



United Nations Environment Programme

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة • 联合国环境规划署
PROGRAMME DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENVIRONNEMENT • PROGRAMA DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS PARA EL MEDIO AMBIENTE
ПРОГРАММА ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ ПО ОКРУЖАЮЩЕЙ СРЕДЕ

UNEP Consultative Meeting with Industry Associations 2000

21 - 22 September, CAP 15, Paris

Meeting Report

Fifty representatives of national and international industry associations joined officials from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) to discuss the world environment agenda on 21 - 22 September in Paris. It was the 17th of the annual **UNEP Consultative Meeting with Industry Associations**, hosted by UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE).

Opening the meeting and welcoming participants, UNEP-DTIE Director Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel invited representatives to make full use of the opportunity to share information, assess progress made and challenges remaining, exchange views and explore future cooperation.

During the first session on "**The global environment agenda**", JoAnne DiSano, Director of the Division for Sustainable Development in the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), gave an overview of early preparations for the Rio+10 event in 2002, noting that a venue and conference title still need to be decided. Regional preparatory meetings are due to start in March 2001 with the aim to undertake regional assessments and provide regional platforms. Both regional and thematic roundtables with selected eminent persons and experts are envisaged as well.

Mrs Aloisi de Larderel gave participants an overview of the role of UNEP and its contribution to CSD8, CSD9 and the Rio process. She highlighted key events such as the First Global Ministerial Environment Forum of Malmö, May 2000, and the Second Ministerial Forum to be held at the forthcoming session of UNEP's Governing Council in the first week of February 2001 in Nairobi. She encouraged participants to note the latter in their diaries, since it will also include special events and discussion on voluntary initiatives and the Global Compact of the UN Secretary-General. Representatives of bodies such as the International Organisation of Employers (IEO) and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) signalled their willingness to assist in ensuring sufficient private sector representation at these events.

During the following session on "**Trade liberalisation and the environment**", Charles Arden-Clarke gave an overview of the growing activity of UNEP-DTIE in the field of trade & environment. A key challenge remains linkage between the work of UNEP, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the secretariats of various Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). He described case studies that have been undertaken by UNEP to assist developing countries and the role of the new UNEP-

Division of Technology, Industry and Economics
Division Office

Tour Mirabeau, 39-43 quai André Citroën, 75739 Paris - Cedex 15, France, Tel: +33.1.44.37.14.50; Fax: +33.1.44.37.14.74
E-mail: unep.tie@unep.fr URL: <http://www.uneptie.org/>

UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force (CBTF) on Trade, Environment and Development.

In his keynote address, Brad Allenby of AT&T explored the topical theme "**E-commerce and the environment**", helping participants to assess whether it is merely a matter of "new economy, old problems". The world is increasingly complex, with rapidly evolving new governance structures and economies which are restructuring to be information-dense and knowledge intensive. Allenby argued that our current understanding of the concepts "environment" and "environmental technologies" is inadequate to respond to this reality. The example of e-commerce and the Internet demonstrates the profound and often unappreciated ignorance with which we are attempting to address these problems. Many e-technologies are in fact environmentally sound technologies, but not recognised as such.

The panel with Raymond van Ermen of European Partners for the Environment (EPE), Claude Fussler of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) and JoAnne DiSano of UNDESA introduced participants to a key discussion on "**Preparing for Rio+10**". Van Ermen described the tripartite approach that the *European Rio+10 Coalition* is following and their call to develop an Enterprise Agenda 21, following a concept suggested by Dr Klaus Töpfer. Linking with his presentation, Claude Fussler described the role of the WBCSD in making the business case for sustainable development and enhancing stakeholder dialogue. In her contribution, DiSano noted that in principle Agenda 21 will not be renegotiated. She outlined the process foreseen up to 2002, rather than focussing on the conference agenda which still has to evolve. Key steps will include CSD9 and CSD10, as well as regional events organised with UNEP.

Participants subsequently broke into four groups to discuss preparations for Rio+10. From feedback in plenary a number of central points emerged. Firstly, both smaller companies or SMEs on the one hand and MNCs on the other hand need to be more involved in the process. Several participants stressed the need for more contact between business representatives from industrialised and developing countries.

Group discussion also examined a **UNEP proposal to prepare 10 - 15 sectoral industry reports on the implementation of Agenda 21 for Rio+10**. Participants stressed the value that the case studies could add in highlighting practical solutions and examples of innovation. It needs to be made clear that sustainable development presents opportunities to improve management, and that waste and pollution are signs of mismanagement. Business at this stage is beginning to plan for Rio+10 and cooperation with UNEP in the preparatory process would bring neutrality and balance.

In his keynote address, European Parliament member **Anders Wijkman** listed a number of reasons why he felt there is still a lack of progress, though much has changed since the Stockholm Conference in 1972. He mentioned disagreement on the definition of sustainable development, noted that the PPP is still not being applied, and highlighted that the poverty agenda and North-South issues are not being addressed effectively. He argued that economists still deal with scarcity as if there are always substitutes and that they still have the notion that economic growth is by definition good. On goals ahead of us, he included energy and argued that we need a crash

programme in technology innovation. He also identified big cities, our social model and global governance as key themes to be addressed.

Day Two started with an introduction to "**Improved knowledge management and information sharing for environmentally sound decision-making and implementation of MEAs**". Frank Rittner briefed participants on *The Sustainable Technologies Alternatives Network* that UNEP is about to initiate in a strategic partnership with the Global Environment Facility (GEF). He highlighted goals such as encouraging the consideration of and investment in sustainable technology alternatives, as well as support for the adoption and commercialisation of emerging sustainable technology alternatives. During subsequent discussion, it was mentioned that there is much information on new technologies available, but a lack of penetration and screening of such information. A web name for the new network will be available within the next five months.

The following session focussed on "**Catalysts for change - how industry associations can promote sustainable development**". The basis of discussion was a draft paper prepared for UNEP, as decided at the consultative meeting of 1999, by consultant Robin Clarke. During group discussions on the draft paper, participants mentioned the need to reflect on whether case studies are meant to be more representative or more illustrative, to raise awareness of the triple bottom line, to help members look beyond their borders, and to ensure greater involvement of associations from the developing world.

It was agreed that the report should not be a lobby document. Its goal is, through the presentation of lessons learned from case studies, to catalyse the activities of the many industry associations who have not taken a pro-active role to assist member companies in developing environmental policies. Participants expressed their willingness to provide UNEP with further information on the role of their associations in advancing sustainable development. Robin Clarke will follow up with representatives by email.

Participants were also introduced to *The Efficient Entrepreneur*, the 2001 UNEP/Wuppertal Institute calendar with guidebook for SMEs. Michael Kuhndt of the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy explained the content and aim of the calendar. Mrs Aloisi de Lardere encouraged associations to assist UNEP with its production and world-wide distribution. The calendar was welcomed by association representatives as a practical tool to build capacity and assist SMEs with improving their environmental and economic performance.

Discussion on the role of industry associations was followed by a keynote address on "**Trade Unions and the Environment**" by Lucien Royer of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and the OECD's Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC). He gave participants a trade union perspective on the sustainable development agenda. He started by focussing on the risks workers face from accidents at work and diseases caused by hazardous substances. He highlighted the role of environment, health and safety as a new organising principle for workers and the need to advance more sustainable forms of production.

The afternoon session provided participants the opportunity to discuss the **Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and Voluntary Initiatives (VI)**. Allan White, Director of

the Interim GRI Secretariat, gave participants an introduction to the GRI process and the wide range of stakeholders involved. The revised *Sustainability Reporting Guidelines on Economic, Environmental and Social Performance* were published in June 2000. Participants were also briefed on progress made in examining the establishment of a permanent GRI institution. They were invited by UNEP to join and assist in the planned sectoral adaptation of the GRI Guidelines.

In her report back on the voluntary initiatives (VIs) workshop of 20 September, UNEP consultant Clare Cocault gave participants an overview of the categories of initiatives that exist and their respective advantages and limitations. She noted outstanding issues such as the need to clarify stakeholder involvement. Mrs Aloisi de Larderel announced **that an event on the implementation of the Global Compact, building on the VI workshop, is planned for the 21st session of the UNEP Governing Council** that is due to be held in Nairobi in February 2001. This meeting will provide the opportunity for greater developing country involvement in the debate.