

# OUTREACH 1997

Countdown to Earth Summit II

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## WELCOME - THE COUNTDOWN BEGINS !

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#### WELCOME

Dear Friends

We would like to introduce a new service from the **CSD NGO Steering Committee** called 'Outreach 1997' it is our attempt to keep those interested in 1997 sustainability issues aware of the events leading up to '**Earth Summit II**' (UN Special Session of the General Assembly). Outreach 1997 will be coming out *monthly* from now until immediately after '**Earth Summit II**'.

Many people already recognise 1997 to be a landmark year for those interested in the issues of sustainable development. The diary section on page 4 will keep you abreast of new meetings or changes in the plans for Earth Summit II.

The **Steering Committee** have already produced a draft briefing document on how the process could operate at the preparatory meetings for '**Earth Summit II**'. This and this newsletter will be put up on the **CSD NGO Steering Committee** Website which Robert Pollard is setting up for us.

We hope that all the Steering Committee members and others will use Outreach 1997 as a resource - repackage it and send it out in your country, region or to your network. If you want to put your logo on it please do

The **Steering Committee** is here to facilitate your involvement at best we can. You should have a copy of the NGO synthesis paper produced by Peter Mucke and Tom Bigg with the mailing we sent out in early August. We will be using that as an initial starting place in setting up support around particular issues. As you know we have two list servers we are hoping to set up others on issues. To do this we need volunteers to manage the list servers. In the last mailing there was a questionnaire can you fill that in and let us have it back. This next year offers those interested in sustainable development a unique opportunity to help the world.

Best Wishes

Esmeralda Brown & Michael McCoy  
Co-Chairs of the CSD NGO Steering Committee

### NEWS FROM THE INTERNET

#### *CSD NGO Steering Committee*

The **Steering Committee** has now constructing a web page. This is at <http://www.igc.apc.org/habitat/csd-97>  
There is also a general list server for those interested it is [csdgen@undp.org](mailto:csdgen@undp.org) just send a message to be added to it.

#### Useful Web Pages

##### *Secretariat for the Biodiversity Convention*

<http://www.unep.ch/biodiv.html>

##### *Clearinghouse Mechansim*

<http://www.biodiv.org>

##### *Bionet*

<http://www.bionet.org>

##### *Secretariat for the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*

<http://www.unfccc.de>

##### *IEA Greenhouse Gas Research and Development Programme*

<http://www.ieagreen.org.uk>

##### *Secretariat for the Convention on Desertification*

<http://www.unep.ch/incd>

##### *Ozone Secretariat*

<http://www.unep.ch/ozone>

##### *Secretariat for the IPF*

<http://www.un.org/dpcsd/dsd/ipf.htm>

##### *Habitat (post Habitat II information)*

<http://www.undp.org/un/habitat>

##### *UNEP*

<http://www.unep.ch>

##### *DPCSD*

<http://www.un.org/dpcsd>

*Linkages (Earth Negotiations Bulletin)* is a multimedia reference tool for environment and development issues

<http://www.iisd.ca/linkages>

#### **OUTREACH '97**

CSD NGO Steering Committee

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# UPDATE

*Things to look out for in the run up to 1997*

## In Brief.....

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio Summit 1992 (UNCED), not only set on course a new cycle of Conferences and Summits, but initiated processes for the development of a whole range of legally binding instruments, international treaties and conventions designed for the protection of the global environment. Many of these processes will reach a key stage at or before the 'Earth Summit II'. The run up to 1997 will be paramount for refocusing the international agenda as we go into the 21st Century.

**PrepCom 0:** Though the first preparatory meeting (prepcom) for 'Earth Summit II' will not be until February 1997 there will be a meandering prepcom 0 starting the third week of October and going on until mid December. This will be through Committee II of the General Assembly where governments will start to float their viewpoints for what '97 should achieve.

**CSD NGO Steering Committee:** The CSD NGO Steering Committee will be coordinating the logistics around the two preparatory meetings and the Earth Summit II itself. This will include training, room booking, the NGO Forum, government-NGO dialogues, morning strategy sessions and issue based working groups. They will also be collecting together views on what different NGO priorities for 1997 and beyond are.

## International Activities....

**DPCSD:** The Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD). Will be organizing the UN side of preparations for the 1997 preparatory meetings and the Special Session. They will be providing the initial papers in early January which governments will be negotiating from. They have a Major Groups Focal Point - Zehra Aydin who has produced a questionnaire for groups to fill in. If you are interested then let us know and we will send you a copy. Their newsletter can be found on the DPCSD web site.

## Conventions

**Biodiversity:** The Convention on Biodiversity's, Third Conference of the Parties (COP 3) is to take place in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Additional meetings and possible signing of the *Biosafety Protocol*, safety in biotechnology will be held in May and October 1997.

**Hazardous Waste:** The Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, working groups and subcommittees will be held in September and October of this year respectively. Related meetings include the Second and Third Session of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the preparation of an internationally *legally binding instrument for the application of Prior Informed Consent (PIC)* on 16 September 1996 and to be confirmed in 1997.

**Climate:** The Convention on Climate Change, the Second Conference of the Parties (COP 2) took place in July of this year, COP 3 will be held in December 1997. At this it will agree *legally binding* targets for CO2 reductions past the year 2000. Further working groups on the Berlin Mandate will take place in December 1996 and February 1997.

**Desertification:** The Convention on Desertification, the International Negotiating Committee to combat Desertification will take place on the 3 - 13 September 1996 in New York, to be followed up on 6 - 17 January 1997. The Convention has at present signatories Short of it becoming *legally binding*.

**CITES:** The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the Animals Committee will meet from 23 -27 September 1996 in the Czech Republic and the Plants Committee from 11 -15 November 1996.

**Ozone:** The Thirteenth Meeting of the open ended working group for the Montreal Protocol met on August 26 this year. The 8th Meeting of the Parties will take place in November 18-29.....

## Intergovernmental Panels

The Third Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests will meet from 9 - 19 September. This will deal with trade aspects of forests and start to negotiate text for '97. Related meetings include the Seminar on the Implementation of Sustainable Forest Management from 22 - 25 November 1996.

## Conferences

The follow up to Habitat II will take place through the Commission on Human Settlements. This will be meeting in May 1997 in Nairobi for two weeks. One of the questions it and the Special Session will have to deal with is does the CSD take up urban sustainable development or does the Commission on Human Settlements?

## The World Food Summit Rome 13 - 17 November 1996

As world leaders prepare to assemble in Rome in November, the prospect of a public commitment to action to eliminate hunger moves closer. The summit will offer an opportunity to ensure food security and equitable access for all to a balanced diet essential for a healthy active life.

As food resources dwindle and population grows it becomes increasingly more important to develop rapid and sustainable agricultural production to achieve an increase in access of 75% , whilst maintaining and not destroying the natural recourse equilibrium which is essential for all.

## World Trade Organization Meeting Singapore December 9 - 13 September 1996

The WTO Trade and Environment Committee has initiated discussions on ecolabelling and on the interaction of environmental agreements and trading rules. The environmental effects of trade liberalisation and environmental issues involving the protection of intellectual property rights will also be on the agenda in

## In the Coffee bars

*This section is to give you the latest gossip that is around the coffee bars of the UN.* Some people say there is a chance that 'Earth Summit II' will be put off until September 1997. This would enable EcoSoc to have its discussion over UN Reform and in particular the future of UNCHS. We understand the two governments that are looking to move it - for different reasons - are the US and Germany. This would take 'Earth Summit II' out of the Dutch EU Presidency and into the Luxembourg one.

Did the UK Secretary of State's statement at the Climate negotiations in favor of an air fuel tax mean that northern countries are going to come to Earth Summit II with money? Any chance of this will depend on the outcome of the US elections. In particular if the Democrats have a majority in the House and Senate!

# CONVENTIONS

## BIODIVERSITY CONVENTION

*Biosafety Protocol First Meeting of the Open-Ended Ad hoc Working Group 22-26 July Aarhus Denmark*

Control and safety in biotechnology is a key, but contentious component of the convention. The meeting produced little in the way of written results. However, it went some way to defining issues and articulating positions. Issues of liability, perhaps the crux of a biosafety protocol, were highlighted.

An essential element for transparency in negotiations was set, NGOs were welcomed into the deliberations. Elements for a future protocol were listed by governments, future work programmes were outlined and two further meetings were agreed for 1997.

### *Highlights of the SBSTTA-2*

*Second Session of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-2)*

Items for discussion were assessment of biodiversity, identification and monitoring and indicators. There was a call for a distinction to be drawn between the assessment of biodiversity status and the state of knowledge. Work priorities included critical methodological review, indicators, information exchange, analysis of activities with a negative impact and capacity building.

The October issue of OUTREACH '97 will discuss the outcomes of SBSTTA-2, in the run up to the Second Conference of the Parties to the Biodiversity Convention.

## CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

*Second Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change 8 - 19 July 1996*

The Second Conference of the Parties (COP II) opened amidst controversy arising from the publication of the widely discussed IPCC Second Assessment Report (SAR). The report, which details increases in green house gases (GHGs) and atmospheric pollutants and their links to phenomena such as global warming, is a timely reminder of the enormous scientific, environmental and economic challenges in the next millennium. The contentious issue of the SAR was left unresolved, but some progress was made.

Though not unanimously accepted, the 'Geneva Declaration', resulting from the ministerial High Level Segment constitutes a significant political statement. The Declaration endorses the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

conclusions, including the finding that the continued rise in GHG concentrations will interfere with the climate system, and calls for legally binding objectives and significant reductions in emissions. However, initial observations of NGOs, though recognizing the importance of such a joint statement, do point towards a number of short falls. The report does not specify that any reductions should aim to be well below the 1990 level set in the FCCC; it fails to call for legally binding coordinated measures and it does not specify an upper-bound concentration level of GHGs.

Sixteen delegations, mainly consisting of oil producers, strongly objected to the content and handling of the Declaration, stating that there is substantial work still to be done concerning any predictions of climate change and the links to GHGs. Questions were raised as to the economic impact of recommended actions and there were calls made for compensation if proposed measures were implemented.

### *The Berlin Mandate - US Shift Position*

Arguably the most significant outcome of COP II was the US shift in position to support a legally binding agreement to fulfil the Berlin Mandate. Such a change in stance may well force other delegations who have till now hidden their own opposition behind that of the Americans, to give their support. However, development of an agreement will not be smooth sailing with the Americans linking a protocol to tradeable permits. Some developing countries spoke against market based schemes, arguing that markets will favor the wealthy, which could solidify, rather than resolve inequalities.

*'Global climate change needs global action now'....*

The UK Secretary of State for the Environment John Gummer in a rousing speech urged delegations not to underestimate climate change, but to strive to fulfil the Berlin Mandate. His call was for action now, based on 'no regrets' policies and measures based on the precautionary principle. Among the policies suggested were the removal of subsidies on fossil fuel; increased competition in energy markets; a rise in road duties; improvement in fuel/energy efficiency and an aviation tax.

## MONTREAL PROTOCOL & THE VIENNA CONFERENCE

*Thirteenth Meeting of the Open-ended Working Group Geneva 26 August - 1 September 1996*

100 countries met in Geneva to discuss future implementation of control measures relating to the phasing out of ozone depleting substances agreed in the Montreal Protocol. It is feared that any success achieved to date could be seriously undermined or even reversed unless developing

countries are encouraged to adopt and develop ozone-friendly technologies.

Essentially, success is dependent on the replenishment of the Multilateral Fund for 1997-1999. The Technology and Economic Assessment Panel estimates a sum of US\$436.5 million to maintain existing momentum and initiate implementation by those developing countries not yet involved in the process. The talks focused on ways for raising the necessary finances.

In parallel the talks will discuss phasing out of methyl bromide and HCFCs in industrialized countries. Lists of essential uses, for example food security in agriculture, will be drawn up. Measures for the control of the illegal trade of ozone depleting substances (ODS) was also on the agenda.

The Montreal Protocol has had significant success in phasing out the use of many ozone-depleting substances in many countries. In addition, projects in developing countries have resulted in about a one third reduction in consumption.

## CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (CCD)

*9th Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Desertification, 3 - 13 September New York*

Issues to be discussed at the 9th Session will include Global Mechanisms for finance, the designation of a Permanent Secretariat, scientific and technical cooperation, rules of procedure, financial rules, communication of information, Urgent Action for Africa, and interim measures in other regions.

The CCD is the first Convention to wholly integrate the approach of Agenda 21. The experiences arising from this approach is an opportunity to provide many lessons. To date the Convention has been ratified by 41 delegations, this is expected to rise to 50 by the fifth anniversary of UNCED. UNEP has expressed interest in hosting the Permanent Secretariat. UNDP considers CCD one of the most significant post-Rio frameworks working towards the goal of sustainable development. Availability and access to data will be crucial. The outcomes of the Convention to Combat Desertification will be reported in the next **OUTREACH 1997**.

# DIARY COUNTDOWN'97

31 Aug - 1 Sept Global Biodiversity Forum

9 - 19 Sept 3rd IPF Meeting, Geneva

2 November East London Conference 'Building Our Future'

4 - 15 November 3rd meeting of the COP to the Biological Diversity Convention in Buenos Aires.

19-27 Nov 8th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol and the 4th COP to the Vienna Convention Costa Rica

7 - 8 December Summit Conference of the Americas on Sustainable Development Santa Cruz

9 - 13 December Singapore meeting of the World Trade Organization.

First Half 1997 International Conference on sustainable development for countries in transition Minsk, Belarus

6 - 17 January The 10th meeting on negotiations for the Desertification Convention (INCD-10) in New York.

8 - 19 January IPF . Issues to be addressed will include the need for appropriate legal arrangements and finalising the report to be submitted to the CSD New York

13 - 15 January CSD High Level Advisory Board Meeting, Monaco

27 Jan- 7 Feb UNEP will hold its 19th Governing Council. Policy issues for UNEP for

10 - 21 Feb 4th Session of the IPF, New York

24 Feb- 7 Mar Intersessional meeting for the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) - now recognized as PrepCom I for the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in June. New York

13 - 19 March Rio Plus 5, Earth Council Rio de Janeiro Brazil

7 - 25 April CSD meeting - PrepCom II for the Special Session of the UNGA. New York

30 April - 11 May Meeting of the **Commission on Human Settlements** to review outcomes from Habitat II and agree priorities for implementation of the **Habitat Agenda**. New York

12 - 16 May Open Ended Ad hoc working group on Biosafety (Prov)

9 - 13 June 'Earth Summit II' - the Special Session of the UNGA. The Chair of the meeting will be Ambassador Razali of Malaysia. New York

Late June G7 Meeting - may deal with some of the institutional and financial issues left over from Earth Summit II.

July CITES Convention meeting

tbd Third session of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the preparation of an international Legally binding Instrument for the Application of the Prior Informed Consent procedure for certain hazardous Chemicals in International Trade. To be adopted in 1997.

13 -17 October Open Ended Ad hoc working group on Biosafety (prov)

December 1997 COP 3 to the FCCC Japan to confirm

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