must be empowered to make financial/operational decisions about their water supply and sanitation. The key to better water outreach is public-private partnerships, enabling policies and legal mechanisms, and complementary approaches between service delivery and resource management. Projects geared to supply water on a large scale should be implemented, with due concern for ecological and social issues.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS 2

Chairperson

Mr M S Ramachandran

Speaker Mr Ian Johnson

The Millennium Development Goals demand rapid economic growth while recognizing that environmental quality and social sustainability are not impediments. Beyond national averages of economic growth, we must seek to target the benefits of such growth at the poorest.

Environmental sustainability is particularly relevant. Nearly 1.3 billion people eke out livelihoods from natural resources, with such 'environmental incomes' often constituting 30%–40% of their incomes. They suffer the most when water and air are polluted. Improving health is not merely about service delivery but also combating the root causes of ill health. Of the



nearly 100 000 lives that natural hazards consume annually, about 97% occur in developing countries.

Responsible growth also requires social sustainability, two major aspects of which are good institutions and income distribution benefiting the poorest. Institutions for responsible growth must respond to people's demands through inclusive and transparent decision-making. Reliability in providing basic services (health, education, transport, information, etc.) is necessary.

PLENARY SESSION 2

Meeting basic needs and protecting the environment

Chairperson Prof. Shankar Acharya

Speakers Mr Suman Bery • Mr Somnath Bhattacharjee • Mr Robert Graham-Harrison • Mr Juergen Friedrich Hake • Prof. Yoichi Kaya • Dr Hoesung Lee • Dr Ligia Noronha



Economic growth remains an effective route to decrease poverty and improve environmental conditions. The general policy framework and macro governance structures strongly influence economic decisions. The challenge is to rectify popular policies that are regressive as well as environmentally damaging. The right policies can facilitate technological evolution.

Well-designed local governance can encourage the poor to address environmental degradation, since it directly victimizes them. Dependence on regulatory interventions should be limited. Economic instruments like pricing policies have become preferred options owing to lower implementation costs and higher resource-use efficiency.

'Appropriate' technologies, developed through community partnerships are low-cost, easily accessible, and meet local needs while ensuring higher efficiency and productivity. The rapid penetration of such interventions reveals the crucial role they play in enhancing livelihood opportunities. They must incorporate maximum energy efficiency and minimum resource requirements and waste production.

The close connection between human well-being and the state of ecosystems necessitates that the implementation of the WEHAB (Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture, and Biodiversity) initiatives highlighted at Johannesburg follows an 'ecosystem approach'. Designed through trans-disciplinary, participatory processes sensitive to gender issues and social contexts, such approaches can be catalysed by empowering local governments to regulate the impacts of development activities, enabling stakeholders to manage ecosystems more effectively, and encouraging local community to rebuild agriculture, develop water harvesting, and regenerate degraded areas in partnership with government and the private sector.

PLENARY SESSION 3

Environment, health and education: solutions in a knowledge economy

Chairperson Prof. Joanne Kauffman

Speakers Prof. Charles D Kolstad • Sir Charles C Nicholson • Prof. Charles Perrings • Mr Steven D Smith • Mr Hau Singh Tse • Prof. Kimio Uno



In both developed and developing nations, lack of knowledge, institutional capacity, and governance form major barriers to sustainability. Economic theory solved most environmental problems years ago by introducing tradable permits or charging a price for pollution. But two fundamental problems exist in realizing these. The distribution problem falls disproportionately on the poor and often burdens narrow sectors. For instance, the most polluting vehicles are often the oldest, owned by the poor. Also, the cost of monitoring small sources is usually not justified. However, IT could well solve this. It is already used in monitoring road congestion, automotive emissions, etc.

Since climate change alters relative costs and benefits, policy-makers should allocate more resources to mitigation and less to adaptation. Capital flow into sustainable projects is vital. Financial institutions must include socio-economic costs in valuing sustainable projects.

Collaborative efforts should address the need for (1) knowledge solutions to produce meaningful development; (2) institutional strengthening and capacity building to successfully implement and disseminate knowledge solutions; and (3) empowered local governance to enhance interaction with people on environment, education, and health.

RECEPTION AND DINNER ADDRESS

Chairperson Prof. Emil Salim

Speakers Mr Salman Khurshid

Regaling participants of the third Delhi Sustainable Development Summit with his wit and sense of humour, the former Minister of External Affairs, Mr Salman Khurshid, talked about the sense of incompleteness in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh as the 'unfinished civilization'. During his hilarious speech, he touched upon such important issues as water, forests, infrastructure, and governance. He also expressed his concern over the misuse of democracy in some of the Indian states.



Corporate Social Responsibility: a business case

CSR (corporate social responsibility) is a business case and is economically desirable for any organization to follow it. Any community within which a company operates cannot be disengaged from the company's activities. Corporates have to extend good practices in enhancing the welfare of the community.

CSR is multidimensional and includes aspects of health, safety, ethics, and the environment. However, in developing countries, CSR initiatives have been more in terms of welfare as reaction to government's inaction. In India, of late, many Indian corporates have been practising good CSR actions by involving the local communities and integrating their needs with the companies' policies, mandate, and activities.

For any corporate to be successful, there are three vital ingredients: (1) interaction with various stakeholders, (2) transparency in its actions and activities, and (3) convergence of business policies and goals with its CSR goals.

As they said it . . .

Peace on this planet is very critical for achieving sustainable development.

Dr Kristalina Georgieva, Director, Environment Department & Chair, Environment Sector Board, World Bank

The way people count upstream is not the way people count downstream. Watershed management needs to happen, but is not happening because of political obstacles.

Dr Maritta R v Bieberstein Koch-Weser, President, Earth3000, Germany

Sustainability is not only about taking care of the quantity (of water) but also about its quality.

Ms Radha Singh, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, India

For the achievement of the millennium development goals it is essential to enhance the assets of the poor and reform environmental and industrial policies of governments.

Mr Robert Graham-Harrison, Minister (Development), British High Commission; Head, Department of International Development, India

It is certain that climate has changed and it is going to continue to change in the next decade.

Nobel Laureate Prof. F Sherwood Rowland, Donald Bren Research Professor of Chemistry and Earth System Science, USA

We cannot have economic growth, if we do not have agricultural growth ... agricultural development must be linked with good natural resource management.

Mr Ian Johnson, Vice President, Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development The World Bank, Washington DC

Trade is an important instrument for growth. Therefore, there is a need to link the debate on trade with the debate on the environment.

Mr Suman Bery, Director-General, National Council for Applied Economic Research, India

Look forward to . . .

Keynote address 3 (10.00–10.45 a.m.)

Chairperson

Mr Suresh P Prabhu, Former Minister for Power, India

Speaker

Mr Chad Holliday, Chairman and CEO, DuPont, USA

TealCoffee (10.45–11.00 a.m.)

Plenary session 4 (11.00 a.m.–12.30 p.m.)

Land use, forestry and biodiversity

Chairperson

Ambassador Walter Fust, Director-General, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Berne

Speakers

- Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director, Bioresources and Biotechnology Division, TERI
- Dr John Kilama, President, Global Bioscience Development Institute, USA
- Dr S K Pande, Distinguished Fellow, TERI
- Dr Kilaparti Ramakrishna, Sarah Shallenberger Brown Chair in Environmental Policy, Woods Hole Research Center, USA
- Ms Tiahoga Ruge, Coordinator-General, Centre for Education and Capacity Building for Sustainable Development, Secretariat of the Environment and Natural Resources, Government of Mexico
- Dr Kazuhiko Takeuchi, Professor, Graduate School of Agricultural and Life Sciences, The University of Tokyo

Keynote address 4 (12.30–1.15 p.m.)

Chairperson

Mr Ashok Jaitly, Distinguished Fellow, TERI

Speaker

Dr Sam Pitroda, Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, WorldTel Limited, UK

Lunch (1.15–2.15 p.m.)

Plenary session 5 (2.15–3.45 p.m.)

The role of the media in sustainable development

Chairperson

Sir Mark Tully, Former Chief of Bureau, BBC, India

Speakers

- Dr Sanjaya Baru, Editor, The Financial Express, India
- Mr Raj Chengappa, Executive Editor, India Today
- Mr Darryl D'Monte, Chairperson, Forum of Environmental Journalists of India (FEJI); President, International Federation of Environmental Journalists (IFEJ)
- Mr Sunil Jain, Contributing Editor, Business Standard, India
- Mr Yateendra Joshi, Director, Information Technology and Services Division, TERI

TealCoffee (3.45–4.00 p.m.)

Plenary session 6 (4.00–5.30 p.m.)

Governance issues in sustainable development

Chairperson

Mr Michael F. Carter, Country Director, The World Bank, New Delhi

Speakers

- Dr Frank Biermann, Project Leader, Global Governance Project, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, Germany
- Dr Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Executive Director, LEAD (Leadership for Environment and Development) International, UK
- Prof. Mohan Munasinghe, Chief Energy Advisor to the Government of Sri Lanka, and Minister-Counsellor
- Prof. Rehman Sobhan, Chairman, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Bangladesh
- Dr Leena Srivastava, Director, Regulatory Studies & Governance Division, TERI

Reception and Dinner (7.30–9.30 p.m.)

Venue

Taj Mahal Hotel, No. 1 Mansingh Road, New Delhi

Chairperson

Ambassador C Dasgupta, Distinguished Fellow, TERI

Speaker

Mr Gilbert Parent, Ambassador for the Environment, Government of Canada

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