

**The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development:
The First Five Years**

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Prepared for delivery at the United Nations University Conference "The United Nations and the Global Environment in the 21st Century: From Common Challenges to Shared Responsibilities"

14-15 November 1997

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In 1992 the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) changed the international environmental agenda. For the first time, the United Nations system examined both environmental protection and economic development on an equal footing at the same conference. Based on the concept of "sustainable development" -- development that is consistent with future as well as present needs, the general recognition that development is a priority for Third World countries, but that the environmental consequences of development must be taken into account -- has shaped the international environmental agenda for the past five years. The results of the Earth Summit, as UNCED was popularly called, embodied in the global programme of action, Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (also known as the Forest Principles), tried to promote and operationalize this concept of sustainable development and change the way the international system looks at environment and economic development.

At the international level, the main responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the Rio accords and, hence the implementation of sustainable development, fell to the Commission on Sustainable Development. This Commission, which was called for in Agenda 21 and established by United Nations resolution 47/191 in December 1992, was given three broad responsibilities: to review progress at the international, regional and national levels in the implementation of recommendations and commitments contained in the final documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), namely: Agenda 21; the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; and the Non-legally Binding Authoritative

Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (also known as the Forest Principles); to elaborate policy guidance and options for future activities to follow up UNCED and achieve sustainable development; and to promote dialogue and build partnerships for sustainable development with governments, the international community and the major groups identified in Agenda 21 as key actors outside the central government who have a major role to play in the transition towards sustainable development including women, youth, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific community, and farmers to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED.¹

How well the Commission has succeeded in fulfilling its mandate and further advancing the sustainable development agenda is the subject of much debate. While there are numerous ways to evaluate the success or failure of any organization, there are two major challenges in evaluating the work of the CSD. First, it is still a relatively young intergovernmental body without a significant track record. Second, is the fact that the Commission is a different beast to everyone who is involved in or observes its work. Just like the three blind men who come across an elephant, each person who examines the work of the CSD has a different opinion as to what exactly we are talking about when we discuss the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

With this in mind, the purpose of this paper is to evaluate the work of the CSD during its first five years. The first part of this paper will examine the history of the Commission and its work. The evaluation itself will examine the Commission's effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate, and its role in setting and coordinating the international sustainable development agenda. The paper concludes with an examination of the overall strengths and weaknesses of the Commission, and where the CSD should go from here. While this paper is not intended to be a comprehensive evaluation of the Commission, it is hoped that it provides certain insights into how the Commission has worked during its first five years and where it is headed as the United Nations

¹ United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. "Terms of Reference: Commission on Sustainable Development" <<http://www.un.org/dpcsd/dsd/csdback.htm>> (visited 25 August 1997).

enters the 21st century.

History of the Commission on Sustainable Development

The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) is one of the major institutional outcomes of UNCED, which was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 1992. Agenda 21 provided for the creation of the CSD in Chapter 38:

In order to ensure the effective follow-up of the conference, as well as to enhance international cooperation and rationalize the intergovernmental decision-making capacity for the integration of environment and development issues and to examine the progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national, regional and international levels, a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development should be established in accordance with Article 68 of the Charter of the United Nations.²

Agreement in Rio to the creation of the CSD was achieved in spite of considerable opposition from many Northern governments, including the United Kingdom and the United States, who opposed in principle the creation of any new body in the United Nations system. This position was eventually overridden, in large part as a result of the persistence of a number of Southern and other Northern governments and a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).³

In the fall of 1992, the 47th UN General Assembly debated the role and modalities of the CSD and, after much haggling, adopted resolution 47/191, "Institutional arrangements to follow up the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development." The resolution, among other things:

Requests the Economic and Social Council in 1993, to set up a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development as a functional commission of the Council;
Recommends that the Commission consist of representatives of fifty-three States elected by the Economic and Social Council from among the Members of the United Nations and members of its specialized agencies for three-year terms, with due regard to equitable geographical distribution;

² United Nations. *Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development*. New York: United Nations, 1992: 275.

³ Thomas Bigg and Felix Dodds. "The UN Commission on Sustainable Development." in *The Way Forward: Beyond Agenda 21*, edited by Felix Dodds. London: Earthscan, 1997:18.

- Recommends that the Commission provide for representatives of various parts of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations to assist and advise the Commission in the performance of its functions;
- Recommends that the Commission provide for non-governmental organizations, including those related to major groups as well as to industry and the scientific and business communities, to participate effectively in its work and contribute within their areas of competence to its deliberations; and
- C Recommends that the Commission shall meet once a year for a period of two to three weeks, beginning in 1993 in New York.⁴

The Commission consists of 53 member-States elected by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for a three-year term with the following regional allocation of seats: (a) 13 seats for African States; (b) 11 seats for Asian States; (c) 10 seats for Latin American and Caribbean States; (d) six seats for Eastern European States; and (e) 13 seats for Western European and other States. One third of the Members are elected annually and out-going members are eligible for re-election. Other States, organizations of the UN system, and accredited inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations can attend each CSD session as observers.

The Commission held its first substantive session in New York from 14-25 June 1993. Amb. Razali Ismail (Malaysia) was elected chairman and presided over an exchange of information on the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level. The CSD also adopted a Multi-Year Thematic Programme of Work for the period 1993-1997. This work programme integrated the 40 chapters of Agenda 21 into the following nine thematic clusters: (a) critical elements of sustainability (including matters related to trade and environment, sustainable consumption, combating poverty, demographic dynamics and sustainability); (b) financial resources and mechanisms; (c) education, science, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, cooperation and capacity building; (d) decision-making structures; (e) roles of major groups; (f)

⁴ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 47/191, "Institutional arrangements to follow up the

health, human settlements and freshwater; (g) land, desertification, forests and biodiversity; (h) atmosphere, oceans and all kinds of seas; and (i) toxic chemicals and hazardous wastes.

Clusters (a) to (e), which are broadly cross-sectoral in nature, were to be considered by the Commission annually, while clusters (f) to (i), which are sectoral in nature, were to be considered on a multiyear basis: (f) and (i) in 1994, (g) in 1995 and (h) in 1996. According to the work programme, In 1997, the Commission would conduct an overall review of the progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21 to prepare for the 19th Special Session of the General Assembly to assess the progress achieved in the five years since UNCED.

At its first session, the Commission also recognized the need for intersessional work to address some of the more contentious issues that the CSD would discuss in 1994, namely finance and technology transfer. Delegates agreed to establish an "ad hoc open-ended intersessional working group" to be composed of government experts to assess and suggest specific measures to enhance the implementation of Agenda 21 in these two areas. The 1993 session of the CSD also:

Set up reporting processes to channel information on efforts to implement Agenda 21 into the CSD for review. The annual report process would include submissions from national governments and from intergovernmental organizations. The CSD secretariat was to receive these, analyze them and then produce aggregated reports on Agenda 21 implementation at the national and international levels. Scope was allowed for NGOs to contribute, both through their national governments' reports and directly to the secretariat.

- C Allowed a number of governments to offer to host meetings that addressed various parts of the CSD agenda.
- C Agreed on other matters involving financial assistance and technology transfer.

- C Addressed progress made by various parts of the UN system towards incorporating Agenda 21 into their operations.⁵

The second session of the CSD was held from 16-27 May 1994, under the chairmanship of Dr. Klaus Töpfer, then German Environment Minister. Delegates widely acknowledged the need for effective intersessional work to prepare for the next session of the Commission and so the CSD took the decision to extend the mandate of the intersessional working groups so that one group would prepare for the 1995 discussion on land resource issues and the second group would focus on finance and technology transfer. There was much support for intersessional meetings hosted by governments and other organizations to address issues on the CSD's agenda. The 1994 session also:

- Recommended that relevant bodies should seek a legally binding status of the Prior Informed Consent Procedure. OECD countries should ban exports of listed or dangerous substances to developing countries.
- C Called for greater cooperation with governing bodies of international organizations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) and with major groups.
- C Recognized that the overall financing of Agenda 21 and sustainable development fell significantly short of expectations and requirements.
- C Agreed that additional efforts were essential in the area of transfer of environmentally sound technologies, cooperation and capacity building.
- C Acknowledged that additional measures needed to be taken to change contemporary patterns of consumption and production that are detrimental to sustainable development.
- C Emphasized the importance of continuous exchange of information on practical experience gained by countries, organizations and major groups.

⁵ Bigg and Dodds, 1997: 24-25; United Nations. "Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its First Session" (E/CN.17/1993/3/Add.1), 30 June 1993.

- C Backed ongoing work on the elaboration of realistic and understandable sustainable development indicators that can supplement national reporting.⁶
- C Developed innovative ways of working. The need for a dialogue-oriented approach was recognized, including the use of panel discussions and other means by which information could be shared and the expertise of a wide range of actors could be sought.⁷

One organizational problem that became apparent during the preparations for this session was that CSD Chairs were elected at the beginning of the annual session and served until the start of the following year's session. Initiatives developed by the outgoing Chair would therefore reach their fruition under a successor who might not have the same level of commitment or interest, and who would be coping with the immensely difficult task of chairing a CSD session for the first time.⁸ Attempts were made to persuade ECOSOC to change the normal arrangements and allow election of the Chair and the Bureau of a UN commission at the end of the annual session, but it was not until after the Special Session of the General Assembly that ECOSOC finally agreed to make this procedural change in its resolution 1997/63.

At its 1995 session, which met from 11-28 April 1995 under the chairmanship of Henrique Calvalcanti (Brazil), the Commission held more dialogue sessions and panel discussions. Fifty-three countries produced national reports and more than 50 ministers and high-level officials attended the session. One of the most notable accomplishments of the 1995 session was the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests to formulate options for action to support the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and report back to the CSD in 1997. The Commission also: established a work programme on consumption and production patterns; called for a review of the mechanisms for transferring

⁶ This was considered to be a major accomplishment since two years earlier in Rio, many developing countries were not willing to even discuss the development of sustainable development indicators for fear that their use would compromise national sovereignty over natural resources and the environment.

⁷ Bigg and Dodds, 1997: 25-26; United Nations. "Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its Second Session" (E/CN.17/1994/20), 12 July 1994.

⁸ Bigg and Dodds, 1997: 26.

environmentally sound technologies; agreed on a timetable for the formulation of sustainable development indicators; promoted an integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources; recognized the need to analyze the potential effects of environmentally-related trade issues; recognized that poverty eradication is an indispensable requirement of sustainable development; and encouraged initiatives at the national and international levels, including action to phase out the use of leaded gasoline.⁹

The fourth session of the CSD, chaired by Rumen Gechev (Bulgaria), met from 18 April - 3 May 1996 and completed its multi-year review of Agenda 21 and began to assess its own current and future role. As in 1995, there was a day dedicated to the work of major groups and more panel discussions. The CSD endorsed the Global Plan of Action on protecting the marine environment from land-based activities, which was adopted in November 1995. The Commission also urged governments to pilot the 126 indicators developed by the CSD secretariat in conjunction with governments, UN agencies and major groups. It also reviewed the work programme on changing consumption and production patterns and concluded that although eco-efficiency is a promising strategy for policy development, it is not a substitute for changes in the unsustainable life-styles of consumers. The CSD addressed the relationship between the World Trade Organization provisions and trade measures for environmental purposes, including those relevant to multilateral environmental agreements.¹⁰

The fifth session of the CSD, which met from 7-25 April 1997, under the leadership of Mostafa Tolba (Egypt), prepared a comprehensive document to be adopted by the 19th Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly to Review the Implementation of Agenda 21 in

⁹ Bigg and Dodds, 1997: 27; United Nations. "Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its Third Session" (E/CN.17/1995/36).

¹⁰ Bigg and Dodds, 1997: 28-29; United Nations. "Report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its Fourth Session" (E/CN.17/1996/38).

June 1997. Governments agreed that some progress was made in terms of institutional development, international consensus-building, public participation and private sector actions. As a result, some countries have succeeded in accelerating economic growth, reducing the incidence of poverty, curbing pollution and slowing the rate of resource degradation. Overall, however, the global environment continues to deteriorate and the commitments in the UNCED agreements have not been fully implemented.

Five years after the Earth Summit in Rio, delegates reconvened in New York for the 19th United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) to review the implementation of Agenda 21, from 23-27 June 1997. This meeting served as a review and an assessment of the work of the Commission, and how the UN system, governments, local authorities, NGOs and international organizations were implementing key components of Agenda 21 and moving toward sustainable development. UNGASS delegates adopted a "Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21" and called on the CSD to:

- Make concerted efforts to attract greater involvement in its work of ministers and high-level national policy makers responsible for specific economic and social sectors;
- C Continue to provide a forum for the exchange of national experiences and best practices in the area of sustainable development;
- C Provide a forum for the exchange of experiences on regional and subregional initiatives and regional collaboration for sustainable development;
- C Establish closer interaction with international financial, development and trade institutions.
- C Strengthen its interaction with representatives of major groups; and
- C Organize the implementation of its next multi-year programme of work in the most effective and productive way.¹¹

Delegates also agreed on a new five-year work plan, culminating with the next comprehensive review of progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 21 in the year 2002.

¹¹ Chad Carpenter, et. al. "Summary of the Nineteenth United Nations General Assembly Special Session to Review Implementation of Agenda 21: 23-27 June 1997." *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, Vol. 5 No, 88 (30 June 1997):10.

Has the CSD accomplished its mission?

Unlike many functional commissions of ECOSOC, the CSD was given a very broad mandate and programme of work. Therefore, there is quite a lot of room for interpretation and evaluation of what the CSD has accomplished after its first five years. This section examines the Commission's effectiveness in accomplishing its mission, as set out by the General Assembly in resolution 47/191: to review progress at the international, regional and national levels in the implementation of recommendations and commitments contained in the final documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED); to elaborate policy guidance and options for future activities to follow up UNCED and achieve sustainable development; and to promote dialogue and build partnerships for sustainable development with governments, the international community and the major groups identified in Agenda 21.¹²

Review Progress in the Implementation of Agenda 21: On a purely technical level, the CSD's first multi-year programme of work reviewed the implementation of each chapter of Agenda 21, the Forest Principles and, to a lesser extent, the Rio Declaration. Within this context, the CSD attempted to monitor implementation at the national, regional and international levels. The CSD chose to monitor progress at the national level through the submission of national reports. From the beginning, governments had a number of concerns about national reporting. Many developing country delegations stressed that this information should be voluntary and that the Secretariat should not set guidelines or a standardized format for the reports. Members of the

¹² This evaluation of the work of the CSD during its first five years is based on a review of the existing literature on the Commission as well as a series of interviews with UN, government and non-governmental representatives who have participated in the work of the Commission since its establishment in 1992. The majority of the people interviewed asked that their comments be treated as "off the record." As a result, I will not be citing anyone directly, but I would like to thank the following people for their contributions: Oscar Avalle, GEF Secretariat, Gunilla Bjorkland, Stockholm Environment Institute, Felix Dodds, UNED-UK, Alison Drayton, Government of Guyana, Paul Hofseth, Government of Norway, Amb. Bo Kjellén, Government of Sweden, Peter Padbury (Canada), Andrey Vasilyev, UN Division for Sustainable Development, and Marilyn Yakowitz, OECD.

Group of 77 did not want anyone to examine the individual reports or make comparisons among them.¹³ This was largely because developing countries did not want a situation to develop where development aid to be linked to national reporting. Others, such as Australia and the Nordic countries believed that the reports should be limited to the topics being discussed during a particular year and should be as brief and concise as possible.¹⁴

While the final resolution adopted by the CSD¹⁵ listed guidelines that the Secretariat should follow on preparing the information to be included in the analysis of national information, it is left to individual governments to decide on the degree of detail and regularity of their reporting to the CSD, thus maintaining the voluntary nature of national reporting.¹⁶ However, the reporting requirements proved to be too vague to facilitate a comprehensive reporting process. The Secretariat continued to work closely with governments to evaluate and improve the reporting process. According to Lars Hyttinen, who was responsible for processing the information from the national reports within the CSD Secretariat until his retirement in 1996, "what has happened in the last five years is a simplification of the reporting process." Through this simplification it has become easier over the years to fill out the questionnaire supplied by the Secretariat and to compare the results from different countries.¹⁷

However, although more countries have submitted reports each year, their contents are still difficult to compare and even harder to verify. Furthermore, the questions in the reports do

¹³ Pamela Chasek, et.al. *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, Vol. 5 No. 4 (16 June 1993).

¹⁴ Pamela Chasek, et.al. *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, Vol. 5 No 12 (28 June 1993).

¹⁵ Commission on Sustainable Development. "Exchange of information regarding the implementation of Agenda 21 at the national level." (E/CN.17/1993/L.3/Rev.1), 22 June 1993.

¹⁶ Helge Ole Bergesen and Trond K. Botnen. "Sustainable Principles or Sustainable Institutions? The Long Way from UNCED to the Commission on Sustainable Development." *Forum for Development Studies*, 1996, No. 1: 49-50.

¹⁷ Maria S. Verheij and William R. Pace. "Reviewing the Spirit of Rio: The CSD, Agenda 21, and Earth Summit +5." Report published by the International NGO Task Group on Legal and Institutional Matters (INTGLIM), March 1997:38.

not always address the issues that are most important and it is not always clear what exactly the Secretariat wants to measure. The national reports that have been submitted have been few in number, of uneven quality and not always linked to the political debates among ministers within the Commission. The majority of developing countries have never submitted national reports. The summaries produced by the Secretariat are based on insufficient coverage and are presented in such general terms that it is impossible to draw meaningful conclusions from them. As a result, they appear to play a marginal role when the Commission meets.¹⁸

On the positive side, the CSD has actually been able to move towards a crude form of peer group review by instituting the practice of having governments make presentations and allowing other governments and major groups to comment. Furthermore, the CSD has managed to gain greater acceptance for the use of indicators to monitor progress towards sustainable development. As part of the implementation of the Work Programme on Indicators of Sustainable Development adopted by the CSD at its Third Session in April 1995, a working list of 134 indicators and related methodology sheets has been developed and is now ready for voluntary testing at the national level, by countries from all regions of the world. The aim of the CSD is to have an agreed set of indicators available for all countries to use by the year 2000.

With regard to reporting on progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the international level, many have praised the "task manager" system instituted by the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD). A different UN agency or department is responsible for preparing, in collaboration with concerned organizations, coordinated inputs for the consolidated analytical reports of the Secretary-General which will focus on common United Nations system strategies for the implementation of Agenda 21 and identify areas for further

¹⁸ Bergesen and Botnen, 1996:53.

action for consideration by the CSD.¹⁹ For example, the Food and Agriculture Organization is responsible for implementation of the chapters on forests and sustainable agriculture. UNEP is responsible for desertification and biodiversity, UNIDO is responsible for biotechnology and WHO is responsible for health, human settlements and freshwater. While many have praised the task manager system, others complain that there is often little or no inter-agency consultation on some of the issues and that the quality of the reports varies greatly from sector to sector, both in terms of accuracy and clarity.

While the CSD has made some progress in monitoring the implementation of Agenda 21, it must be recognized that each of the UN conferences that have followed UNCED address some of the same issues that are contained in Agenda 21.²⁰ Therefore, any true review of Agenda 21 must integrate the outcomes of these other conferences and this is not happening. There are separate ECOSOC commissions to examine the follow-up to each of these conferences, including the Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Settlements. While there have been numerous debates on this issue within ECOSOC, including proposals that the CSD coordinate follow-up work of all these major conferences, to date there has been no substantive movement in the direction of coordinated follow-up. Furthermore, each of these follow-up processes requires its own reporting. Some argue that governments have to spend so much time reporting that there is no time for implementation. If ECOSOC and its functional commissions are able to reach agreement on a coordinated and streamlined national and international reporting process, there may be more progress to report.

¹⁹ United Nations. "Report on the Second Meeting of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development" (ACC/1993/24), 19 November 1993 <gopher://gopher.un.org:70/00/inter/iacsd/93-24.en>.

²⁰ These conferences are the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo), the 1995 World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen), the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women

Elaborate Policy Guidance and Options for Future Activities: The CSD's record in elaborating policy guidance and options for future activities to follow up UNCED and achieve sustainable development is a mixed one. On the one hand, when you look at the cumbersome and politicized mechanics of accomplishing anything within the UN system, it is hard to imagine how a body such as the CSD can come up with any real policy guidance at all. The CSD's hands are particularly tied on issues such as finance and technology transfer where the North-South divide is as wide as ever.

Yet, there are some areas where the CSD has been successful in providing policy guidance. The first is forests. The establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests in 1995 is seen by many as a watershed event that has helped to focus the international dialogue on forests. Eleven intergovernmental processes supported the work of the IPF and over 200 comprehensive, technical reports were prepared in conjunction with the work of the IPF. The Panel's deliberations built international consensus and formulated approaches for action on the majority of issues under consideration.²¹

Another success story is the Comprehensive Freshwater Assessment. At its second session in 1994, the CSD requested preparation of a Comprehensive Assessment of the Freshwater Resources of the World, to be submitted at its fifth session in 1997. This assessment provides an overview of major water quantity and quality problems with the aim of helping people understand the urgent need to deal with these issues before they become even more serious. In spite of its limitations, the available information provides the basis for a broad understanding of the problems facing various regions of the world, and of the nature and magnitude of the global implications of

(Beijing) and the 1996 Second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Istanbul).

²¹ For more information on the work of the IPF, see United Nations. "The Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests on its Fourth Session" (E/CN.17/1997/12), 20 March 1997 <[gopher://gopher.un.org:70/00/esc/cn17/ipf/session4/97---12.EN](http://gopher.un.org:70/00/esc/cn17/ipf/session4/97---12.EN)>.

not dealing with these problems.²²

While governments have identified new things that they want to do, the bigger question remains, "Is anyone listening?" Is the CSD having an impact outside of the UN basement? A number of NGOs believe that the CSD needs a more strategic process, including greater involvement of experts, national-level officials from the capitals, and stakeholders at the local level. While the CSD has succeeded in attracting far more NGOs, ministers and representatives from national capitals than any other ECOSOC commission, the vast majority of delegates -- especially those from developing countries -- are diplomats. The job of the diplomat is to negotiate. The diplomats often do not consult their capitals or the people who actually understand various environment and development problems. According to members of the NGO community, if the CSD is to be truly effective in the area of providing policy guidance, there should be additional funding to support the attendance of people from capitals so as to move towards substance and away from rhetoric.

Promote dialogue and build partnerships for sustainable development: Of all three areas, the CSD seems to have best accomplished its goal of promoting dialogue and building partnerships for sustainable development between governments, the international community and major groups.²³ One of the major accomplishments of the Rio process was the breakthrough in the participation of NGOs and other major groups. Their participation gives a real vitality to the work of the CSD, particularly through the convening of side events and dialogue sessions. Some have gone so far as to say that the CSD is the most successful commission in the UN because of the fact that it promotes dialogue between governments, intergovernmental organizations and

²² The Comprehensive Freshwater Assessment was released as UN Document E/CN.17/1997/9 (4 February 1997) and can be found on the Internet at <<gopher://gopher.un.org:70/00/esc/cn17/1997/off/97--9.EN>>.

²³ Major groups, as defined by Agenda 21, include women, youth, indigenous peoples, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, the scientific community, and

major groups.

During CSD-5 there were formal dialogue sessions between governments and each of the major groups. While not everyone was satisfied with these sessions, specifically with the few government delegates who participated and the way in which the results of the sessions were used by the Commission, they represented a major step in institutionalizing major groups into the work of the Commission. The general purpose of these dialogue sessions is to bring a sense of reality into the CSD. Governments are not the only ones implementing Agenda 21 and working to achieve sustainable development. Each of the major groups is also a stakeholder and has success stories to report and problems to bring to the table.

This partnership building within the CSD has also had an effect on the domestic agenda in some states. The CSD is one of the few UN bodies that is capable of generating an NGO reaction or a backlash in national capitals. While not every country has NGO representatives present during the work of the CSD, those that do have to watch their backs. If the NGOs do not like what their government representatives are saying, they will report on this to their constituencies at home, who will, in turn, put pressure on the government to explain or even change its position. In many UN bodies, governments have no one watching them and can say whatever they want, but not in the CSD. In the Commission there must be a delicate equilibrium between national interests, international role play and the domestic agenda. The NGOs have made sure of this.

Yet, there are still some problems. First, not every major group is equally represented in the work of the Commission. While the dialogue with NGOs, women and youth have improved -- and with it an improvement in these groups' understanding of the process -- the dialogue with some of the other groups has never really taken off. For example, the dialogue with the business

farmers.

community is not as good as it was prior to UNCED. The business community does not see the CSD as a priority since most of its actions do not have an impact on business. If one or two representatives attend the meeting and report back to umbrella organizations such as the International Chamber of Commerce, this is seen as sufficient. In the cases of other major groups, particularly indigenous people, farmers and trade unions, the CSD is attracting members of umbrella organizations but not the actual major groups. In other words, the "diplomats" for the sector are attending, rather than the rank and file membership. Finally, there are very few major groups from developing countries who are represented at the CSD. Many of them cannot afford to attend or are unaware of the importance of the CSD. As a result, a certain amount of outreach to major groups is still necessary.

Second, in spite of the increased attendance of major groups at the CSD, and the convening of dialogue sessions and other events, there is still concern that governments are not listening. While some major group representatives, especially members of the Women's Caucus, have become very effective at lobbying government delegates and ensuring that their views are represented in the decisions, many other major groups feel that although they contribute to sustainable development, they have little impact on the work of the CSD.

Finally, there are some government delegates who are concerned that major groups are no longer able to distinguish between their role as lobbyists and their lack of a role as decision makers. No matter how much access is given to major groups at the CSD, they are still observers. The decisions rest with governments who hopefully have the basis for making those decisions. Many major groups come to the CSD with inflated expectation. Instead of observing what is going on, reporting to their own constituencies and trying to influence policymakers at home, some major group representatives behave like UN diplomats and spend their time trying to

influence the text under negotiation. Some government delegates argue that they must remember that a lot of advocacy work needs to be done at home. Thus, the participation of major groups vis à vis the CSD may be greater than with any other UN body, but there are still some issues regarding what role major groups should actually play in an intergovernmental negotiating body.

Critical Assessment of the CSD

While the major focus of the CSD during its first five years was to monitor the implementation of the Rio agreements, its purpose is not only to look back to what has been accomplished since 1992. The CSD also has a role to play in setting the international sustainable development agenda and acting as a coordinating body within the UN system on environment and development issues. The Commission has had varying levels of success in these areas, but since the CSD is an intergovernmental body, the onus of responsibility ultimately rests in the hands of the member governments. In fact, unless its member governments are ready to act on a particular issue, the CSD will accomplish little. During its first five years, the CSD did find that the time was ripe for governments to act in several areas and, as a result, the Commission can report some success. Yet, in far more cases, the CSD has not yet proven to be a major force outside of the UN system and until it does, it will not have much of an effect on advancing the sustainable development agenda.

Agenda Setting: Given its position as a highly visible and well attended UN commission, the CSD has an opportunity to play a pivotal role in setting the international sustainable development agenda. But how do you measure the CSD's effect on agenda setting? For the purposes of this paper, the following questions were used to define what role the CSD has had in agenda setting:

- Has the CSD generated greater concern for an issue already on the international agenda, but languishing?
- Has the CSD put any new issues on the international agenda?
- Has the CSD directed attention to the links between issues that were formerly considered separately?
- Has the CSD promoted more sophisticated priority-setting among the many issues on the international agenda?

To a certain extent, some CSD delegates and observers believe that the Commission has been successful in generating greater concern for issues on the international sustainable development agenda. By creating the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, the CSD was able to focus the forest issue and create more understanding that forests are owned by someone and give livelihood to many people. Freshwater resources and energy are two issues that did not receive much attention in Rio and are now at the top of the international agenda (at least the CSD's agenda for the period 1998-2001), largely due to the work of the Commission. Similarly, the CSD's discussions on sustainable production and consumption patterns and the need for technology transfer and capacity building in developing countries have raised the profiles of these issues.

However, when it comes to putting new issues on the international agenda, the CSD has not been as successful. Some argue that the CSD has put the issues of transport and tourism on the agenda and has advanced the discussions on finance so that new issues such as private direct investment, airline fuel taxes, and a tax on foreign financial transactions, to name a few, have been added to the international sustainable development agenda. The bottom line, however, is that this really is not the CSD's job. Within the UN system, UNEP is responsible for identifying new environmental problems and determining how to tackle them. During the first five years of the CSD, UNEP has shaped the international environmental agenda on such issues as sustainable tourism, chemical safety, persistent organic pollutants, and marine pollution from land-based

sources. Likewise, there are other agencies and programmes in the UN system that are responsible for agenda setting in such areas as population (UNFPA), poverty (UNDP), food security (FAO), human health and the environment (WHO), and so on. Furthermore, some argue that the CSD should also not get involved in areas where there are existing environmental conventions, i.e., climate change, ozone depletion, biodiversity loss, desertification, and ocean dumping. So where does the CSD fit in?

Perhaps the area where the CSD, which is a political body and not a technical body, can have the greatest impact in agenda setting is in directing attention to links between issues and promoting more sophisticated priority setting. Yet, the CSD has had only a modicum of success in these two areas. The CSD's first multi-year thematic programme of work was designed to try to draw out the links between related sectoral issues and to address the cross-sectoral issues in terms of the sectors under review. For example, during its 1995 session, the CSD examined all of the sectoral issues related to land resources (agriculture, forests, desertification, biodiversity, and mountains) and it was hoped that the cross-sectoral discussions on issues such as finance, technology transfer, consumption and production patterns, education, and capacity building would be discussed in terms of land resources as well. While the Commission's intentions were admirable, its execution was not so successful. Governments continued to differentiate their statements and their negotiating strategies on both the cross-sectoral and sectoral issues. The debate on finance was rarely able to get beyond the call for new and additional financial resources and the achievement of the UN target of 0.7% of GNP for official development assistance (ODA), much less focus on finance for a particular sector.

Along these lines, some observers have pointed out that there is a strange absence of linkages to the world economic situation within the context of the CSD's work. In some

intergovernmental bodies, such as the OECD, members always have a finger on markets, employment figures and other leading economic indicators. In the CSD, the discussions take place in a vacuum. Unless there are closer linkages to the work of the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, the work of the CSD may prove to be irrelevant.

The one area where there was some success in issue linkage was in some of the government-sponsored intersessional meetings. In many of these meetings, which provide expert input into the work of the CSD, participants have drawn out these linkages in finance, freshwater resources, forests, sustainable production and consumption, and other issues. However, while the results of these meetings are submitted to the CSD and become part of the official record, the level and quality of debate in the Commission rarely does justice to the work of these expert meetings. So, although linkages are being advanced outside of the CSD, the intergovernmental political process has not yet been able to surmount the rhetoric to make the necessary progress in this aspect of agenda setting.

The blame, however, cannot be placed on rhetoric alone. A far more complicating matter is the fact that we live in a very sectoralized society. At the national level, most of the issues on the sustainable development agenda are divided among different ministries with little coordination between them. This is definitely reflected in the work of the CSD, where different ministries contribute to different reports, are responsible for implementing different chapters of Agenda 21 and participate in the work of the CSD at different levels. Each year the CSD tries to attract ministers from non-environment ministries to limited success. If the upcoming CSD discussions on fresh water are to have any impact whatsoever, it will be imperative that the necessary linkages to urbanization, agriculture, industry and the needs of rural communities are taken into account. This will require a level of inter-ministry and cross-sectoral dialogue that has not yet been seen under

the auspices of the CSD.

During its first five years, the CSD can be described as having a marked lack of priorities, not to mention a lack in effectiveness in priority setting. This was in large part due to the nature of the multi-year programme of work that stressed the overall review of the implementation of Agenda 21 over priority setting. However, the Special Session of the General Assembly adopted a new multi-year programme of work for the CSD for the period 1998-2002 that does reflect some prioritizing. Each year the overriding issues will be poverty and consumption and production patterns. In 1998 the sectoral theme will be "Strategic Approaches to Freshwater Management" and the cross-sectoral theme will be transfer of technology, capacity building, education, science and awareness raising. In 1999, the sectoral theme will be oceans and seas and the cross-sectoral theme will be consumption and production patterns. In 2000 the sectoral theme will be integrated planning and management of land resources and the cross-sectoral theme will be financial resources, trade and investment and economic growth. The sectoral theme in 2001 will be atmosphere, energy and transport and the cross-sectoral theme will be information for decision making and participation and international cooperation for an enabling environment. The 2002 session will complete a comprehensive review.²⁴ For each sectoral and cross sectoral theme different chapters of Agenda 21 have been identified as the main issues for an integrated discussion under the theme. The main question that remains is if governments will be able to address these issues in a cross-sectoral, cross-ministry nature and focus on the stated priority issues. It is important to reiterate that the CSD is an intergovernmental body and unless the individual governments have the political will to move the dialogue forward, the CSD will not be in any position to prioritize issues or set the international sustainable development agenda.

²⁴ United Nations. "Overall Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of Agenda 21: Report of the Ad

To summarize, the CSD does not have a particularly strong record in agenda setting. Examples of the areas where the Commission has played an agenda-setting role include the global freshwater assessment and the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests. The CSD also identified areas where major gaps existed in the international discussion of sustainable development, including such sectors as energy, transport and tourism. Nevertheless, the CSD's record in agenda setting must also be viewed within the context of the Commission's overall purpose. Not everyone thinks that the CSD's role is to set the international agenda. Rather, perhaps the CSD is better placed to play more of an advocacy role -- to put political pressure on national governments and the international system to respond to the challenges of sustainable development -- rather than to set the agenda or come up with the solutions.

Role of the CSD as a Coordinating Body within the UN System: It was envisaged that implementation of Agenda 21 would require active involvement of all relevant international institutions, both within and outside the United Nations system, that deal with specific economic, social or environmental dimensions of sustainable development. However, the CSD was never seen as *the* body that would coordinate the work of the United Nations system. Instead paragraph 38.13(a) of Agenda 21 gave the CSD a monitoring role, stating that the CSD should:

monitor progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and activities related to the integration of environmental and developmental goals throughout the United Nations system through analysis and evaluation of reports from all relevant organs, organizations, programmes and institutions of the United Nations system dealing with various issues of environment and development, including those related to finance."²⁵

Similarly, paragraph 21 of UN General Assembly Resolution 47/191, which established the CSD,

requests all specialized agencies and related organizations of the United Nations system to

Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Nineteenth Special Session" (A/S-19/29), 27 June 1997:55.

²⁵ United Nations. Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development. New York: United Nations, 1992: 276.

strengthen and adjust their activities, programmes and medium-term plans, as appropriate, in line with Agenda 21, in particular regarding projects for promoting sustainable development, in accordance with paragraph 38.28 of Agenda 21, and make their reports on steps they have taken to give effect to this recommendation available to the Commission and the Economic and Social Council in 1993 or, at the latest, in 1994...."²⁶

This language leaves the onus of responsibility for implementing Agenda 21 with the relevant agencies themselves, although it does give the CSD the opportunity to review such actions.

However, the real work at the inter-secretariat level has been led and coordinated through the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD).

The IACSD was established in October 1993 by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) -- the highest inter-agency body of the United Nations, chaired by the Secretary-General, and consisting of the heads of organizations of the United Nations system. The IACSD meets twice a year and reports to the ACC.²⁷

The role of IACSD is to identify major policy issues relating to UNCED follow-up by the United Nations system and to advise the ACC on ways and means of addressing them so as to ensure effective system-wide cooperation and coordination in the implementation of Agenda 21 and other UNCED outcomes and their follow-up.

The functions of the Committee are:

- to identify for the ACC overall policy issues, major gaps and constraints affecting United Nations system cooperation in the UNCED follow-up;
- C to formulate for the ACC recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of cooperation and coordination within the UN system in the implementation of Agenda 21;
- C to ensure clear system-wide division of labor, through optimal allocation and sharing of responsibilities and joint programming, in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the decisions of the Commission on Sustainable Development;
- C to monitor new and additional financing requirements of the UN system organizations related

²⁶ United Nations General Assembly Resolution 47/191, "Institutional arrangements to follow up the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development." (22 December 1992).

²⁷ Participants in the work of the IACSD include: the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, the UN Department for Development Support and Management Services, the UN Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, UN Office of Legal Affairs, the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, the Regional Economic Commissions, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UN International Drug Control Programme, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, ILO, FAO, UNESCO, WHO, World Bank, IMF, WMO, WIPO, UNIDO, IAEA, and Secretariats of the Conventions.

to Agenda 21; and
C to coordinate system-wide response to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

To effectively implement these functions, Task Managers have been appointed from the organizations of the United Nations system. They are responsible for inter-agency coordination, catalyzing joint initiatives, identifying common strategies, preparing reports to the CSD and information exchange under specific thematic areas of Agenda 21 and the work programme of the Commission on Sustainable Development.²⁸

The United Nations Division for Sustainable Development provides secretariat services for both the CSD and the IACSD. As a result, the work of these two bodies -- one intergovernmental and political and one inter-agency and functional -- has been closely coordinated. Thus, the CSD is linked "both vertically and horizontally" to other parts of the UN system.²⁹ Vertically, the Division for Sustainable Development reports to the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs,³⁰ who in turn assists the Secretary-General. Horizontally, it relates to UN agencies, programmes and bodies and takes part in the work of the IACSD.

While the primary responsibility for UN system coordination has rested with the IACSD, the CSD has had an impact on that inter-agency body and on the roles of the agencies in implementing Agenda 21. When it adopted its first multi-year thematic programme of work, the CSD created nine thematic clusters. The CSD originally introduced these thematic clusters to facilitate its own review of Agenda 21 implementation. However, these same clusters have been used to assess the capacity of UN agencies to contribute to Agenda 21 programming and have

²⁸ United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. "Terms of Reference: Inter-Agency Committee for Sustainable Development" <<http://www.un.org/dpcsd/dsd/iacsdref.htm>> (visited 28 September 1997).

²⁹ Bigg and Dodds, 1997:21.

³⁰ Until mid-1997, the Division for Sustainable Development was a part of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD). With the first phase of UN reform activities during the

been used by coordinating authorities to evaluate agency programming. Furthermore, the reports of the task managers have been presented and reviewed on the basis of these clusters in the CSD's "multi-year thematic" review process. Thus, it could be said that the CSD has had an effect on coordination since its multi-year thematic review procedure has permeated every aspect of the UN inter-agency coordination process.³¹

Strengths, Weaknesses and Final Thoughts on the Future of the CSD

Like any organization, the CSD has its own strengths and weaknesses that will have an impact on the future of the organization. While this paper has already addressed a number of these issues, this review of its strengths and weaknesses provides an opportunity to summarize the current status of the Commission.

The CSD has a number of strengths that have contributed to making it the unique body it is. To some degree, one can say that the strengths of the CSD are the same as the strengths of the UN as a whole: it is a forum that brings together all of the countries of the world on an equal standing. However, the CSD's main strengths are in the ways it stands out from the rest of the UN system. Unlike the UN General Assembly and other bodies, there are fewer rigid formats and there is a true liberal attitude about the participation of NGOs and major groups.

The CSD has also proven to be a true catalyst for policy action in numerous areas. Among other things, the CSD has: motivated numerous government-sponsored meetings and workshops related to the implementation of Agenda 21; fostered coordination on sustainable development within the UN system; helped to defuse much of the resistance to national reporting that was evident in Rio; and galvanized NGO and major group activities and action aimed at sustainable

summer of 1997, the department's name was changed to the Department for Economic and Social Affairs.

development at the international, national and local levels.³²

Unlike most UN bodies, the CSD has attracted a mixture of ministers and fairly high-level NGOs. If ministers and NGOs continue to feel it is worthwhile to attend the annual CSD sessions, then the Commission has truly accomplished something. If the ministers know that their colleagues will be there, then the CSD takes on a character similar to a trade fair where all the people dealing with sustainable development gather under one roof.

In addition, through its innovative working methods and with the support of a strong and committed Secretariat, the CSD has managed to add vitality to the international sustainable development debate and keep the "Spirit of Rio" and Agenda 21 alive. The CSD has managed to create a political forum with political leadership, as well as a space for new ideas, new thinking and new forms of interaction between stakeholders and governments and between the local and global levels.

Nevertheless, like any organization, the CSD also has its weaknesses. Like the rest of the United Nations, the CSD operates on the principle of consensus. One delegation can hold up progress, such as Saudi Arabia on climate change or the Vatican on birth control. In addition, the consensus building process often leads to "least common denominator" agreements because there are so many disparate concerns to be met. UN bodies are geared toward negotiation rather than dialogue. As a result, many of the decisions or resolutions adopted by the CSD are vague and not particularly action-oriented. Unfortunately, many of the UN working methods and negotiation practices are not anything that the CSD can change. The UN is not a place where you make revolutions. Nevertheless, the CSD has done remarkably well working within these constraining

³¹ Reg Henry, "Adapting United Nations Agencies for Agenda 21: Programme Coordination and Organisational Reform," *Environmental Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 1 Spring 1996:7.

³² Johannah Bernstein, et. al. "Summary of the Third Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development: 11-28 April 1995." *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, Vol. 5 No. 42 (1 May 1995): 14.

parameters.

The fact that the CSD is a subsidiary body of ECOSOC has given it an inherent weakness. The CSD's decisions have to be endorsed by ECOSOC and then forwarded on to the General Assembly. This serves to weaken the impact that the CSD can have on the international community and on national governments. Furthermore, the CSD does not have its own implementing process and does not have any mechanisms to hold governments accountable, such as is the case with the Commission on Human Rights.

While the CSD attracts many ministers each year, the majority are ministers of the environment. To be truly effective in setting the sustainable development agenda, the CSD must also attract and involve ministers of foreign affairs, finance, trade, agriculture, development or development assistance, forests, and so on. Similarly, the CSD does not garner the attention of the Bretton Woods institutions to the level they should be involved. Finally, the CSD has given insufficient attention to the key linkages between environment and development issues. All of these weaknesses are due in part to the fact that governments are divided along sectoral lines and that it is very difficult for the CSD to truly address an integrated agenda when the member governments are unable to do so.

So where does the CSD go from here? If an informal consensus exists on the role of the Commission, it is as a forum for generating political will to implement Agenda 21. Enhancing this political will and attention given to the issues will depend on a number of factors:

The extent to which the UN system provides the CSD with a more effective means of bypassing the "blanding machine effect" the CSD currently has on the issues, attributable to some extent to the role of diplomatic culture.

C The success of the CSD in providing an authentic role for NGOs and their constituencies, so

that domestic political will is generated before and after reticent governments address the largely normative agenda for sustainable development.

- C Improved communication and educational strategies to raise the visibility and understanding of issues and possible responses.
- C Finally, at all levels, sustainable development must break out of traditional environmental compartments in terms of decision-making structures and conceptual understanding. Unless the CSD comes to grips with the forces of globalization, suspicion will grow that the UN intergovernmental process has become a protective shelter where governments need not confront the erosion of traditional notions of sovereignty resulting, in the words of former British Environment Minister John Gummer, in decisions not read "beyond a small circle of UN aficionados."³³

There is no question that the CSD has established itself as an essential part of the process for reviewing implementation of Agenda 21 and advancing the sustainable development agenda. Yet there are a number of ways that the CSD can increase its effectiveness.

The first is by streamlining its agenda. Now that the first multi-year programme of work has come to a close, the CSD took the opportunity to change its focus during the next five years. Rather than embarking on another comprehensive review of Agenda 21, the CSD will instead focus on a selected number of issues. In essence the CSD will try to fill in the gaps in the UN system where no single agency currently has responsibility, such as freshwater resources, oceans, energy, transportation, and tourism, and sustainable production and consumption, to name a few. Hopefully, this increased focus will in turn foster greater dialogue and more action-oriented proposals than the CSD has been able to generate thus far.

³³Chad Carpenter, et. al. "Summary of the Fourth Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable

To increase the effectiveness of the CSD in both monitoring the implementation of Agenda 21 and advancing the international sustainable development agenda there needs to be a certain level of peer review. National reporting must be enhanced and countries should play a role in reviewing these reports. Developing countries should examine developing countries so as to avoid any North-South finger pointing. Similarly, the CSD must continue to foster increased dialogue within countries (between ministries and between governments and major groups), between countries, between governments and the UN system, and among UN agencies and programmes.

The CSD must also move sustainable development beyond the existing North-South schism. Ambassador Razali Ismail, President of the 51st General Assembly, told UNEP's High-Level Segment in February 1997, "Agenda 21 and the CSD will only bring about sustainable, equitable and ecologically sound development if we can break out of the North-South schism...the real political challenge is to reshape North-South relations." The negotiations on finance during the CSD suggest that States are not only failing to break out of the North-South schism, but that the schism is increasingly polluting the UN's response to sustainable development with suspicion. For developing countries, the decline in ODA since 1992, and attempts during CSD-5 to switch the burden of international funding for sustainable development to private sector investment, which developed countries would argue is a case of acknowledging actuality, have helped to discredit the very concept of "sustainable development."³⁴

If the CSD is to be truly successful, it must -- in the words of former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali -- mobilize the "political will, intellectual leadership, and partnerships" necessary to transform sustainable development into policies and practices on the

Development: 18 April - 3 May 1996." *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, Vol. 5 No. 57 (6 May 1996): 13.

ground.³⁵ In other words, the CSD needs to oblige governments to take the necessary action at the international level, but perhaps more importantly at the national and local levels. Thus far, the CSD has made some progress in mobilizing the international community, governments and major groups to advance the sustainable development agenda, but much more needs to be done.

During its first five years, the CSD has managed to generate over 400 pages of negotiated text. But these are only words, and words they will remain until the CSD manages to translate them into action. Now, in the aftermath of the Special Session of the General Assembly that received its own mixed reviews, and at the beginning of a new five-year work programme, the CSD will need to work harder than ever to maintain its position at the center of the sustainable development debate. As the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* commented in its summary of CSD-5, the CSD must "deliver a renewed political mandate to translate popular concern into urgent and concrete instructions to politicians, translate the information-rich assessments into unequivocal action plans, and translate illusions of top-down sovereign authority and competence into partnerships that span a globalizing world."³⁶

³⁴ Chad Carpenter, et. al. "Summary of the Fifth Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development: 8 - 25 April 1997." *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, Vol. 5 No. 82 (28 April 1997): 12.

³⁵ Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Speech before the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 2 November 1993, as cited in Jared Blumenfeld "The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development," *Environment* Vol. 36 No. 10 (December 1994): 5.

³⁶ Chad Carpenter, et. al. "Summary of the Fifth Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development: 8 - 25 April 1997." *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, Vol. 5 No. 82 (28 April 1997): 13.