

**REPORT OF
REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON WSSD
(WESTERN REGION)**

12-13th July 2002
YUVA Training Centre, Mumbai.

1ST. DAY -July 12, 2002

9.30 – 10.30

Registration & Introduction:

YUVA in collaboration with Centre for Science and Environment hoped for all the western regional groups to come for a two days Regional Consultation on the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to be held at Johannesburg from 26th August to 4th Sept. 2002. The main focus of WSSD will be on reviewing the implementation of Agenda 21 adopted by Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 endorsed by all member States of the UN. The major groups, especially NGOs associated with the preparatory meetings feel that the WSSD is going away from its main agenda of reviewing Agenda 21. This conference is being taken over by developed countries and industries to push their agenda.

Given this background the objectives of the Consultation were:

1. Promote involvement of the NGOs and activists, contributing overall local/ national/ regional development, in the WSSD process by initiating dialogue with them by sharing.
2. Discuss local initiatives and struggles on various issues in the context of Global policy interventions through the WSSD process.
3. Explore possibility of creating 'Regional Group' to address and contribute in the coming WSSD and its follow-up for Global Sustainable Development.

The participation from major groups, especially the NGOs and movements as also activists from India has not been satisfactory. This is for us to come together and contribute in this process. It is our responsibility to put our energy, perspective informed by grassroots reality and vision together and develop a country strategy.

Although quite a few NGOs and activists had promised to come for this consultation, some have dropped out at the last minute for some reason or the other. But there was representation from print media, scientist community, professionals, social activists, academicians, NGO and CBO representatives from Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Rajasthan and Gujrat.

10.30 – 10.45

SESSION 1: OVERVIEW (Lessons from the past – India and Global)

Facilitator Datta Patil, YUVA

Presentations -- Prakash Pokhare, Dainik Deshonnoti

Minar Pimple, YUVA

Anju Sharma, CSE

Prakash Pohare on Global Attempts to deal with Poverty: Successes and Failures

At a time when people are looking inward at families, limited it is more important to look at our motivation rather than numbers. He said we should look at Poverty not merely as material poverty, but also cultural, emotional and creative.

Let us look at efforts at economic poverty -- Have we tried to stop / block the progress of economic impoverishment. We have not done much. Our foreign exchange from exports was 22 %, which has dropped down to mere 1%. Today we have sufficient to feed our population for the next 4-5 years, but our exports have slowed down. Our food grains are getting spoilt. The government is finding ways to distribute that food which is a reflection of 'poverty of ideas' among our leaders.

We are talking of Global warming, yet we put on lakhs of heaters/ Air Conditioners/ Vehicles on the road without a thought to Global warming. We are using electricity for heating our water and not using solar energy. We are spending lot of money on cleaning our rivers "Ganga Shudhikaran" yet we continue to pollute the rivers at an increasing pace. Thus all our efforts at cleaning the water is like a drop in the ocean of pollution.

There are several fronts, on which we have to move. One is awareness about issues like environment and there are others like awareness about our rights / responsibilities. Only 40-50% people vote and elect their government. There is a need for greater awareness about democracy. Thus he put forward views that prodded dialogue and debate.

Minar Pimple - Sustainable Development Issues Faced By India

Briefly touching upon the background of this Consultation, he discussed what happened in 1992, at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, The Earth Summit. All previous attempts to push for a fair, just and equitable framework for managing the global environment — whether at Rio, or the climate negotiations, or any other environmental negotiation over the last 10 years — have failed, as industrialised countries refuse to look at fair rules to share the Earth's ecological resources equally and sustainably. There has been little or no discussion on issues like the control that business and industry has on the positions of governments, and how the negotiations are dictated by economic, rather than ecological, concerns. The government has committed so much in Agenda 21 and the international community is stressing on its implementation. The main focus of WSSD was to be on reviewing the implementation of Agenda 21 adopted by Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 with endorsement by all member States of the UN. The preparatory committee meetings for WSSD are over. Last and fourth preparatory meeting (ministerial level) was held in Bali (27th May to 7th June 2002).

How do we look at Sustainable Development.

It is important to integrate ecology, economy, and equity in sustainable development. We cannot look sustainable development without looking at poverty, social development, and economic and environmental development. Whatever is decided at international level affects us in globalisation, privatisation, and liberalisation

At the national level there is a paradigm of Human rights-, which should become our framework of understanding issues. Human Rights with all its economic, social, cultural civil, political aspects, are closely linked to the issue of Sustainable Development. S.D. for developing countries revolves round land, water, and forest. In rural areas it is fuel, fodder

and food – all these have to be seen together for survival and development. It also means critically looking at who has the right to use it, who is part of the process and who is left out of this process.

The present state of affairs shows that the proactive framework is dismantled, whoever cannot buy / bargain/ fight for these rights are denied and sidelined. We are taking the common man away from his land, alienating him, and leaving him with no security, no wages, taking away indigenous resource of livelihood and forcing him in the labour market. At the same time we are giving all the rights to all those who can buy and control.

He gave an example of the contradictions in our government's policies. The White paper on Water Maharashtra State, potable water- is stated as first in the priority list; animals are given 2nd priority list; Other domestic users- is 3rd. on the list; while cash crop production, and industry are given the last priority. However, wherever there is a dam, we find *chowkies* (security) set up to prevent villagers from using water- the villagers have no right to the water that had been theirs for centuries. This kind of process is contradictory to the concept of SSD. This is happening all over the world and especially so in developing countries.

The concept of export led development is worth giving more thought in the context of justifiable and sustainable development. About GM Seeds, it is not just what we produce but also what we get from outside. A majority of the Indian farmers are still on organic farming not out of choice but because they do not have all the facilities. On one hand we are defying BT Cotton and on the other hand producing it for the MNCs

If you look at the country profile on WSSD Website, we will find that it is blank, saying no input received. This reflects the preparedness and transparency of the government and international accountability.

Issues that we must ponder on

- Are there efforts of developed countries forcing their conditions on us?
- Is the Summit a final stage of dominance of MNCs on the UN
- The Globalisation process can promote equity and inclusion of all
- Summit can decide on actionable agendas
- Which International mechanism can be strengthened

The UN Conferences have set Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

1. Eradicate extreme poverty
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empowerment
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS/ Malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop global partnership

The cost of achieving these goals will be US\$ 40- 60 billion per year while 1.5 billion \$ go to the CEOs. of few top global industries.

11.15 – 11.45- Anju Sharma – Ten Years after Rio

Giving the general picture she said that CSE has been looking at Global environmental negotiations and analysing environmental treaties and policies. It has found that most of the time our governments are not prepared, there is very little participation from southern and developing countries. Thus the international documents rarely reflect the concerns of

southern, developing countries. Environmental concerns are serving as a disguise for economic concerns.

Five major issues related to Sustainable Development are: Water and Sanitation, Energy and Climate Change, Agriculture and food productivity, Bio-diversity and Health. But still there are various issues, being discussed such as sustainable production and consumption; Trade; water and sanitation; Human rights approach; Forestry and biodiversity, Mining & mineral, Science & technology, Women in development, Poverty and Urbanisation etc. Sustainable Development is being defined as “three pillars” i.e. social development, economic development and environment development

1. Why bother with global issues when you have your hands full with local problems?

- Due to a process of “ecological globalisation” many environmental problems cannot be dealt with by one country alone.
- Earth’s capacity to deal with pollutants put out by the Western model of economic development is limited. Present model of economic development is toxic and energy intensive.
- This capacity should be shared equally between all human beings.
- Thus there is a need for a “global constitution”. A global constitution is being framed and decisions, which affect us, are being taken. We must participate to ensure that the rules are not unfair and unequal.

2. So what’s been happening globally?

- In 1972, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE), took place at Stockholm.
- In various countries, environmental departments and environmental legislation were introduced.
- The beginning of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- Review of Stockholm in 1982 led to establishment of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED or Brundtland Commission). “Our Common Future” - 1987 Established the notion of “Sustainable Development”. A lot of northern groups were interested in environmental concerns while the southern groups were interested on developmental concerns.
- Since then there have been efforts to define and pin down the term sustainable development.
- WCED found that existing funding for SD is highly inadequate. Suggested “automatic” sources such as charges on using global commons, and taxes on international trade.
- The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), 1992, agreed on 3 legally binding conventions -- UNFCCC, CBD and CCD -- and three non-binding agreements (Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Principles of Forest Management, Agenda 21)

3. Politics since Rio

- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
The UNFCCC agreed to in 1992 and 1997 Kyoto Protocol, have not yet succeeded in reducing GHG emissions. Rich countries where per capita emissions of carbon dioxide are much higher due to higher usage of fossil fuel are unwilling to compromise their lifestyles by reducing consumption (One American uses = what 19 Indians use). This is one of the biggest challenges facing humankind. Unfortunately economic effectiveness rather than ecological effectiveness lead deliberations.
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

While 80% of the world's biological resources exist in the forests of the South, the North wants unrestricted access to this bio diversity, since it is vital resource for their pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies. It is an interest of indigenous communities verses northern agricultural and pharmaceutical MNC's. USA has not ratified the convention, but it influences the negotiations.

- Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)

Although desertification is a local phenomenon, its occurrence can be traced to global trade and economic practices. For example farmers in poor countries encouraged growing cash crops to generate foreign exchange to pay back international debts. The South has been forced to sell its goods in the global market at very low prices, taking on the burden of the North's consumption at the cost of land degradation. In this context the Desertification problem becomes a 'global' problem?

- Forest Negotiations

The world is divided into two groups: those who want an international legally binding convention on the management of forests and those who do not. The north wants a convention to protect its timber trade interests, not the forests of the world. A forest convention will lay down criteria for 'sustainable wood', 'green wood' which alone would be traded.

- World Trade Organisation (WTO)

Can a country impose trade restrictions to force another country to comply with their domestic environment legislation? Can the USA, for instance, ban the import of shrimps from India because our methods of catching them do not confirm to their national regulations?

- Global Environmental Facility (GEF)

GEF was set up with a vague recognition of the fact that the world's ecosystems are suffering due to lack of financial resources, not the south's call for compensation for environmental damages caused by north. The GEF should have been built on the '*polluter pays*' principle. Instead it is built on the principle of aid/ charity. Northern concerns continue to get more importance.

- **United Nations**

- Environment management within the UN is unstructured. No thought is given to accountability.
- The Environmental Power-Play of the North Global Environmental Negotiations have turned into business transactions, rather than a means of ensuring good global governance.
- No attempt of 'good governance' -- equality, justice and democracy.
- Lopsided governance of the world's resources, controlled and manipulated by Northern countries.
- Southern concerns -- such as poverty and environment, or the impact of global trade patterns on local ecosystems -- are not reflected.
- Fundamental flaws in using aid or trade as tools for controlling errant behaviour in global environmental negotiations.
- Extremely unjust because they can only be used by more powerful nations against less powerful nations.
- Northern NGOs support the use of such iniquitous and one-sided tools.

Weakness of the South

- Lack of Leadership in the South
- Lack of scientific capacity in the South
- Weaknesses of the Southern civil society

4. WSSD: Lets play the same games again?

- Our governments have not learnt any lessons in involving people in decision making.
- The bureaucrats who represent us are still not accountable to anybody for the positions they take. The positions put forward by the South are rarely proactive -- always reactive.

- World Solidarity Fund to eradicate poverty is one example
- The Northern governments have gone from bad to worse – US unilateralism is on the rise. Increase in agricultural subsidies, while promising increase in aid!
- In Europe, too, the climate seems to be changing, with centre right governments coming to power. Opposition to “common but differentiated responsibilities” in WSSD negotiations
- Corporate power has grown in leaps and bounds since Rio – today, 500 companies control two-thirds of world trade. The world’s 5 largest companies together generate annual sales greater than the combined incomes of the 46 poorest countries in the world.
- Although civil society has become more vocal, on the one hand, it has become too fragmented. Southern civil society participation, in particular, needs to be improved.

As a result...

- WSSD is unlikely to achieve remarkable results. Much talk of so-called “type – II results” instead of any real commitments.
- Any mention of finance, and of deadlines, remains undecided.
- Annan’s plea to address WEHAB likely not to be addressed, and as a result, nothing much will be achieved in tackling poverty

5. What do we want from the WSSD?

- Recognition of the equal rights of all human beings to the Earth’s ecological resources.
- An effective plan to address poverty, for instance through employment scheme based on sustainable livelihoods
- A development paradigm that puts people before profits
- A global mechanism that makes polluters pay
- A mechanism to ensure that developing countries get the best possible technologies, to control pollution and in the interests of the global environment

The world should develop ways to promote efficient technology. This will require that developing countries are genuinely help to ‘leapfrog’ to cleaner technologies, rather than being asked to make investments in interim technologies that they will later be asked to replace. At the same time, we need to realise that the Earth’s limited natural resources allow only for limited use. Therefore, the Earth’s capacity to provide these natural resources, and to absorb pollutants such as greenhouse gases, should be shared equally between rich and poor nations, to ensure that both have an equal chance to develop. This includes the need for sustainable consumption in the North.

6. Lessons for the future

- Need greater civil society participation – at the local and global level, built of a strong system of information dissemination
- Need a system to make our governments accountable for the positions taken globally, such as parliamentary ratification
- Need to build alliances within the G77, and with other allies

The principles of democracy, equity and social justice are not just crucial for local governance, but also for global governance.

Minar added- Lets us bring mass movements together forward to raise these issues and to provide grassroots information. There are efforts to bring NGOs, Left parties and mass movements together for Asia Social Forum. This will enable better understanding amongst these groups

NGOs lethargy should be tackled. They need to shift away from project paradigm and move towards political paradigm.

11.45 – 12.00 Tea & Group Discussions
compiled together at the end of the day' session

**SESSION 2: POVERTY AND THE ENVIRONMENT (ROLE OF FORESTRY,
BIODIVERSITY, AND AGRICULTURE IN PROVIDING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS)**

Chair: Deepika D'souza

2.00- 2.20

Debi Goenka on Forests and biodiversity

WSSD or not, we have to talk about whether we want to protect forest and biodiversity. It is estimated that we have knowledge about only 50% of our bio diversity.

We see forest in commercial terms. We do not see the relation of forest and water. There is no analysis on what is the utility of dams. What has happened to Punjab due to Bhakra Dam and what has happened to Bhakra in Punjab? Even in terms of financial wealth, it is important to protect bio diversity. No one has studied the economic importance of forests in generating water. SO much forests can produce so much water. The forest cover between Vihar and Tulsi Lakes in Mumbai have been generating water worth Rs. 150 crores while we are spending only Rs. 2 crores for preserving them. We should look at these issues in the context of sustainable development

India's official figure of forest cover is 19% and actual forest cover is only 9%; the rest is degraded and lost. The Protected area (National Parks & Sanctuary) is 2.5% out of the 19% of forest cover. There is continuous pressure on the Indian Board of Wildlife for denotifying protected areas. The pressures come from ONGC, Defence, Electricity Department; all have interest in taking away area from protected areas. Wildlife protection Act has served to atleast - protect forests from vested interests. If the laws were not there to protect, we would have lost whatever little we have today. Giving the example of Mumbai he said, that we have lost the Powai Lake to the builders.

For survival and development, we continue to destroy our forest cover. For example for building dams we are destroying natural resources. Despite all the energy generation, it is not reaching the masses. It is the forests that are keeping the common people alive. For example in Melghat, malnutrition deaths of children are highest where the forest cover is lost.

Government always says NO MONEY. When we talk of sustainable development, Why are we not talking about *Smokeless chulha*- which is a win- win proposition in terms of sustainable development?

Why does sustainable development plan work against the people and not for the people. He explained how the forests programmes do not work. The real issue is how do you manage the forests with indigenous people's knowledge and for people's benefit. Now ecotourism has become fashionable and the tiger has become more important to preserve than people. Free grazing cattle- not allowed. It is proved that grass production can increase by 30-40 % if cattle not allowed grazing. Can tribals be encouraged to protect it as well as feed the cattle?

Anju- Govt. has done nothing to implement conventions on bio diversity and forestry. India can make a law to implement the convention, to protect bio- diversity and forestry. Sharing of royalty of products from forests with the local people- giving people their dues

A participant from Maharashtra said that Joint forest management is successful in place like Buldhana. Here, lots of schemes are being implemented because one forest official was very

keen. But the same has not happened in any other places except some parts in Gadchiroli and Chandrapur districts.

The groups from MP said, “The government officials bring some scheme and ask the people to participate while the people are not ready to join in. The same happens with all forest department schemes. Village committees are there only in name. In the Village Forest Committees the forest officials lead the committees and this committee can even damage the forest. Now the forest guard has got more powers and he has become a ‘big man’ in the village.”

The forest department sees picking up small twigs as theft. In the JFM scheme lakhs of money is spent. All financial management of these schemes lies with the village committee. The forest guard appoints two villagers who support him in all the corrupt dealings. They attend meetings and say what the forest guard expects them to say. No one else knows what is happening in these committees. This is the level of people’s participation. Only where the NGOs or mass movement is strong they are able to counter this corruption. How does one stop this?

Debi- There has been a campaign and movement towards right to information and social audit of programmes. In Rajasthan, the villagers have taken stock of all vouchers signed and money received, and checked corruption, which shows that the same method can be employed for a Forest Audit. We do not find conservators of forests going to the forests. Instead they are all attending Conference Rooms

2.20 – 2.40 -Raghav Narsale - Some Major Issues With Respect To Interface between Trade Liberalisation and Sustainable Development

It is very important to understand: WSSD and WTO are political forums and have not emerged out of love for equitable development

- Multilateralism, Regionalism and Bilateralism – Presentation concentrating on WTO issues
- GATT (1994)/WTO – Preambular inclusion of sustainable development and its interpretation in the DSS – Shrimp/Turtle Dispute
- TRIPS, GATS, TRIMS, AOA, etc. – how do they interface with WSSD issues. For example TRIPS strips us of our social, economic and cultural rights.
- Doha Ministerial Conference – Interface between MEAs and WTO discussions – Are commitments towards environment and not sustainable development going to be used against developing countries?
- Whether WTO is ever going to help us attain sustainable development is a big question
- The current Chairman’s Text for WSSD is not looking at development issues holistically but in a compartmentalised form e.g. talk on women’s empowerment, but no mention about increasing pressure of globalisation, privatisation on women and their growing alienation from development process.
- Chairman’s text – Doha +10 rather than Rio + 10 –WHY? – Chairman’s text – Continuously reiterates the commitments of government’s to WTO obligations and Doha Ministerial Commitments – Sounds more like a market access document

INDIAN CONTEXT:

1. Rio + 10 agenda how does it conflict with Government of India's trade agenda is required – in fact to avoid this kind of domestic documentation at the India level, the government might even accede to the Chairman's text
2. Democratisation of decision-making processes relating to WTO to critically address developmental implications of trade liberalisation.
3. Technical assistance – classic case of Politics of Coherence, Politics of Conditionalities and Politics of Inertia

2.45- 3.00 -Leni- Climate change

The issue of climate change is not limited to rich states it is linked to all of us. Its impact is felt by all of us. Climate change affects Rainfall due to which our food security is affected. This means our Survival is also affected.

The Indian Network on Ethics and *Climate Change* (INECC) is a loose network of people from all over the country. It sees climate change linked closely to livelihood, ethics and sustainable development. The dampeners are unsustainable patterns of production, consumption, and lopsided development.

How do we provide alternatives to this process in thought, beliefs and actions?

Thus we are taking preparatory workshops

Thus we are placing our concerns and alternatives

The process involves a movement from climate change to sustainable communities.

We have been trying to contextualise it and relate it to survival

Giving example of Andhra Pradesh she said, we talk to people about the visible climate changes and discuss about why are these happening. They linked it up to forest depletion, degradation of bio diversity, depletion of resources due to demand pressure, lifestyle issue and how to live, ethics of what and how much to draw from the earth, the relation between demands and productions processes and environment.

These discussions show the linkage between local climate change and macroclimate change. Whatever comes out of Conference of Parties becomes legally binding. The north will gain out of it. They prefer to ignore the fact that the whole Kyoto Protocol is inequitable and unjust to the developing countries. We cannot leave it for negotiations at the international level. We have to take it to people directly who are facing impact.

She stressed on the need for educating and sensitising different groups like legislators, bureaucrats, media, and victims of global processes, through information documentation and dissemination. Lack of governmental accountability and information, was leading to people signing away their rights. This scene has to be changed and it can be done when Panchayati Raj institutions, community-based organisations, and traditional leaders network with the scientific community to adequately address issues such as climate change.

Let us look at climate change in the context of our ecosystem -

- coastal
- forest dwellers
- mountainous areas
- arid regions
- urban regions

This region (Western) has much work on urban situations which is important to understand climate change.

Nafisa- INECC

Within the country, the government should formulate and implement development policies whose benefits will reach every segment of the population and ensure every citizen's life in dignity according to the spirit of Article 21.

COP 8 will be held in India and it would be an opportunity of a lifetime where all the countries who are party to it will be present. It is our responsibility to see that many more people can be linked to Cop8 process. We are talking of interactive processes.

Anju- It is our government's failure to make laws and policies for protecting people's livelihood and see the linkage between right to bio diversity and right to indigenous people and their traditional knowledge. MNCs do not want the people's rights to be recognised, TRIPS does not take note of traditional knowledge base. With regard to forest we need to decide on the forest convention, we have taken the forest away from the people and given it in the hands of the government. We should pressurise that Governments should not be given those rights.

Minar - gave a few pointers for the groups to discuss and share:

- People's Right to Natural Resources
- Food security and food sovereignty
- How does all this impact on women/ the increasing feminisation of poverty

OBSERVATIONS FROM GROUP DISCUSSIONS ON 1ST DAY

1. THE ROLE OF INDIAN GOVERNMENT

- What is our role in governance? 'They' who frame policies versus 'us' who are affected by those policies. There is no participation of the people in framing policies.
- There is no transparency in our government. The people have no right to information- "we do not know, even NGOs are not fully informed.... We cannot raise questions on time, whether it is national parks or dam and displacement. We also accept willingly but only because we are unaware. We do not understand its impact on our day- to day lives and especially on social relationship due to increasing gaps in economic situations."
- Does our government know people's plight? Do they want to know? The Indian Government has the right to represent us from the constitution, but this right is often misused. For instance when the government accepted TRIPS, which goes against the basic rights of the Indian people, what is the government's credibility to represent
- What is our government's role at international level? Why do Government's accept international policies willingly?
- Governments are puppets in the hands of MNCs and can no longer reflect the concerns of the people at global meetings
- Do our governments lack information and expertise on global issues? Why don't they take help and advice from experts?

Action Points

- ***Set up a National Forum, to pressurise government to set up accountable and transparent systems of developing country positions***
- ***Is it worth building pressure on the PM to attend WSSD?***
- ***Can launch a campaign to push for parliamentary ratification- but several people have already written to the constitutional Review Committee- unlikely to get support of either the Congress or BJP***

RIGHT TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE

- ***Panchayati Raj System should be our base.***
- ***The right to information should be implemented all the way to the Panchayat.***
- Are legislations for our benefit we should pressurise for greater decentralisation in real terms
- The Gram Sabha should be made the prime body to clear all projects in a village (already so in Madhya Pradesh)
- Villages should become the centres of policy making
- *Proliferation of village committees. We find all villagers are part of some committee or the other. But has that increased participation or is it token participation. Instead they should be given responsibilities and powers. Some Village Committees, that have more funds (e.g. Watershed committee) become more powerful than the Gram Panchayats. This can be a dangerous trend. It is a mockery of the 73rd amendment In order to participate actively and consciously the people should be made more critically aware.*
- *We should amend this Act to include food security and indigenous knowledge in its purview.*
- Whatever happens at the global level should be made available to each village, so that they can meet, discuss and decide what is in their interest

Gram Sabhas should be our final authority and all committees should be made responsible and responsive to the Gram Sabhas. No development programmes if gram sabhas do not take place.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION

- No alternative livelihood- survival and subsistence are primary
- Issues of poverty, biodiversity, forestry and agriculture are all interrelated and cannot be separated. Mechanisms need to be put into place to integrate and converge all efforts.
- We must ensure that laws represent the interests of the people
- We must make sure that the people understand these laws
- Peoples' control over resources or livelihood will give them sustainable employment and the process will be self- sustaining
- Traditional arts and crafts knowledge should be formalised and recognised
- Both urban and rural poverty should be looked at. In both cases, the problem seems to be alienation from resources that could provide a livelihood. No options are provided after this alienation, so that even basic survival and subsistence is not possible
- The poor are held responsible for environmental problems. It is not recognised that they suffer most from environmental problems, or even that they are often the ones that have a close relationship with their environment

FEMINISATION OF POVERTY

- Given our present social set up where women have to take care of the food and nutrition of the household, they face the brunt of all this denial of resources at hand and efforts to get whatever is possible; it begins and ends with them.
- Women are the worst affected by poverty because water, food, and fuel are seen as their primary responsibility. **They** are more affected by cash crop growing because the families loose their food security for the year and women take on the burden of malnutrition the most.
- The women have to put in extra labour, they have to face exploitation in several ways while doing so and in the process have more mental tensions.
- Women take care of water and farming practices and fishing; however their problems (when natural resource are depleting or inaccessible) are not recognised- there is informalisation of labour and women and children are forced to take on this burden.

FOOD SECURITY

- Our premise is that it is our government's responsibility to give the people food security
- While production is more than we need, our distribution system is faulty and we should see how we could resolve that problem.
- Food grains are in surplus and yet malnutrition and starvation is rampant.
- If people take decisions about their local production, pricing, marketing and distribution, then food security will not be a problem. When our villages become sovereign then we will be truly sovereign.

RIGHTS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

- Traditionally Indian villages have had 'Gram Van' as well as 'Van Grams'.
- Our laws state that the natural resources belong to the government and not to the people-. If the people have to access these resources, they have to find non- legal ways of doing it. It is criminalising the people who need to access the resources.
- Natural resources protection and utilisation should be people's rights and responsibilities.
- Forestry sustainable development and poverty are all linked to each other Biodiversity and forests should be given to people to protect, and they should have clear property rights so that they have ownership. How can the jungle become sustainable of the people living in its vicinity
- JFM can be an entry point- a Participant from MP said that they had tried it in 4 small villages. The villagers decided what should be the action taken when a trader was caught pilfering the forest wood. At another village, the villagers came together to decide on their '*Nistaar Rights*'. They have decided to protect and utilise it judiciously.
- The JFM can be reworked and loophole should be plugged. It should become people's rights and Government's revenues- as in agriculture
- JFM not working- it has become a racket for getting funds from the World Bank etc. Not a participatory process
- Governments can give bio-diversity and forests rights to people, and then tax them, much as they do in the case of agriculture.
- Laws such as PVP and the second patent amendment act have been done in a hurry, and many crucial things have been missed out
- Needs a dramatic change in attitude, of particularly the government, so that people take responsibility and thus also lessen chances of corruption
- Amendments in Acts to reflect people's opinions/ voices.

PROTECTING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

- Protect traditional seeds/ crops and conduct research on them. A rice from a particular region known locally by that name is getting lost. Kondo beej- (Kukdi) a millet useful for pregnant women is not grown any more. 'Kathia Genhu' (wheat) and 'Mahua laddoos' during delivery helps in sustaining a woman's health. All these are examples of traditional knowledge about food and preservative methods.
- Traditional knowledge on how to save seeds (such as lighting a lamp to get rid of the pests or layering with '*neem*' leaves is being lost. Pests on traditional crops can be managed by traditional knowledge and skill.
- Traditional knowledge is dying out and the new generation is not ready to continue this traditional knowledge. Thus it is important that we record and preserve these properly.
- Some form of value addition necessary to promote traditional products / practices that are unique, such as geographical indicators
- Traditional knowledge should not be patented; there are risks involved and the procedures are cumbersome; However, there should be some systems to acknowledge that it belongs to the communities

- Traditional knowledge can be maintained in registers maintained by the Panchayat, much in the same way that registry of births and deaths is maintained.

AGRICULTURE

- Suicides by Farmers are a matter of grave concern to all of us. It reflects on the food security of the nation.
- Cash crops versus grain crops (wheat versus soyabean); Traditional seeds versus hybrid seeds This is affecting the nutrition level of our rural families. How do we reduce cash crops now that the people have got used to the subsidy pattern and immediate high incomes in their hands?
- Farmers should be allowed to stop producing cash crops and to produce crops for local consumption. Villages should decide what to grow based on their requirements.
- Centralised distribution of food creates problems
- Who decided price of the agricultural produce? It is the government or the trader's lobby. We should look at this policy critically. Farmers should be allowed to decide the price of their own produce, after investing time and money.
- How can benefits to local communities from trade be ensured?
- India is grain surplus and yet there is hunger in the country.

We need to reverse this trend. Bio diversity is essential for organic agriculture, which in turn will lead us to sustainable agriculture.

OTHER RELATED ISSUES

- Access to, and dissemination of information identified as a major problem
- Global media- impact on our tastes, demand and culture of consumption. How do we counter it? We must give more thought to countering this impact.

ISSUES FOR WSSD/ GLOBAL LEVEL

- Rio + How can we have a continuous process even if it seems frustrating?
- If trade is going to be the basis for WSSD, how will human rights principles be acceptable
- The corporate sector and the MNCs should be controlled, made accountable, responsive.
- The Pollutant pays principle should be applied. It should not be charity. But the application of this principle will need major backing from groups in developing countries, otherwise it will be thrown off the agenda
- How can trade benefit come back to people- panchayati raj
- Revitalising the UN is the most important thing to do. (but others felt that the UN has always failed to take a stand.
- The 73rd amendment may not work so well, but it is a model for the rest of the world.
- WTO and WSSD are at loggerheads- how will their differences be ever reconciled?
- UN Conventions like CRC are exploited for trade protection and this shows double standards

ROLE OF THIS CONSULTATION

- How will all these issue that we are discussing here be raised at international conferences?
- Some case studies should emerge
- WSSD is it only a discussion forum or some actions will come out of it. Only one month is left for the WSSD process to start. What preparations have been done so far? What is the role of this consultation in WSSD?
- Who will represent India? Who decides? What is the role of NGOs, civil society government and political parties How to ensure those peoples' issues and not just NGO issues are represented in this forum?
- We should have a representative group to present our views to the PM

- How do we create the linkages between CBO, NGOs, National NGOs, and International NGOs? Can the marginalised groups come together, whether through NGOs or mass movements-and present their views?
- What is our role as NGO in the process? What do we take back-from this process to the masses How do we take back information to the people? How do we discuss these issues openly with the people?
- Even though we maybe skeptical about its impact, we should increase the people's awareness about the international level/ UN conventions.
- Future forums where people's representatives – for this we should increase horizontal networking
- How can we improve our access to information?
- Future plans- need continuous dialogue
- How can we get more politically oriented and less project oriented?

July 13, 2002

SESSION 3: GLOBAL DEMOCRACY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Chair: Raghav Narsale

9.00 – 9.30 Neelam Singh on Climate Change and Equity

Climate change is an entirely natural process that occurs over a wide range of timescales, from a few years to hundreds of millions of years. The challenge faced by climate scientists is that of making the distinction between natural climate variability and climate change which has been forced by human activity. Global climate is affected by many different processes.

More recently, however, humans have changed the composition of the atmosphere by increasing the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, primarily as a result of burning fossil fuels, but also as a consequence of deforestation and agricultural activities. In addition to carbon dioxide, we are emitting other greenhouse gases such as methane via the combustion of fossil fuels, landfills, agricultural activities (cattle and rice cultivation) and manufactured greenhouse gases such as CFC. Increasing the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere increases the strength of the natural greenhouse effect, which in turn increases the earth's average surface temperature.

We can detect recent changes in climate using the instrumental record of daily, monthly and annual changes in rainfall, temperature, humidity and other weather phenomena. These records provide a detailed, albeit short, history of climate change.

Given this context it is important to remember that the earth has only a certain capacity to absorb emissions. The principles that should form the basis for dialogue are social justice, equity and common right to clean atmosphere.

Equity demands that poor nations have the maximum environmental space for their future growth and the threat of climate change is averted as fast as possible because they will suffer the most. To allow all countries an equal chance to develop, Southern and northern nations will have to converge to a level of emissions that is sustainable in a manner that poor countries still have the 'ecological space' to increase emissions before they take on reduction targets.

The world can check climate change by ensuring that we move towards a global economy built on zero-carbon energy sources. Immediate action is needed to get out of a fossil fuel-based economy. We should remember that a fossil fuel power plant built today would continue to emit carbon dioxide for 30 years. Developing countries with less ability to adapt

are twice as vulnerable to these adverse effects than industrialised countries, while small island states are three times more vulnerable.

At the third conference of parties to FCCC (CoP –3, 1997) a Kyoto Protocol came into existence. Under this the industrialised countries listed in Annex B agreed to reduce their emissions in the 2008- 2012 period by 5.2% compared to 1990 levels. However, USA under George Bush (2000) rejected the Protocol on grounds that the science of climate change was unsure and that the protocol was unfair to USA as it exempted ‘population centre’ like India and China from reducing their GHG emissions.

At the resumed session of CoP –6 in 2001, nations (minus the USA) finalised a political deal on the controversial elements of Kyoto protocol. However, it is a weak Protocol now.

The points that we should take ahead for discussion are:

- Developing countries ask developed countries to take on the burden of new technology
- Every country should have an entitlement to emission
- No emission trading- no dumping of technology
- Climate change and energy consumption are linked

BUZZ GROUPS

GROUP 1

- We should be thinking about alternative energy sources- and making this accessible to common people. How do we pressurise the government to do something about it?
- Smokeless chulha, solar cookers, Gobar gas plants, CNG for vehicles, are good ideas, but with problems in implementation; how can we make these ideas workable and acceptable to more people
- Prepare for CoP –8 by starting discussions at the ground level
- In Rajasthan solar energy is being encouraged.

GROUP 2: -

- Western model of development has been accepted by India, which is difficult to break away.
- Many a times, our discussions revolve round energy and do not move towards climate change. We need to discuss beyond energy issues.
- Urban planning and development is not at all based on environmental concerns; from flooring to ventilation systems all go against less consumption, appropriate energy source, less wastage, and emissions. While public transport systems are needed the government is promoting private vehicles.
- We need to discuss mud houses, appropriate housing for our environments
- We need to remove the middle class inertia, unless its affects us we will not change.

GROUP 3: -

- We need more pressure and advocacy groups
- It is a common man’s problem
- What is the need for such development which destroys our land and ecology
- Who is participating in RET?
- Need to co-ordinate at a national levels so that we can advocate change
- Information dissemination

- Scientific capacity to study impact of climate change in India should be combined with village laboratories and observation posts.

GROUP 4:

- We are already late in discussing these environmental issues. Immediate ban on environmentally hazardous items
- Threshold limits for emissions for developed and developing countries should be worked out but without saying “we will commit the same mistake to the same extent”.
- A forestation should be encouraged
- Optimising non- renewable energy sources
- Encourage research and development of renewable sources of energy
- Encouraging traditional energy saving values

9.30 – 9.50

Deepika D’Souza on Human Rights and the WSSD

There is an undermining of people’s rights. She quoted recent figures of increasing deaths of common people who were killed protesting the government’s plans to take away their means of livelihood and sustenance.

- February 2001- Koel Karo- 8 people shot dead
- April 2001- Dewas- 4 people shot dead
- June 2001- Puntambe- 2 people shot dead
- October 2001- Nagarnar- 2 people injured in police firing
- November 2001- Raigad- 3 people shot dead

Who do you think killed them?

Why do you think people were shot at?

Do you think these were human rights violations or environmental violations or both?

The State and its agencies are being pressurised into accepting anti- people stand which take away people rights. Thus we should look at the new context of rights called “Earth Rights”

Earth Rights in Historic Context

She gave a few examples of national and international laws, which state that the people are entitled to live in an environment adequate for their health and well being.

- 1) 10th Dec. 1948- The Vienna Declaration On Human Rights, ie. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights. These cover civil, political economic, social and cultural rights. In the latter half of the 20th Century it led to a greater awareness of Rights relating to environment eg. 1992- Rio Declaration.
- 2) Indian Constitution _ article 21 says Right to Life
- 3) Panchayati Raj Act
- 4) Schedule V of the Constitution
- 5) SC/ ST Prevention of Atrocities Act

These rights are more important today. In a world where economic globalisation and transnational Corporations, multilateral institutions and increasing militarisation, all seek to undermine the local communities’ control over their resources.

Quoting from the Draft Principles on Human Rights and the Environment- Ksentini Principles (1994) she said that the concept of Earth Rights provide for:

- Right to healthy environment
- Right to freedom from any form of discrimination
- Right to safe and healthy working conditions
- Right to adequate housing
- Right to preservation of unique sites

- Right to participation
- Right to information
- Right to legal redressal
- Rights of indigenous people

How do we strengthen people's collective rights and how do we monitor/ check the growing powers of MNCs, to protect and preserve people's rights.

9.50 – 10.10 *Bhim Raskar on Gender concerns at the WSSD*

Taking a hard look at the historical background and the social baggage of discriminations, double standards and inequality that the woman carries, he spoke about how the women has not been the focus of attention for opinion makers and policy framers. There is hardly any gender equality towards women as a labourer, as a marginalised person and as a woman

He presented some hard-hitting facts pertaining to gender concerns

- Sex ratio- 933: 100 males
- Only 10% get nutritious diet
- 67% pregnant women are anaemic
- 60% of adolescent girls are anaemic
- Women's contribution to farm production is 50 % but only 1/10th women have ownership of land.
- Only 7-8 % women are in the highest decision making body

There are many like Manjushree Sarda who died only 4 months after her marriage. Dowry deaths, flesh trade, sex scandals, acid attacks, violence, rape and murder of women have increased over the years. There is no gender-focused thrust in planning and resource allocation in villages and several gaps in progressive laws.

There have been a few positive steps ahead like efforts for gender sensitivity and equality, joint ownership of land, anti- liquor movement, and the movement for increased role of women in governance. At the grassroot level we find there are a number of Self- Help Groups, micro credit societies that have given more strength to the people. We need better networking between these ideas, programmes and groups. We need to keep a Watch/ Vigil on what is happening.

In this situation, it is only right that we ask for some answers to the people at WSSD

Women & means of production-

How much are the proprietary rights of the women over jewellery, hearth and home, We shall ask the World Summit

Distribution of Natural Resources

How much of the Water, land resources, and crops in the field belong to women May we ask the World Summit?

Land Ownership

Why does her name not go on the land she tills, the home she builds? Shall we ask the World Summit?

Women and her identity

Why can't she give her name to her child and does she have a right to her own name Shouldn't we ask the World Summit?

Women in governance

What say does she have in the governance of her Village?
When she does take the lead why do you show lack of trust?
Why are you so timid about giving her affirmative reservation?
We want to ask the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

KR Datye shared the experiences of the research team of Society for People's Participation in Eco-system Management (SOPPECOM) and their association with many voluntary organisations extending from Rajasthan to Tamil Nadu. He proposed a new strategy based on regenerative agriculture and diversified biomass production as a way of overcoming the crisis in the water sector in India. It is believed that the only way out of the deepening crisis in the water sector is through privatisation, foreign direct investment and international donations. A major problem is the lack of understanding of a rational basis for estimating water needs, evaluating the resource and creating a consensus for matching needs and availability. No credible option is in sight, there is a rural urban divide and at the same time it is difficult to persuade the rural community to accept withdrawal of subsidies for fertilisers and energy.

A paradigm shift is the only solution. The alternative development strategy would be based on sustainable agriculture with low external inputs, regeneration of the ecosystem through the use of exogenous water and energy, and a restoration of degraded lands. In this "New Paradigm" the reliance would be on human, local and renewable resources. In the alternative strategy water and irrigation reforms would be implemented simultaneously with land reform. Priority would be given to entitlement of the poor to small plots for intensive culture to create food security and to provide balanced nutrition for the entire community including the poor and resource full.

The word 'regenerative' refers to the concept that agriculture should regenerate its resource base of soil, water, and biomass. Agriculture, along with diversified biomass production has this potential. The word 'sustainable', which is frequently used with reference to agriculture, is too often interpreted to mean that, given necessary resources even a system which disturbs the ecological balances can be sustained for a long time if non-renewable resources are available to pay the 'price'. To move beyond this ambiguity, the word regenerative is used. The idea of 'regeneration' goes beyond concept of conservation, for this latter word just conjures up the idea of being careful about using a resource in order to extend its time horizon as much as possible. Regeneration, in contrast, and particularly in the case of agriculture and biomass production refers not only to the replacement of the essential resource, but to its enhancement.

The suggested approach concentrates on limited water application for production of coarse cereals in order to achieve regional food security along with non-agricultural biomass production and its processing by use of renewable energy. There is now a wealth of experience, of partial successes as well as failures, on which we can draw in various spheres of activity pertaining to the proposed strategy. This experience base can help evolve an implementation strategy. It is high time that donors and policy makers recognise that equity is a prerequisite of participation. Here, policy support to equity considerations is crucial in strengthening local community and NGO initiative.

The most important step in ecosystem management would be the transfer of the local assets to the communities who take the responsibilities for sustainable and efficient use. However, the passing of ownership to the village must be accompanied by empowerment of the poor, women and other through entitlements of disadvantaged groups to the new water and to the produce from land developed at public cost. It is also important that the devolution of decision-making powers is effective, that is, the rural communities are truly able to exercise their choice of programme, technology, priorities, phasing and scheduling. Drinking water problems can women be involved in the planning and implementation stages. Women should decide on the basis of information and analysis. Women should be resource literate, they should have the right to acquire knowledge. Women can also be given employment if we hand over the responsibility of storage of water to them. He gave example of how tree plantation has 90 % survival rate because the women took on that responsibility.

He suggested that communities should be entitled to assistance on condition that they regulate water use (including ground water), ensure equity and prevent unsustainable extraction and wasteful use. Training and capability building along with a restructuring of research, extension and education for self - learning is another crucial aspect so is a differential tariff structure and cost recovery. A facilitating legal framework is also necessary along with the social instruments for management and use of common properties to provide for the household food security of the poor and building the biomass pool.

He gave the examples of Korea and Denmark that have initiated mechanisms for making renewable energy sources cost effective. In Korea they have 80 service agencies with grass roots technicians who can carry out the implementation, financial institutions backing and supporting these agencies and policies that give an umbrella protection for such activities.

2.00 – 4.00 p.m. -Group discussion on Local lessons for Global Policy-Makers

- 1) Human Rights and WSSD
- 2) Case Studies (Success Stories)
- 3) What have we not discussed in this Consultation?

National Policies and WSSD

- Governments and Corporations are bringing in programmes with a lot of conditionalities, which means they have to give up some of their fundamental rights
- When people protest, the state seems to forget its commitment as per the constitution. The conflict between human rights and police seems to have sharpened in recent years.
- At one level, all the policies proclaim all the right terminologies, concepts; but when it comes to implementation, there are many things missing. For example women's policy in Maharashtra and MP, is favourable to women; but when we talk of implementation and the environment to make it applicable there are major gaps.
- How can we talk of sustainable development when one section i.e. women are missing in all our planning, programmes and evaluations
- Whatever the reason for starting SHGs (WB Scheme or not), we should now see how these efforts will be linked to sustainable development
- Most of our development policies are detrimental to us and look at the short term benefits rather than long term impacts
- Whichever international policies are against our national and people's interests, the government should refuse them. We should be able to pressurise the government in doing so.
- What is the accountability for all these International Conventions

Case Studies (Success Stories)

- In Maharashtra- Saigatha, Medhalekha (tribal area- jungle bachao), Krishak Panchayats (where people are producing and conserving their own seeds) Buldhana, Gadchiroli districts have had good example of people's assertion of their rights and sustainable development. Maharashtra, there is a whole movement for women in governance, SHGs and anti- liquor campaigns are strong forces to deal with.
- MP- '*hamaare gaon mein hamaara raaj* - has seen micro planning, people are taking initiatives, less corruption in the process, etc. In MP the social audit has worked.
- In Rajasthan women were participating actively in water management. Similarly the right to information campaigns are going strong.

Unfortunately many of these are not documented and circulated.

NEED FOR

- Manual for grassroot workers
- Show linkage between gram panchayat and WSSD
- All policies- A Ready Reckoner/ Hand Book
- Need for increased networking and advocacy
- Intensive Training workshops in our communities

SONGS-

Tum hum ko vishwas do
 Hum tum ko vishwas dein
 Shankaon ke sagar hum lagh ke jayenge
 Iss dharti ko hum swarg banayenge
 (You give me your faith
 We give you our trust
 Let us cross the oceans of doubts and mistrust
 Let us make this world a heaven on earth.)

**World Summit on Sustainable Development
 REGIONAL CONSULTATION
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