

Statement from the European Women's Conference for a Sustainable Future

The EWC conference received support from the European Union DG Culture and Education; the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety; the Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment; and Women's Environment Development Organisation (WEDO). The views presented in this document do not necessarily express the opinion of the sponsors.

Preamble

We, 120 women from 30 nations of Western, Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS countries including Central Asia, have met in Celakovice, near Prague, to formulate our contribution and priorities to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and express our concerns to the Heads of State preparing for WSSD (Johannesburg 26 August – 4 September 2002).

9 issues

We gathered in working groups, to give essential input into the process of preparing for the World Summit. The recommendations below are not intended to be comprehensive but to indicate priorities defined by the women at the conference.

STOP WARS AND OTHER ARMED CONFLICTS

Peace and demilitarization are a prerequisite for sustainable development. World leaders must do everything in their power to stop all wars and other armed conflicts. Funds must be redirected from current militarization to peaceful conflict resolution, to victims of war, and towards the fight to eradicate the root causes of war, such as poverty and unsustainable development – which increase the inequality between nations and within. Funds should be used for the empowerment of women and for humanitarian actions - for the future of our children and the planet. It is our money that Governments use for war. As long as we are silent, we are also responsible. We must take action now. Women can play an important role in peaceful conflict solving. We therefore demand:

- Equal influence for women in questions of peace and security, for example through the creation of

a Women's Security Council and increasing the number of women in the United Nations Security Council to 60%.

Eradicate Poverty

We, women coming from different countries in Western, Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, have shared our experiences and data which clearly show that the poverty situation in the region has deteriorated tremendously during the past decade, especially in the NIS, and that trends do not show any improvement. This has an enormous impact on the lives and livelihoods of women. In many areas environmental security and justice are failing, and conflicts and war take a heavy toll.

The poverty situation, especially amongst women, youth, children and elderly in the region should be widely recognized and we call on our governments and the international community, including the EU, the Council of Europe, the UN and the international financial institutions (IFIs) to:

- Empower women and civil society at large, and give priority to strategic education and leadership development of women, and to widespread training on gender issues of all actors.
- Ensure women's continuing access to and control of their basic resources and services (including land, water, energy, biodiversity, intellectual property, information and mass media, training, social safety, diverse jobs, income and financial services, including women's banks), and guarantee their equal access to and control of decision-making at all levels.
- Ensure compliance with national legislation and international legal treaties and promote and devel-

op mechanisms for implementation and monitoring of poverty eradication measures. Guarantee the independence of the legislative, judicial and executive powers.

- Develop and implement poverty reduction strategies which are country-specific and stakeholder-owned, and which are under public control. Raise a tax on international financial transactions to finance poverty reduction programs – with full participation of the poor.
- Ensure transparency in governance. Condemn corruption and guarantee that invested funds are not misused, as corruption is often a main catalyst of poverty.
- Fight criminality, in particular trafficking and abuse of women and children.

A Healthy environment – A human right

The goals of sustainable development cannot be achieved when there is a high prevalence of debilitating disease, and a population's health cannot be maintained without ecologically sound sustainable development and support to countries in transition and developing countries.

Every human has a right to live and work in a clean and healthy environment, with clean air, soil, food and water, access to information and protection of human rights. The health of people should take precedence over economic interests.

We need to empower women as full partners in sustainable development, using their experience, knowledge and commitment to implement the aims and goals of the WSSD.

There is enough scientific evidence to suggest a strong link between environmental pollution, such as POP's, nuclear contamination, and pesticides, on reproductive health, developmental and neurological disorders, cancer and allergies. We are deeply concerned with the lack of implementation of the precautionary approach. The lack of specific indicators of environmental health effects due to environmental degradation and the lack of universal monitoring of health problems as a result has been one of the main obstacles to full recognition of the problems. Lack of monitoring is no excuse for lack of action.

Women and children are especially susceptible to the influence of environmental degradation and pollu-

tion and are the first to feel its effects. Exposure to toxic chemicals, substances and radiation has an impact on women's health, in particular reproductive health, and the development of the child. Therefore, their health should be used as an indicator of the state of the environment. Norms and standards should be based on levels which do not harm the developing foetus and child.

At the dawn of the new millennium poverty is likely to remain the number one killer worldwide. The poor suffer the most from illnesses and environmental degradation exacerbated by economic crisis.

Poor health in turn is signified by the resurgence of such communicable diseases as malaria and social diseases such as tuberculosis, the quick spread of HIV/AIDS, waterborne diseases, low life expectancy, malnutrition, and continuous environmental pollution.

Our Women's Action Agenda for Sustainability calls for responses on the following key issues:

- Adjust norms and standards for chemicals and radiation so as not to have any negative impact on the developing foetus and child.
- Support and enforce national and international environmental and health legislation (including international legal standards) on:
 - maintaining and protecting health, paying particular attention to most vulnerable groups, focusing on women's health, sexual and reproductive rights, including the right to healthy pregnancy and giving birth to healthy children;
 - protecting human rights for a safe environment and free access to justice for all, in accordance with the goal of the right to a healthy environment.
- Allocate more resources for better access to health information and education, and freely available quality health care services.
- Protect health from negative influence from the environment in accordance with international standards, monitoring the results using environmental impact assessment.
- Ratify the treaties and conventions on the control and elimination of potentially harmful chemicals, toxic substances, radiation and other hazardous processes, and express full commitment and responsibility to implementation.

- Increase support to programs to combat HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malnutrition, water borne diseases, infant mortality, and other social and communicable diseases.
- Establish independent scientific research on the links between environmental pollution and health, and make a global database available to all.
- Define a set of indicators such as life expectancy, developmental and reproductive disorders, breast cancer and other cancer incidence, incidence of asthma and allergic diseases, and the level of contaminants in breast milk to measure the impact of the WSSD planned strategies on progress towards sustainability in health.

Guarantee equal access to water and proper sanitation

Our *Women's Action Agenda for Sustainability* calls for responses on the following key issues:

On a global scale

guarantee equal rights to access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation.

At the international level

Water should be considered as a common good and not subject to WTO negotiations. Hygiene, water and sanitation should be acknowledged as environmental human rights, and related to human development and health, the elimination of poverty, and environmental sustainability.

The necessary holistic approach demands integrated management of all water resources. To safeguard environmental health, water and sanitation improvements should be directly linked with the development and protection of freshwater resources.

At national/local level

- Empowerment of the local users/consumers to participate in decision making.
- Transparent governance and involvement of local stakeholders, promotion of gender equity and encouragement of women to take leadership roles in water management.
- Development of a strong legal framework for the public/state regulation of the water sector in line with international regulations and with WHO recommendations.
- Technology choice, encouraging the use of a wide variety of appropriate household- or community-

based, low-cost technologies, and support for research and pilot programs on sanitation and water supply

- Mobilization of financial resources for affordable services, with cross subsidies focussed on assisting the very poor and vulnerable groups.
- Education for sustainable water use.

Sustainable Consumption and Production are essential

Production and consumption is essential to life, and impacts the daily routines of every one of us. Without making production and consumption processes and patterns sustainable, a truly sustainable society will never be achieved. Unsustainable patterns of production and consumption are increasingly a major source of - and contributor to - wars and armed conflicts throughout the world.

A sustainable society cannot be achieved without gender equality. Therefore, the policies and decision-making that determine consumption and production should always be based on gender analysis. Policies should also contribute to more equal gender relations, for example by challenging the gendered division of work.

Rather than as separate entities, production, distribution and consumption should be considered as an integrated cycle, with a sustainability and gender approach applied at all its stages. Failure to do this will have serious consequences.

Consumers can have a strong influence over industry, but only when they are empowered by the existence of choice. Even where there is apparent choice, it may be severely restricted by:

- cost – people only have the freedom to make ecological choices if these choices are available and affordable;
- distorted communication (i.e. advertising) and limited access to accurate information due to the commercialisation of the media.

These restrictions apply particularly to women, as they often make consumption decisions for others as well as themselves. However, women should not bear the burden of blame for unsustainable consumption patterns. Our *Women's Action Agenda for Sustainability* calls for responses on the following key issues:

- Equitable sharing of the World's Resources. While some parts of the world's population over-consume, others, a large proportion of whom are women and children, need to increase their consumption in order to meet the minimum standards of living set down in the Universal Declaration for Human Rights. An international effort is needed to establish the necessary mechanisms for the equitable sharing of the world's resources.
- Promotion of alternative economic models, such as social- and solidarity-based models, should be promoted. Such initiatives create breathing space for regional and local markets and promote women's economic empowerment.
- International and national recognition and enforcement of the following environmental human rights:
 - The consumer has a right of access to relevant and accurate product information and to products which do no harm to the environment or to the health of either consumers or workers
 - Every person has a right to an equitable share of the world's resources.
- Making re-use and renewability pre-requisites. Products that cannot be re-used or recycled should not be produced. The substitution of products with services wherever possible can also contribute to sustainable development.
- No privatization of services providing for people's essential needs.
- Addressing the structural gender inequality in production processes, for example with women having equal representation in decision-making on the design and type of products.
- Democratic reforms in media and public space, including restrictions on the corporatisation of media, and the promotion of citizens' and non-commercial media. National governments should disseminate information about sustainable consumption patterns through specific campaigns.
- Internalisation of the environmental and social costs of products, in particular through environmental tax reforms. Women must also be protected by international, binding workers' rights. Research is needed into the implications for women of such reforms to ensure that they contribute to gender justice.
- Globally binding regulations to attain sustainable production and distribution processes are needed, voluntary codes and standards are important but not sufficient.
- Application of the precautionary principle to new and existing products, as well as combinations of products. This is particularly important for women as child-bearers - the foetus and young children are more at risk from toxic products than adults.
- Transparency of the product lifecycle. NGOs need to continue their role of watch-dog over product lifecycles.
- Research is needed into the consuming patterns of women and men, and into the differences in the time invested by women and men into sustainable living practices.

Biodiversity and Gene Technology

We urge acknowledgement of the intrinsic value of biodiversity of ecosystems, species and varieties, as well as the crucial function that biodiversity plays in the maintenance of all life, including production, habitat, regulation and information. We are deeply concerned by the serious threats to biodiversity that directly influence the livelihoods of communities and particularly those of women and people living in poverty.

As the sustainable use of plant genetic resources is indispensable for their conservation and further development, and as indigenous and local communities have been effectively using them in a sustainable way, we call upon the international community to take effective and sensitive measures in support of these communities and their sustainable agriculture. Women play a crucial role in conservation and sustainable utilization of plant genetic resources. As a consequence they are especially affected by damages to biodiversity. Therefore, we consider the empowerment of women active in agriculture and food production a crucial contribution to the conservation of biodiversity.

In view of the importance of biological diversity to all life on earth we call on our governments, the international community, including the EU and the Council of Europe, and the WSSD to respond on the following key issues:

- Establish, at the international level, the general prin-

ciple of multilateral environmental and social agreements such as the CBD (Convention on Biodiversity) to override trade regulations such as those contained in WTO (World Trade Organisation) agreements, i.e. the TRIPS agreement (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights).

- Establish, at the international level, Farmers' Rights as Human Rights. (Farmers' Rights as defined by the international community comprise, among others, the rights to save, collect, grow, exchange, adapt, breed, market their own seeds at all events and at any time.) In this context special attention has to be given to the roles, needs and competence of women farmers.
- Ban patents on life forms (including patents on whole organisms, plant varieties, parts of organisms, genes and traits) now obligatory under the stipulations of the TRIPS agreement as they have great potential to restrict farmers' access to, and sustainable use of, plant genetic resources (Farmers' Rights).
- Ban the use of genetically modified plants and plant varieties for agriculture as well as the use of GMOs for food production and, at the same time, guarantee the diligent application of the precautionary principle and comprehensive risk assessment procedures wherever gene technology and GMOs are used or applied for medical purposes.
- Ensure the enforcement of environmental impact assessments with regard to biodiversity for any projects or programs concerning nature, natural resources, ecosystems, habitats, etc. and/or agriculture and indigenous and local communities.
- Emphasize support for sustainable methods to increase and improve food production, and make public funds available at national, regional and international levels for participatory research - with special emphasis to women's involvement - on such methods, in particular, on organic and low external input agriculture: and stop spending large sums of public funds on gene technology research .

Globalisation: precedence of human rights, health and social justice

Economic globalisation

The current economic liberalisation, and the policies of the International Financial Institutions and the World

Trade Organisation must be reformed in order to conform to principles of sustainable development, democracy and gender justice. Research, assessment and monitoring of the effects of policy for women, children and poor is needed. Free trade and market liberalization should never be an aim in itself. Multinational corporations have to be held accountable, and there is a need for re-regulation of markets and economy. Respect for existing local experience and structures must be ensured.

Stop worldwide militarisation

Aggression as a response to aggression only generates more aggression and conflict. The current escalation of world wide militarisation must be stopped, and governments and the military industry should be held accountable for the all destructive effects of armed conflicts, including environmental-, social-, psychological consequences, and the violation of human rights and violations against women and children.

Our *Women's Action Agenda for Sustainability* calls for responses on the following key issues:

- A stop to world-wide trade liberalisation, carrying out of an evaluation of effects of trade liberalization and an assessment of the specific needs and pre-conditions of different countries. Only then should democratic future planning in accordance with environmental, social, and gender justice be pursued.
- Implementation of Sustainable Development regulations in the WTO and International Financial Institutions must be implemented, laying down principles for environmental security, democracy, transparency, social development and gender justice.
- Establishing of global regulations on the activities of corporations, to ensure social development, gender justice, and environmental security.
- Regulate Foreign Direct Investments so as to ensure that they do not compromise sustainability.

Promote organic agriculture and sustainable Rural communities

Our *Women's Action Agenda for Sustainability* calls for responses on the following key issues:

- Promotion of Organic agriculture worldwide, as a model for sustainable agro-ecological practice that

protects ecosystems and biodiversity, produces healthy and nutritious food, and promotes sustainable rural development.

- Providing funding for research, training, education and awareness raising to achieve these goals.
- Assuring Involvement of women and small-scale farmers at all levels.
- A ban on GMOs in agriculture. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's) should not and need not to be used in agriculture.
- Maintaining and promoting rural livelihood, ensuring access to land, basic services and infrastructures to guarantee the quality of life. Local communities should be empowered by capacity building and training in order to ensure multi-stakeholder involvement on rural development policies and decision making. Women's role, knowledge and needs must be taken into account.
- Industrialized nations should reform their Agricultural Policy (i.e. EU CAP) so as to ensure sustainable agriculture world-wide. The European Union should, in accordance with the Copenhagen Declaration urgently develop European Action Plan for organic farming. National plans and institutional frameworks for organic agriculture should support this.

Gender approach for livable and sustainable cities

Worldwide, city sustainability is directly related to the sustainability of the countryside. The urban/rural relationship is becoming more difficult every day in the developing countries. Urban growth and rural/urban shifts in the South are occurring in a context of far higher absolute population growth, at much lower income levels, with much less institutional and financial capacity, and with considerably reduced opportunities to expand into new frontiers, foreign or domestic.

Sustainable urban development requires gender responsive land use, transport policy and housing. New policy and design practices should equally meet women's needs and involve them in a range of ways in intervention around housing and basic urban service provision.

- Basic resources and basic needs should not be sold (water, education..) to a population that cannot effort to buy them (such as poor women).
- Local authorities can often negotiate more flexibly than national government, and can therefore do

more to reduce the negative impacts of globalization. We call on them to promote sustainable, participative development in their cities.

Our *Women's Action Agenda for sustainability* calls for responses on the following key issues:

- The UN member States should continue to codify, evaluate, and disseminate best practices in order to develop programs, instruments, methodologies and pilot projects that allow for gender mainstreaming in urban and environmental policy.
- Equal opportunity in gender relations should be considered a general criteria for success of any sustainable planning process. Gender impact assessment should be mandatorily applied to plans and programs.
- The UN member States should support capacity building of all groups that can contribute to mainstreaming gender equality in human settlement development. Links and policy instruments should be used to enable women and other vulnerable groups to define and pursue their own paths to sustainability.
- In order to better evaluate the relationship that exists between women, environmental and urban policies and programs, effective data and indicator systems should be developed, which build on existing data sources. Effective policy Indicators could be: Reducing the ecological footprint of cities and families; women's empowerment as an indicator of the success of intervention; use of gender indicators in monitoring. One important improvement of these statistical systems should be that data and indicators are gender-disaggregated.
- Governments should create programs providing affordable services for employed women in order to ensure equal opportunities for improvement of health and economic situation, and social and political participation.
- Governments should support equitable access to infrastructure and develop gender-neutral political strategies for urban livability.

Working Group Statements

Health

Working Group Statement

A long time has passed since the Earth Summit in Rio 1992 and a number of other important events and conferences resulting in the more active involvement of women in the international political agenda. However, women have not been yet empowered as full partners in sustainable development, despite being identified as a major group by Agenda 21. The main responsibility for this lies with governments.

We express our deep concern about the lack of implementation of Agenda 21.

Many problems remain unsolved, while new ones arise. The greatest challenge today is to ensure that social development, economic balance and environmental preservation are mutually reinforcing and interdependent components of sustainable development. For that process, women's input is invaluable as they constantly show their commitment, knowledge and skills to build a more sustainable society. Recognising, supporting and enabling women's roles and input is perhaps the surest strategy to combat poverty, environmental degradation, and to attain better health.

We expect that the World Summit in Johannesburg will recognize women's contribution to the process and guarantee that gender will be incorporated into all areas of policy, both design and implementation, starting with public health and the environment.

The proportion and participation of women in all decision making bodies related to Sustainable Development should be of key concern. Policies and programs

must incorporate gender sensitivity in their design, delivery and evaluation while reflecting the gender balance.

Health is an integral and overarching part of Agenda 21, but lack of implementation has failed to strengthen the link between health, environment and socio-economic development. The goals of sustainable development cannot be achieved when there is a high prevalence of debilitating illnesses, and populations health cannot be maintained without ecological sustainable development.

Health improvements need to be addressed from all perspectives if they are to be sustainable. Health is a precondition for well-being and quality of life. It is a benchmark for measuring progress towards the reduction of poverty, the promotion of social cohesion and the elimination of discrimination.

Despite undoubted health advances in many areas, poor health continues to be a constraint on development efforts. Poor health in its turn is signified by the resurgence of such communicable diseases as malaria and tuberculosis, the quick spread of HIV/AIDS, water-borne diseases, malnutrition, and continuous environmental pollution. The biggest cause of these problems is poverty, which at the dawn of the new millennium is likely to remain the number one killer worldwide. In the countries of the former Soviet Union undergoing economic and social transition the proportion of poor has more than tripled.

The poor suffer the most from illnesses and environmental degradation. They cannot afford good treatment, cannot move to cleaner areas, they cannot afford to buy clean food and bottled water, they have to do the dirtiest jobs, they lack the power and education to defend their rights to live and work in a healthy envi-

ronment. The typical trait nowadays is feminization of poverty, which is a major threat to social and economic development. Seventy percent of the world's poor are women.

The protection of vulnerable groups should be given priority at the World Summit.

We urge governments to intensify efforts to eliminate poverty.

The protection standards, legislation and monitoring must be based on the protection of these vulnerable groups and must take the gender difference into account.

We also appeal to women from all world regions to join forces to change the current situation.

Health and environment are closely connected. Recent scientific research has shown that Europe still has an environment heavily polluted by toxics, for example; organochlorine pollutants like dioxins, hexachlorobenzene and others. There is impressive evidence that PCB and dioxin background concentrations already affect 10% of newborns throughout Western Europe. And this is just the tip of the iceberg, because PCB and dioxin figured as model substances in toxicological research. We simply don't know as much about the thousands of other diffuse pollutants, with similar properties abounding in our air, food and water. They are neither researched nor measured. They reach us, our children and their unborn children through all kinds of exposure routes.

We are very much concerned about the growing evidence that pesticides and chemicals, which mimic estrogen, are responsible for increasing rate of ovarian and breast cancer among women, and prostate cancer among men.

Little is known about the effects of many chemicals and almost nothing on the cumulative and combined effects they have on our health and the health of future generations. From that point of view the implementation of precautionary approaches should be given the highest priority.

More resources also need to be directed at research on the effects of environmental pollutants and hazardous processes. Study data collected must be disaggregated by gender and age, so that future health and environment policy can be effectively

targeted at different population groups.

Women are especially susceptible to the influence of the environmental pollutants. Exposure to toxics and radiation has an impact on women's health, reproductive health and the development of the child. Women's health and in particular reproductive health has become an indicator of environmental pollution.

We call on Governments to recognize the women's unique vulnerability to environmental health impacts.

The WSSD is an ideal opportunity to call for the implementation and ratification of various treaties which refer to production, use and phase out of persistent chemicals. The WSSD has to make sure that governments undertake actions for elimination of dangerous pollutants.

Monitoring and control systems should be an explicit part of the implementation and they should be based on the sustainable development indicators. The role that local communities play in monitoring of the local environmental situation should be recognized.

We urge states to promote a healthy environment including clean air, clean water and uncontaminated food.

Women's experiences and contributions to an ecologically sound environment must be central to the agenda for the twenty-first century. Sustainable development will be an elusive goal unless women's contribution to environmental management are recognized and supported.

Gender Health and the Environment

There are complex interdependencies between policy sectors in the European Union. Many of the public health challenges facing the European Union have environmental roots; however, this is not often reflected in policy considerations. Environmental policy requires action by other policy areas such as enterprise, energy, transport, agriculture and public health. In many cases, these spillovers between sectors are not taken into account, resulting in policies in different sectors pulling in opposite directions. This undermines policy effectiveness and wastes resources. There is an urgent need for intersectoral co-ordination of policies, particularly those concerning the environment and public health, as well as the adoption of a long-term perspective in policy development.

Economic Interdependence

Growing economic interdependence in the European Union and the convergence of a single market has led to increased efficiency and productivity at the expense of the environment and public health. Policy makers have the power to facilitate the conditions in which citizens and businesses are encouraged to integrate environmental and social considerations. When deliberating environmental policies, it is pivotal that the European Commission considers their effects on public health. The environment and public health, as well as the adoption of a long-term perspective in policy development.

Environment and Public Health

The environment's impact on public health affects both men and women. This is why it is crucial that the European Commission mainstreams the gender perspective into all areas of policy, starting with public health and the environment.

'Gender is a structural difference, which affects the entire population. Neither women nor men should be treated like some special interest group among several such groups. On the contrary, gender affects, and often reinforces, differences and vulnerabilities according to other structural differences such as race, ethnicity, class, age, disability and sexual orientation. Policies, which appear gender neutral may on close investigation, turn out to affect women and men differently.' There is increasing evidence from all fields of medical research that diseases differ in men and women. In such cases, research, screening, treatment and care-delivery must be adapted according to gender. Gender mainstreaming does not refer to the study of sex-linked disease or sexual discrimination in scientific research. Rather, it refers to the point that physiological differences between men and women are not confined to the reproductive system, and that the possibility of gender differences must be considered in all areas of medical, scientific and environmental research.

EIWH Conference on Gender

The European Institute of Women's Health (EIWH) recommended in its September 2000 conference in Dublin, 'Promoting Gender Equity in Public Health in Europe,' that the European public health program include gender as a priority. The Institute believes that

the gender perspective must not be confined to public health policy, but instead must be included in all sectors of policy, including environmental policy. The EIWH and conference delegates outlined the objectives to be achieved in order to mainstream the gender perspective into health policy and planning to ensure that the health status of men and women is to be fully understood and that health interventions are to be effective. Since public health is directly linked to the state of the environment, these recommendations must not only be applied to public health strategies, but those relating to the environment as well.

Recommendations:

- The European Commission's policies and programs need to be gender sensitive in their design, delivery and evaluation.
- Gender analysis will need to be incorporated in the design and implementation of environmental policy.
- Gender impact assessment criteria need to be used throughout the planning cycle.
- Women as well as men should be actively involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies.
- More NGOs should be involved in the consultation process and in the design monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs.
- Intersectoral collaboration and networking will be essential if gender mainstreaming is to be achieved across all policies and programs. This can be achieved somewhat by the establishment of intersectional working groups for evaluation, monitoring and cross-referencing on gender impact assessment of policy formulation or policy change.
- Data collected at the EU, national and regional levels must be disaggregated by gender and age, so that future health and environmental policies can be effectively targeted at different population groups.
- There should be an increase in the number of women heading research projects.
- More resources need to be directed at research on the effects of environmental issues, such as endocrine disrupters.
- Appropriate numbers of men and women must be included as part of EU and nationally funded research projects. EU funding criteria should

include the requirement that all applicants take gender concerns seriously in their research design.

- Gender should be mainstreamed into the programs by which Member States fund science and technology.

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136

Agriculture and Rural Development

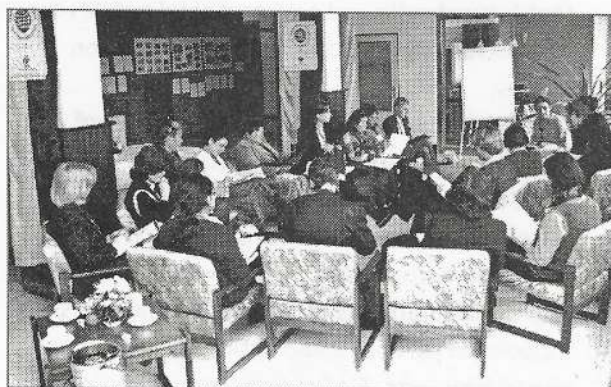
Working Group Statement

The members of the working group have agreed on the following recommendations:

- **Organic agriculture** should be promoted worldwide as a model for sustainable agro-ecological practice that protects ecosystems and biodiversity, produces healthy and nutritious food and promotes sustainable rural development. To achieve this, funding, research, training, education and awareness raising is required. **Involvement of women** and small-scale farmers must be ensured at all levels. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's) **should not and need not to be used in agriculture.**
- Rural livelihood should be maintained and promoted ensuring access to land, basic services and infrastructures to guarantee the quality of life. **Local communities should be empowered** by capacity building and training in order to ensure multi-stakeholder involvement on rural development policies and decision making. **Women's role, knowledge and needs must be taken into account.**
- We request the EU to **reform the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** so to ensure the above-mentioned recommendations. Following the Copenhagen Declaration, a **European Action Plan for organic farming** should be urgently developed. National plans and institutional frameworks for organic agriculture should support this.

Members of the working group:

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14. Yekaterina Koshkaryan, "GOY" Legal-Environmental NGO, Armenia

Comments on specific paragraphs and issue areas of the Chairman's Paper (A/CONF.199/PC/L.1 of 12 February 2002)

Suggested replacement texts and additions:

Poverty eradication

Current text/*Proposed text*

4. (b) Improve access to modern energy services in rural and peri-urban areas through rural electrification and decentralized energy systems by intensifying regional and international cooperation, including financial and technological assistance, with a view to providing, by 2015, energy services to half of the two billion people who currently have no access to modern energy services;
4. (b) *Improve access to modern energy services in rural and peri-urban areas through rural electrification and decentralized energy systems **emphasizing renewable energy sources** by intensifying regional and international cooperation, including financial and technological assistance, with a view to providing, by 2015, energy services to half of the two billion people who currently have no access to modern energy services;*
4. (c) Promote sustainable agriculture and rural development to ensure food security, diversification of rural economies, and improved access to markets and market information, as well as provide financial and technological support for rural infrastructure, enterprise development and access to credit for the rural poor;
4. (c) *Promote sustainable agriculture and rural development to ensure food security, **food safety**, diversification of rural economies, and improved access to markets and market information, as well as provide financial and technological support for rural infrastructure, enterprise development and access to financial services credit for the rural poor;*

4. (d) Develop multi-stakeholder approaches to public-private cooperation to improve outreach in basic sustainable agricultural techniques and knowledge to farmers with smallholdings and the rural poor;
4. (d) *Develop multi-stakeholder approaches to public-private cooperation **for participatory technology development (PTD)** and to improve outreach in basic sustainable agricultural techniques and knowledge to farmers with smallholdings and the rural poor;*

4. (e) Provide funding for integrated rural development plans, programs and strategies at the national and regional levels, with particular emphasis on investment in economic and social infrastructure in rural areas, enterprise development, human resource development and capacity-building for local governance;
4. (e) *Provide funding for integrated rural development plans, programs and strategies at the national and regional levels, with particular emphasis on investment in economic and social infrastructure in rural areas, **environmental protection and conservation, ecological restoration, enterprise development, human resource development, gender mainstreaming and capacity-building for local governance;***

4. (h) Promote access by the poor to land, water resources and other agricultural inputs, and promote land tenure modifications that recognize and protect indigenous and common property resource management systems;
4. (h) *Promote access by the poor to land, water resources and other **non environmentally harmful, neither hazardous** agricultural inputs, and promote land tenure modifications that recognize and protect indigenous and common property resource management systems;*

4. (i) Promote more comprehensive rural education and extension programs, directed particularly at the rural poor, with major emphasis on efforts to reduce illiteracy, particularly among women and girls;
4. (i) *Promote more comprehensive rural education and extension programs, directed particularly at the rural poor, with major emphasis on efforts to reduce illiteracy **and to provide training and capacity building, particularly among women and girls;***

Changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production

To be added as a new paragraph:

Organic agriculture should be promoted worldwide as a model for sustainable agro-ecological practice that protects ecosystems and biodiversity, produces healthy and nutritious food and promotes sustainable rural development. To achieve this funding, research, training, education and awareness raising is required. Involvement of women and small-scale farmers must be ensured at all levels. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's) should not and need not to be used in agriculture.

Protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development

Current text/*Proposed text*

6.(a) Improve equity and efficiency in the use of water resources with a view to maintaining water for nature and ecosystems and preserving or restoring ecological integrity in fragile environments, and initiate programs to protect water resources against domestic, and industrial pollution;

6.(a) Improve equity and efficiency in the use of water resources with a view to maintaining water for nature and ecosystems and preserving or restoring ecological integrity in fragile environments, and initiate programs to protect water resources against domestic, agricultural and industrial pollution;

11.(a) Promote the integration of agriculture with other aspects of land management and ecosystem conservation in order to promote both environmental sustainability and agricultural production;

11.(a) Promote the integration of agriculture with other aspects of land management and ecosystem conservation taking organic agriculture as the best model to promote both environmental sustainability and agricultural production;

11.(b) Promote programs to enhance the productivity of land and water resources in agriculture, forestry, artisanal fisheries etc., especially through community-based approaches;

11.(b) Promote programs to enhance the productivity of land and water resources in agriculture, forestry, artisanal fisheries etc., in a sustainable way

especially through community-based approaches;

11.(c) Reverse the declining trend in public sector finance for agricultural research and for sustainable agriculture and rural development, in particular through increased external assistance;

11.(c) Reverse the declining trend in public sector finance for agricultural research and for sustainable agriculture, with emphasis on organic agriculture, and rural development, in particular through increased external assistance ensuring participatory approaches;

11.(d) Provide incentives for agricultural enterprises to monitor water use and quality and to improve efficiency and reduce pollution. Since agriculture is the main consumer of water, more efficient use of water in agriculture is of primary importance;

11.(d) Provide incentives to monitor water use and quality in agriculture and to improve efficiency and reduce pollution. Agriculture is the main consumer of water, hence more efficient use of water, crop diversification and appropriate practices in agriculture is of primary importance;

11.(f) Encourage well defined and enforceable land rights and legal security of tenure, and ensure equal access to land, water and other natural and biological resources, in particular for women and disadvantaged people living in poverty and indigenous communities;

11.(f) Encourage well defined and enforceable land rights and legal security of tenure, and ensure equal access to land, water and other natural and biological resources, in particular for women and disadvantaged people living in poverty and indigenous communities. Reverse the trend of privatization of natural common resources;

Sustainable development in a globalizing world

Current text/*Proposed text*

18.(f) Fulfil the WTO Doha commitment to initiate negotiations aimed at substantial improvements in market access for agricultural products and reduction with a view to phasing out all forms of export subsidies, and at substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support, with special and differential treatment for developing countries as an integral part of the negotiations;

18.(f) Fulfil the WTO Doha commitment to initiate

negotiations aimed at substantial improvements in market access for products from sustainable agriculture and reduction with a view to phasing out all forms of export subsidies, and at substantial *reductions in trade-distorting domestic support, with special and differential treatment for developing countries as an integral part of the negotiations;*

Means of implementation

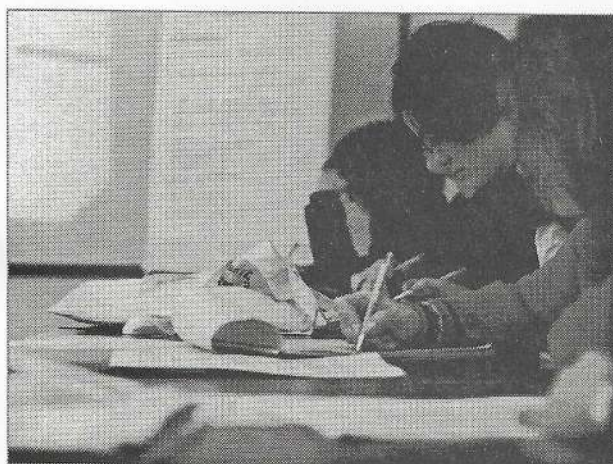
Science and education

Current text/*Proposed text*

26.(c) Promote and advance formal, non-formal and informal education and public awareness needed to promote sustainable development, including environment education. Promote and provide assistance, with the support of the international community, to national education action plans and programs that are relevant to local conditions and needs;

26.(c) Promote and advance formal, non-formal and informal education and public awareness needed to promote sustainable development, including environment education. Promote and provide assistance, with the support of the international community, to national education action plans and programs that are relevant to local conditions and needs and gender sensitive.

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Habitat and Local Agenda 21

Working Group Statement

1. Women's poverty

Women's poverty worldwide is steadily deteriorating. Poverty reduction policy at macro and micro levels is urgently needed to overcome constraints on women's participation in productive activities.

2. City and the countryside

Worldwide city sustainability is strictly related to the sustainability of the countryside. The urban/rural relationship is becoming every day more difficult in the developing countries. Urban growth and rural/urban shifts in the South are occurring in a context of far higher absolute population growth, at much lower income levels, with much less institutional and financial capacity, and with considerably reduced opportunities to expand into new frontiers, foreign or domestic.

3. The men's city

City design continues to be insensitive to women's needs, regardless of class. Examples include zoning laws that separate residential and commercial areas, making it difficult to combine economic and domestic activities.

4. Policy of Time

In many countries all over the world women are responsible for productive and reproductive work. The consequence is an increasing shortage of time for women, who have less time for civil and political participation and their personal lives. For this reason many local authorities (for example in Italy) are developing a "Policy of time" and "Time Banks".

5. Urban safety

The design of public spaces and public transport systems do not ensure women's safety. Continuous fear and vulnerability to particular forms of crime and violent attacks plus the design of public places in ways unfriendly to women, make many women feel they do not have the same "Right to the city" as men. Women

should no longer be considered the only people responsible for their personal safety. In order to achieve this goal, it is essential that safety in the city become the expression of a self-respecting society.

6. Unequal patterns of property ownership

North or South, Developed or Developing, in cities and towns all over the world, the concerns of women are not being adequately addressed. Despite the increasing number of female-headed households, unequal patterns of property ownership between men and women persist.

7. The exclusion of women from decision-making

In cities and towns all over the world, the problems confronted by women are exacerbated because only few women are in positions of power to change the prevailing attitudes to urban development. The average for women's participation in local government ranges from about 9 per cent in Africa to 50 per cent in some Transition Countries. This situation must not continue. The exclusion of women from decision-making and from access to urban resources is unsustainable at every level. The crisis of women in our cities is a crisis that affects everyone.

8. Gender and environment

Women's peculiar sensibility reflects the needs of the "reproductive sphere" as they are less subordinated to industrial production and to the rigid differentiation of functions. But women have not enough voice in environmental policies. And according to the United Nations Habitat II Agenda (1996), a gendered approach to the management of the impact of environmental hazards and ecological health, including the use of gendered indicators in monitoring is required.

9. Gender responsive land use, transport policy and housing

New policy and design practices which meet women's needs and involve them in a range of ways (in intervention around housing and basic urban service provision) are required.

10. Urban disaster mitigation, relief and reconstruction

Urban disaster mitigation, relief and reconstruction are

becoming increasingly urgent issues for cities. Women's role in rebuilding homes, families and communities is crucial.

11. Women's implementation of Local Agenda 21

Until now many local Agenda 21 have been implemented. Many experiences were successful, but many others did not really take into account the result of the participation process to the final decision. This process of „participation kill“ should be counteracted.

12. Engendering public goods management

Basic resources and basic needs should not be sold (water, education..) to a population that cannot effort to buy them (principally poor women). They are Public commons.

13. Globalization

Globalization increases competition between, as well as fragmentation within, cities, with many negative effects. It is necessary to develop strategies for recapturing the geography of places, for the localization of the global. Women's (politics) of resistance to the present globalization process should implement a "globalization from below".

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Globalization and Trade – Enlargement of the EU

Working Group Statement

Key issues

Economic globalization

The current economic liberalisation, and the policies of the International Financial Institutions and the World Trade Organisation must be reformed in order to correspond to sustainable development principles, democratic- and gender justice principles. An evaluation and research on the effects on women, children and poor is needed. Free trade and market liberalization should never be an aim in itself. Multinational corporations have to be held accountable, and there is a need for re-regulation of markets and economy. Respect for existing local experience and structures must be ensured.

Stop worldwide militarisation

Aggression as a response to aggression only generates more aggression and conflict. The current escalation of worldwide militarisation must be stopped, and governments and the military industry should be held accountable for the all destructive effects of armed conflicts, including environmental-, social-, psychological consequences, and the violation of human rights and violations against women and children.

Recommendations

1. Worldwide trade liberalisation should be stopped, and an evaluation of effects of trade liberalization carried out. An assessment of the specific needs and preconditions of different countries should be undertaken. Only then should democratic future planning according to environmental, social, and gender justice aspects be pursued.
2. Sustainable Development regulations, laying down principles for democracy, transparency, social development, gender justice, and environmental security

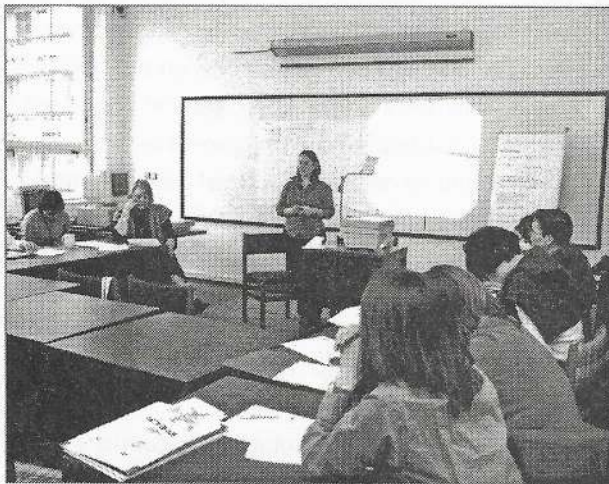
in the WTO and International Financial Institutions, must be implemented.

3. Global regulations on the activities of corporations, which ensure social development, gender justice, and environmental security must be established.
4. There should be no Foreign Direct Investments that do not correspond to Sustainability, and regulations are needed to ensure this.
5. There must be no double standards and no externalization of environmental and social costs from developed to less developed countries.
6. Alternative values and alternative sustainable economic models should be promoted.
7. Governments must develop mechanisms of gender balanced public participation in decision-making processes through monitoring of economic policy making and liberalisation and privatisation processes at local, national, and international levels.
8. There should be no privatization of governmental responsibilities.
9. A system monitoring and control must be established with the urgent aim to stop worldwide militarisation. The monitoring should include assessing environmental and social outcomes of armed conflicts, and the effects on women.
10. Alternative and peaceful solutions to conflicts must be promoted, and resources redirected to this aim.
11. International mechanisms for holding governments and military industry accountable for effects of armed conflicts must be developed.
12. All states should without further delay ratify the agreement on the International Criminal Court.
13. Implementation of resolution 1325 of Security Council on the obligation to ensure women's participation in all areas of peace- and conflict resolution.
14. Increase the representation of women in the UN Security Council to 60%.
15. A strategy for the democratization of communication and information should be developed, including combating the concentration of media. Governments should never control media. Governments must ensure independent and non-corporate media, through the promotion of independent public broadcasting and alternative media, especially women's independent media initiatives.
16. Governments should step up the fight against transnational crime and corruption.

Ideas / Projects

- Establish independent (women) media: Print and Internet newsletter / newspaper, radio, and television.
- Work towards the formal establishment of a Women's World Peace and Security Council.
- Create a Women's Coalition for Peace
- Promote / support women in Asia for Human Rights and Sustainable Development

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Sustainable Consumption and Production

Working Group Statement

Preamble

Production and consumption is essential to life, and impacts the daily routines of every one of us. Without making production and consumption patterns sustainable, a truly sustainable society will never be achieved.

Nor will it be achieved without gender equality. Therefore the policies and decision-making that determine consumption and production should always be based on gender analysis. They should also challenge the gendered division of work.

Production, DISTRIBUTION and consumption should be considered as an integrated cycle, not as separate entities, with a gender approach applied at all stages.

Failure to do this will have serious consequences. Unsustainable patterns of production and consumption are increasingly a major source of, and contributor to, wars and armed conflict throughout the world.

An immediate threat to humankind, such as a natural disaster or a terrorist attack, provokes an immediate response. The threat posed by unsustainable consumption patterns, however, is not immediate nor easily-defined. It has time and location-specific effects, but these are rarely interpreted within the wider picture of unsustainable consumption so the real, ongoing threat is overlooked.

Therefore, in order to take real steps towards sustainability people need to be convinced of the urgency of the threat to our natural resources, our well-being, our future.

The working group on Sustainable Production and Consumption identified two key issues. These are given below, followed by a call for two new human rights and a series of recommendations to policy-makers, consumers, business and the media.

KEY ISSUES

1. The need to empower consumers

Consumers can have a strong influence over industry

and policy makers, but only when they are empowered by genuine choice. Even in societies with an illusion of consumer choice, it is in fact severely restricted by:

- cost – people will only have the freedom to make ecological choices if these choices are available and affordable;
- distorted communication (including advertising) and limited access to accurate information due to the commercialisation of the media and to education.

These restrictions apply particularly to women, as they often make consumption decisions for others as well as themselves. Despite a narrowing of the gender-gap in the UK, for example, 70% of consumer decisions are made by women. However, internationally, women are at a significant disadvantage when it comes to accessing accurate information: two thirds of the world's illiterate people are women.

Despite their key role as consumers women should not bear the burden of blame for unsustainable consumption patterns.

2. The need for equality in production and consumption

Some statistics provide an effective, if simplified, illustration of the challenges of inequality we face. Basic health care and nutrition for everyone in the world would cost about \$13 billion a year, while more than \$17 billion is spent on pet food in Europe and the USA alone (UNDP Human Development Report 1998). Over half the children in many sub-Saharan African countries are malnourished, while in America, 61 percent of adults are overweight, and in Europe, approximately a third. This inequality has inhibited progress in achieving sustainable patterns of production and consumption and lead to a policy gridlock between developed and developing countries.

High incidences of obesity, cancer and mental illnesses in the parts of the developed world demonstrate that increased consumption is not necessarily accompanied by an improved quality of life. The air and water pollution that result from unsustainable lifestyles are major causes of premature death in both industrialised and developing countries. At the same time it is undeniable that members of the population in all countries urgently need to increase their con-

sumption in order to have the minimum standards of living set down in international conventions.

Establishing levels of consumption "need" is extremely complex. But it is clear that an international effort is required to establish the necessary mechanisms for the equitable sharing of the world's resources, and for their clean and sustainable use.

Call for two new human rights to be enshrined in international law

In the light of the above key issues the working group recommends that two new human rights are incorporated into international law:

- **The consumer's right to products which do not harm the environment or health, and to accurate information**
- **The right to an equitable share of the world's resources**

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Just as sustainability is about equitable sharing of resources, so it is about sharing responsibilities. This will only take place when we take stock of the causal effects of our consumption and realise the way in which each one of us is now inextricably linked to the rest of the world. Policy makers, industry, consumers, the media and pressure groups all have their share of the responsibility.

1. Policy Makers

Governments need to overcome "sustainability by stealth" - the support of isolated initiatives - and instead establish overarching policy by stimulating collective debate. Recent events and trends have demonstrated that when environmental/ social/ economic stress increases, people automatically revert to more sustainable practises. For example bartering markets have emerged from Argentina's sudden economic downturn. These were born of necessity, but remind us of the fragility of the globalised financial marketplace and the need to establish alternatives now – even if they are running in parallel to the status quo - instead of waiting until circumstances force us to do so.

While sustainable alternatives such as these can emerge of their own accord or of necessity, the impetus for a total shift towards them will come largely from governments and policy makers at national and inter-

national levels. Voluntary codes and standards are important but not sufficient to attain sustainable production and consumption patterns. Global, binding regulations are needed.

There is a risk, however, that excessive regulation in the name of sustainable development will lead to a culture of mere compliance that will inhibit innovation and the emergence of alternative solutions. Regulation should aim to create a climate that channels the innovation of the market place in the right directions.

1.1 The environmental and social costs of products should be internalised, in particular through the implementation of an environmental tax reform. An environmental tax reform is not an increase in taxes, but a shift from taxes on desirable activities – in particular labour – to non-desirable activities, with high emissions or pesticide use. Research is needed into the implications of these mechanisms for women to make sure they contribute to gender justice.

1.2 Alternative economic models, such as social and solidarity-based models, should be promoted. These will create breathing space for regional and local markets and promote women's economic empowerment.

1.3 The precautionary principle should always be applied to new and existing products, as well as combinations of products. This is particularly important for women as child bearers – the foetus and young children are more at risk from toxic products than adults.

1.4 Structural gender inequality in production processes must be addressed. Women must be protected by international, binding workers' rights and have equal representation in decision-making on the design and type of products made.

1.5 Products that cannot be re-used or recycled should not be produced. The substitution of products with services wherever possible can also contribute to dematerialisation.

1.6 Product declarations on goods and services should be made mandatory, containing information on key environmental parameters such as durability, reparability, energy and water use, and toxic contents.

1.7 Services providing for people's essential needs should not be privatised.

1.8 Media and public space should be democratised, including restrictions on the corporatisation of the media, and the promotion of citizens' and non-com-

mercial media. National governments should disseminate information about sustainable/non-sustainable consumption patterns through specific campaigns.

1.9 Subsidies that encourage unsustainable consumption and production, in particular within critical industries such as energy, agriculture and transport, should be removed.

1.10 The links between poverty and unsustainable purchasing patterns need to be incorporated in policy changes.

1.11 Women's access to micro-credit schemes should be improved.

1.12 With more direct access to consumers than national institutions, local authorities need to be empowered and proactive in promoting sustainable consumption.

1.13 More recognition should be given to women's unpaid domestic and caring work. Sustainable practices such as the waste trio of "reduce, reuse, recycle" should be made possible without putting further time pressures on individuals, in particular women, who often juggle paid employment with work in the home. Much of the unsustainable aspect of modern lifestyles is a result of time pressures, which promote disposable, on-the-go consumption patterns.

1.14 Technological cycles can be applied to make urbanisation work for sustainable consumption rather than against it, i.e. by making use of the high concentration of people in one area for car-sharing pools and public transport reform, curb-side recycling collections, and educational/ recreational opportunities.

2. Consumers

Just as important as over-arching policies is the tidal-wave effect of small actions taken by individuals. Women, as centres of households and communities, are in a prime position to instigate these waves of change. Networks, community projects and women's organisations have a key role to play in increasing awareness about the environmental damage caused by certain products and in facilitating access to sustainable alternatives.

2.1 Spending is often motivated by pressures to match social status and standards set by society, thus prioritising non-essential goods over essentials such as food, education and health care. A shift in emphasis from short-term, quick-fix satisfaction spending

towards seeing spending more as investment – in people, the environment, the future – is needed.

2.2 Consumer pressure needs to continue to shift from straightforward boycotts of unsustainable products to giving positive encouragement to sustainable goods and services.

2.3 Research is needed into the consumption patterns of women and men, and into the differences in the time invested by women and men into sustainable living practises.

2.4 The commercial exploitation of women in consumer society should be discouraged. This puts added pressures on women, especially in countries where it combines with the traditional concept of woman as the property of her husband.

3. Business

The short-term manner of the market place is inherently opposed to the long-term view required by sustainable development. But companies are increasingly recognising that a long-term approach can be translated into short-term gains. By recognising the genuine benefits of a triple bottom line approach (economic, social and environmental) business can make a significant contribution to sustainable patterns of production and consumption before they are obliged to do so by legislation.

3.1 Producer-end progress in terms of improved energy-efficiency, reduced packaging and reduced use of toxic substances needs to continue, and become mainstream.

3.2 Accountability to consumers and openness in environmental and social reporting is of utmost importance.

3.3 Business has an important outreach role to play in the training and education of employees, and in encouraging innovation and eco-design.

3.4 Cleaner-production best-practice should be shared, and participation in international forums used to learn from others' experiences.

3.5 Women should not be exploited as a source of cheap and docile labour. Companies are responsible for the fair treatment of their employees and should aim to exceed international standards.

3.6 Business should recognise its responsibilities when it enters new markets in the developing world

and not put undue pressure on people to substitute traditional products/lifestyles with unsustainable alternatives. Women are at particular risk from this – a classic example is that of baby-milk formula.

4. Media

Information, information, information! As stated at the beginning of this draft statement, without information people cannot be aware of the effects of their and others' actions on the world, and therefore will not be moved to act.

The media is both friend and foe of sustainable development. On the one hand it promotes unsustainable consumption, for example through advertising. On the other it is essential for disseminating information, stimulating debate and instigating change. It is through the media that the benefits of sustainable consumption in terms of price, quality, convenience and pleasure can be communicated.

4.1 Environmental scares such as BSE, farmed salmon dioxins, or polluting industrial accidents are usually treated as stand-alone stories with an emphasis on the scandal aspects but little thought towards potential solutions. They need to be linked into the wider picture and used by the media to promote sustainable production and consumption.

4.2 Women as child-bearers and carers have a right to information about environmental risks to their children's health. As well as extensive research into the health-effects of products, these risks should be interpreted clearly and accurately to the media, who have the responsibility for communicating complex scientific information to the public at large without distorting it in the process.

4.3 Advertising guidelines could be established and maintained to control adverts promoting unsustainable lifestyles and encourage those promoting sustainability.

4.4 An important outcome of the WSSD could be a global advertising and awareness-raising initiative to re-connect people with the environment and with each other, and to re-assert the role of women in moving the world towards sustainable consumption.

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Biodiversity and gene technology

Working Group Statement

We, women from Eastern and Western Europe and Central Asia, have given serious thought to the state of global biodiversity and to gene technology as it relates to biodiversity. We have pooled our knowledge and our concern about the global loss of biodiversity, its causes and further imminent threats to biodiversity, in particular, in the area of agriculture and food production. We are concerned about the detrimental effects of patents on life forms and gene technology on plant genetic diversity and indigenous and local communities.

As the sustainable use of plant genetic resources is indispensable for their conservation and further development and indigenous and local communities have been effectively using them in a sustainable way we call upon the international community to take effective and sensitive measures in support of these communities and their sustainable agriculture. Women play a crucial role in conservation and sustainable utilization of plant genetic resources. As a consequence they are especially affected by damages to biodiversity. Therefore, we consider the empowerment of women active in agriculture and food production a crucial contribution to the conservation of biodiversity.

In view of the importance of biological diversity to all life on earth we urge our governments, the international community, including the EU and the Council of Europe, and the WSSD to:

- 1) Establish, at the international level, the general principle of multilateral environmental and social agreements such as the CBD to override trade regulations such as those contained in WTO agreements, i.e. the TRIPS agreement.
- 2) Establish, at the international level, Farmers' Rights as Human Rights. (Farmers' Rights as defined by the international community comprise, among others, the rights to save, collect, grow, exchange, adapt, breed, market their own seeds at all events and at

any time.) In this context special attention has to be given to the roles, needs and competence of women farmers.

- 3) Ban patents on life forms (including patents on whole organisms, plant varieties, parts of organisms, genes and traits) now obligatory under the stipulations of the TRIPS agreement as they have great potential to restrict farmers' access to, and sustainable use of, plant genetic resources (Farmers' Rights).
- 4) Ban the use of genetically modified plants and plant varieties for agriculture as well as the use of GMOs for food production and, at the same time, guarantee the diligent application of the precautionary principle and comprehensive risk assessment procedures wherever gene technology and GMOs are used or applied elsewhere.
- 5) Ensure the enforcement of environmental impact assessments with regard to biodiversity for any projects or programs concerning nature, natural resources, ecosystems, habitats, etc. and/or agriculture and indigenous and local communities.
- 6) Emphasize the support of sustainable methods to increase and improve food production, make available public funds at national, regional and international levels for participatory research - with special emphasis to women's involvement - on such methods, in particular, on organic and low external input agriculture and stop spending large sums of public funds on research on gene technological solutions.

We draw attention to the fact that agricultural plant and animal genetic diversity (species as well as varieties), which to a great part was created over thousands of years by farmers' creative agricultural work, is the basis of global food security as well as the immediate basis of existence of subsistence communities. In order to conserve and further develop plant and animal genetic resources sustainable use of this diversity in terms of sustainable agriculture is indispensable. On farm conservation must be a priority of conservation efforts. Indigenous and local communities, who traditionally use their genetic resources in a sustainable way, must therefore be supported. Women play a most important role in the sustainable use and development of plant genetic resources and, consequently, are especially affected by any damage to genetic resources or restrictions to their use. Women's empowerment is,

therefore, imperative to conservation efforts.

We stress that, in addition, overall gene pools have to be conserved by means of effective nature conservation initiatives including ecosystem and habitat conservation. Special attention has to be paid to the centers of plant genetic diversity (Vavilov Centers). Concerted efforts to deal with the major causes of loss of biological diversity such as conversion of natural ecosystems into more degraded system, pollution, climate change, over-harvesting, etc. have to be made.

We are deeply concerned about patents on life forms (including patents on whole organisms, plant varieties, parts of organisms, genes and traits) as put down in the TRIPS agreement under WTO. Patents on particular plants, plant varieties, plant genes and traits have great potential to restrict farmers' access to, and control of, their seeds. Thereby they have also the potential to severely restrict the potentials of conservation by a sustainable use of plant genetic resources and of their further development as well as to severely threaten the livelihood of indigenous and local communities.

We are equally concerned about the developments of gene technology in the field of agriculture and food production. Recent scientific findings have shown that we know far less about genetic engineering than its protagonists would have us believe. On the other hand, we know from experience about definite dangers of GMOs, in particular where agriculture and food production is concerned. Health problems connected with GM food crops such as allergies and bacterial resistance to antibiotics are well known, whereas long-term health effects cannot be estimated yet. Labeling of food products containing GMOs or produced with their help must, therefore, be a first step towards consumer protection.

We are worried about definite dangers of GMOs - proven by experience - to environment including, in particular, to biodiversity due to:

- Displacement of natural plant varieties;
- Contamination of related varieties, land races and wild relatives due to cross pollination and horizontal gene transfer;
- Interaction with, and gene transfer to, other organisms such as micro-organisms of the soil.

The centers of plant genetic diversity, which are to the greater majority, located in the South are particularly

vulnerable to such damage. Already genetic contamination of indigenous maize varieties has occurred in Mexico, a center of maize diversity. Specific protection from GMOs of the centers of plant genetic diversity is called for.

We are also concerned about the negative socio-economic effects of GM seeds on the farmers growing them. Dependence on industry is the result as examples of farmers in North America show. Such dependence will have especially dire effects on poor farmers of the South - in particular on women.

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Poverty

Working Group Statement

UN Millennium Goal: Halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 in every region and every country i.e. lifting 1 billion people out of extreme poverty. (Millennium Summit, 2000)

Poverty situation

Several NGOs, coming from Tajikistan, Georgia, Belarus, Ukraine and Uzbekistan have supplied the organizers of this conference with relevant information on poverty in their countries. All come to the conclusion that poverty has increased significantly during the last decade. For example, presently 70% of the population of Tajikistan fall in the category of 'poor', and one-third in the category 'very poor'. Three quarters of the population are deeply anxious on how they can provide their minimum needs within the subsequent 12 months. In Georgia more than half of the population lives below the poverty level; and 13-15% of the households live in extreme poverty. In the Ukraine the last 10 years are marked with a sharp cancellation of all social rights and guarantees of people, especially of the women and children (60% below the breadline). So-called 'children of the street' have appeared in all cities of the Ukraine. In that country the term 'poverty' is not officially used, as if the problem does not appear' yet about 33% of its population (85-90% according to western indicators) qualifies as poor today. According to NAS Economy Institute 61% of personal income is spent on food, compared to 16-18% in the USA. Especially in the northern regions of Karakalpakstan in Uzbekistan many people live in poverty: apart from a 10% middle-income families, 15% of the families in that region are poor, and even 75% are considered extremely poor. Although concentrated in rural areas among certain groups, such as small-scale farmers and their families, poverty has also increased in urban areas in the region.

Feminization poverty

Feminization of poverty is a major issue in the region. According to statistical data the population of Uzbekistan makes 24.7 million people, of which 62% lives in rural areas and 38% in urban areas. Women make up 50.2 % of the whole population, and 44.2% of the work-

ing force (1999 data). Of the total number of registered unemployed in the country about 60% are women and hidden unemployment in rural areas in particular has much higher indexes.

Effects on women

Among the main effects on women are: a deepening of the gender imbalance; lack of employment opportunities ('the economic rights of women are frequently violated'; in Georgia, the Ukraine and Uzbekistan reforms in the education system have affected many teachers, who are mainly women) – the unemployment level in remote rural areas is higher in comparison with urban areas especially among women; increased (family) violence against women and girls (i.e. in Tajikistan extreme forms of violence which were unknown in the country until 1990), and major health problems. For example in Uzbekistan: 'People have no money for food products and medicines and we can see food deficiency, anemia, tuberculosis, and problems with the thyroid gland. Poor health conditions result in high infant and maternity mortality and abortions. Drinking water is polluted with chemicals, heavy metals and leftovers of fertilizers.' Regarding education in the same region: 'Since students have to pay for their education (which was free before) the number of female students in institutes and universities has decreased. Many families can not afford to pay for education even for one child and if the family has to choose between paying for a boy or a girl, the preference would be given to the boy.'

Causes

As main causes of the deteriorated socio-economic situation of women are considered: war, the economic crisis (and sharp decrease of incomes of the population), industrial recession, criminality, corruption, drug abuse, bad governance, lack of transparency in decision-making, non-effective legislation, globalization and privatization of state enterprises. It is stated that transitional periods of market economies are usually accompanied with a mutual decline of the economic level. After the splitting of the USSR and the proclaiming of independent countries the old infrastructures were destroyed and new ones are still under construction. Another factor which has been mentioned is the undervalued position of women; i.e. women in the Ukraine are absolute-

ly marginalized in the political life of the country; though women form the majority of the electorate (54%) the percentage of women in the parliament was only 2,5% in 1991-1994, and about 4% in 1994-98. The results of socio-economic surveys in rural areas of Uzbekistan prove that not only mentality, traditions and stable gender stereotypes are considered to be the roots of gender inequality and violence against women, but also economic dependence and high rates of unemployment among rural women.

Environmental aspects

Major environmental aspects that aggravate the effects of poverty are industrial pollution, agricultural pollution and severe droughts, erosion and siltation. The decrease in economic activities in the early '90s has on one hand resulted in a reduction of the negative influence of the industrial sector, although in several countries pollution is increasing again (also because of establishment of industries without proper clearing systems – i.e. of an enterprise for processing petroleum without ecological examination in Ukraine). The deterioration and collapse of the infrastructure – such as portable water supply and sewerage systems, erosion prevention measures, water filtration, refuse collection and coast protection systems – has had major environmental effects. The electric power deficit and unavailability or expensiveness of fossil fuel increased the use of timber and has put pressure on the forests in countries such as Georgia. Also there are often no funds available for monitoring and protection of the environment. The deterioration of the environment and unsafe water supplies contribute to women's poor health, reproductive complications, high infant and child mortality. Areas such as the Aral region, Fergana valley, Bukhara province and Tashkent province's industrial zone have unsafe levels of air and water pollution. Drinking water and food contain unsafe levels of chemicals such as fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. In 1994 2.6 percent of Ukraine territory was contaminated with heavy metals; in 1997 the concentration of nitrates in 19 percent of 2.388 samples taken from water exceeded the acceptable level. In Ukraine 260 settlements consume drinking water that does not meet the standards. Natural – and manmade - disasters such as drought, floods, earthquakes directly influence the quality and quantity of people's livelihoods. Recently,

frequent droughts in the region have become a new kind of danger for agriculture and people's prospects. For example, the losses in Eastern Georgian regions caused by the drought in 2000 exceeded 400 million GEL. And the damage of the drought of 2001 in Uzbekistan was estimated to be 20 million dollars. It is feared that climate change might aggravate this situation.

Strategies

When asked what to do to address these problems, actions were suggested at national, regional and European/international levels. Among the suggestions were: adaptation of proper laws and regulations, including those ensuring women's full participation in social and economic life, implementation of the Aarhus Convention on public participation, programs to fight drugs abuse and criminality, the development of poverty reduction policies (i.e. pro-poor PRSPs) and programs (incl. community building), protection of the human rights of people, capacity building (incl. education and training of women), assistance in development agriculture, industrial development, gender budgeting and support for gender programs, improvement of public education, increase civil awareness, access to micro-credit and revival of traditional handicrafts, attraction of investments, work towards accountable media (i.e. mass media and rights of women and children). Also the importance of cooperation among all the different sectors and organizations was stressed. A radical improvement of the political structure and governance was considered of paramount importance as well. At the international level a need was expressed for support to civil society activities, support in protecting of human rights, pressure on national governments to fight corruption, support for and supervision of implementation of a poverty reduction and economic growth programs, ensure public participation, and investments in the forms of grants, donations and humanitarian aid.

NGO strategies

NGOs in the region have taken several initiatives to countervail this situation. They focus on community mobilization (Open Asia), educational and informational projects, socio-economic and environmental surveys monitoring, and networking, such as the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network (CENN), that promotes

improved communication among organizations in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (and partly Russia and Turkey). A survey done by SABR and other NGOs in 2000 in Uzbekistan showed that most women would like to start their own small businesses, but did not have the start capital for that. Mama'86 is involved in a program to protect consumers' rights on safe drinking water. UDASA carried out a joint project on teaching small farmers skills in drip irrigation and sustainable farming. Education and training are seen as key strategies to overcome the deteriorating situation in the region; that is why many organizations are involved in executing seminars, workshops, training programs for specific groups such as women, youth and teachers, publication of materials. Raising of awareness on environmental human rights, access to justice and public participation in decision-making are main activities of Eco-Pravo in the Ukraine. ISS from Belarus notes that lack of financing is the key to many of the existing problems. In that context also micro-credit programs are executed by some of the NGOs; these schemes are considered appropriate as they encourage initiatives among the public, increase public responsibility and accountability, and support women's financial independence.

WSSD

The organizations participating in the survey indicated that with the eye on the upcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development they would like the international/ European community to support programs that not only support the states but also NGOs, such as:

- Support for national strategies to fight poverty.
- Women's banks in all countries, incl. small and credit programs.
- Development of poverty reduction strategies focusing on the population and of the state.
- Promotion of the elaboration and adoption of laws and regulations regulating disbursement of micro loans by NGOs
- Condemnation of both political and economic blockades of the country, which have allowed military actions.
- Support for tourism development and handicraft production as means of income.

One of the main issues that must be considered by WSSD is, according to Eco-Prava (Ukraine), the opposi-

tion of globalization and poverty (both from the citizens and from the state). Mama'86 underlines that military actions could never be the way to tackle the existing problems in the region.

Conclusions

Although not covered in this presentation, also in several other countries in Europe poverty levels are rising among certain social groups. Among them are single-parent households, immigrants, and drug and alcohol addicts. This is not only the case in the big cities of Western Europe, also in rural areas there is a growing problem of indebtedness and income insecurity. Female farmers often take the lead in challenging agricultural policies and looking for alternatives. Often there is also an environmental justice aspect to poverty issues: the most rich live in the most well-off neighborhoods, whereas poor people often live in polluted and even dangerous environments. As we have seen many people in the countries in transition live in poverty, both in economic and social terms. This makes them extra vulnerable to the deteriorating ecological conditions in their livelihoods. Women are among the most affected social groups in the region. If we want a more sustainable development to be reached, it is of paramount importance that long-lasting poverty eradication gets to the centre of all policies and programs, both from governments, the private sector and civil society; and that promises and commitments (such as the 0.7% ODA) are met. It also requires good governance, respect of human rights, as well as fighting corruption and criminality. A more integrated vision and approach to social, economic and environmental dimensions of society is necessary. Globalization and its institutions – such as the WTO - have to be reformed in order to really work for the poor and for future generations.

In the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development poverty eradication and sustainable development have been recognized as closely interlinked. However, a major effort is needed to decide upon and implement necessary measures at international and necessary level. A strong voice from European women on these issues is needed to remind policymakers of their promises and commitments. You have that power: use it whenever you can!

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Water

Working Group Statement

Preamble

Ever since the declaration of the International Water Supply and Sanitation Decade at the UN Water Resources Conference in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1977, water supply and sanitation sector was pointed out as the next big problem and this is going to be on a global scale.

There were many international agreements and documents developed on the water issue since then (Convention on the Rights of the Child-1989, New Delhi Declaration-1990, Chapter 18 of Agenda 21-1992, Environment Ministers Meeting in Noordwijk, the Netherlands-1994, millennium Targets-2000, Bonn Conference documents-2001).

The millennium Summit developed the concept of access to safe water and sanitation by establishing as a target to halve the proportion of people lacking access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation by the year 2015, and to provide water security as a key dimension of a poverty reduction.

Growing contamination, degradation and shortages of the water sources, decreasing of drinking water quality and health related risks, increasing the prices on water service are the key problems for the public in developing countries and countries with economies in transition (CEE and NIS countries).

The main goal on a global scale is to guarantee the equal right on access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation.

Different tools can be considered in order to achieve this aim at international, national and local levels.

At the international level

- *Water should be considered as a common good and not to be submitted to WTO negotiations.* Taking into account that water need is a basic human right, that water for domestic and life purposes takes precedence over its market value, its control should remain in the public domain.
- *Integrated water management implementation* Should link water and sanitation improvements

directly with the development and protection of fresh water resources, for the benefit of the environmental health, in respect of international multi-lateral agreements enforcement.

- *Education for sustainable water use* Is recognized as an international priority which should be addressed at the national/local level.

At national/local level

- *Empowerment of the local users/consumers to participate in the decision making process.* And to develop sustainable solutions with a supportive regulatory framework.
- *Develop a strong legal framework for the public/state regulation of the water sector.* In line with international regulations and with WHO recommendations.
- *Transparent governance and involvement of local stakeholders.* To promote gender equity and encourage women to take leadership roles.
- *Technology choice.* Encourage the use of a wide variety of appropriate household- or community-based sanitation and water supply technologies and support research and pilot programs.
- *Mobilizing financial resources for affordable services.* Focus cross subsidies on assisting the very poor and vulnerable groups.
- *Education for sustainable water use.* Will empower communities to demand efficient water management, to proclaim improved hygiene and sanitation as a high priority and recognize the need to stimulate it through advocacy and education campaigns.

We ask/demand for the attention on the following key issues:

- *Building on people's energy and creativity at all levels,* requiring empowerment and building the capacity of people in households and communities to take action, and applying technologies that respond to actual and future needs.
- *Holistic approach,* acknowledging hygiene, water and sanitation as a human right, and relating it to human development and health, the elimination of poverty, environmental sustainability and the integrated management of water resources.
- *Committed and compassionate leadership and good governance,* changing long-accustomed roles, lead-

ing to new responsibilities of authorities and institutions to support households and communities in the management of their hygiene, water and sanitation, and in being accountable to users as clients.

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Women's Gains and Unfinished Agenda in the Past Decade of UN Conferences*

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Paper presented at the Venice International Women's Forum in preparation of the WSSD, May 2002

Women's Gains

Over the past decade, the women's movement has grown as a political force to be reckoned with. One arena where national women's movements were visible and effective was at the United Nations (UN) conferences over the past ten years. The UN conferences provided a dynamic arena for action by non-governmental organizations, particularly women's and southern groups.

Though NGO activism took place at several interconnected levels, national, regional and international and was central to both the process and the outcomes of each conference, the agreements reached do not consistently reflect all NGO priorities as some of them were watered down during government negotiations and compromise. Ultimately the final documents that emerged from these conferences are far from perfect - because they result from compromises made by 187 governments.

- The 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio was the first milestone conference of the decade of the 1990s, that made effective NGO participation possible. The international women's movement had a tremendous impact on the document that emerged from UNCED, Agenda 21. Initial drafts had only two references to women but due to intensive advocacy efforts, the final draft had over 172 references to women and an entire chapter on women's role in the environment.

- The 1993 UN Second World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna resulted in significant gains for the international women's movement. Prior to Vienna, women's rights were often viewed as separate from human rights. Through the advocacy efforts of women's groups, women's rights were finally recognized as human rights in the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action.

- The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo was significant as it moved population policy away from an approach focused on population control to one focused on women's sexual and reproductive health and rights.

- Women's NGO's continued to play their pivotal role at the 1995 World Summit on Social Development where they got governments to recognize the gendered implications of macro-economic policies, in particular the negative impacts of structural adjustment and the crippling effects of debt.

- High from the successes at these conferences we created a Women's Linkage Caucus for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing to link and build on the hard won gains women made. Given that government representatives at each one of these conferences came from different ministries, there was a tendency to compartmentalize issues. Our role was therefore to remind governments of what they had previously agreed to and insist that they build on and not roll back the gains.

- At the 1996 Conference on Human Settlements, women won one of the few agreements to corporate responsibility. After concerted advocacy efforts, members of the Women's Caucus succeeded in getting governments to agree to "promote socially responsible corporate investment and reinvestment in, and in partner-

ship with, local communities.” This commitment provides a tool for activists, at the local level, to hold corporations accountable to the communities in which they operate.

- At the 1996 World Food Summit heads of state agreed to halve the 800 million people who suffer hunger by the year 2015. However women found it shameful that they endorsed “trade as a key element in achieving food security” and conducive to “fostering food security for all through a fair and market-oriented world trade system.”

[Rome Declaration] Women’s NGOs challenged this pro free-trade approach to food security. Given that women are the majority of food producers in the world, the competitive pressures of open markets will undermine their role as local and small food producers.

- In 2001 at the World Conference Against Racism women pressed governments to recognize that current processes of globalization are built upon historic and current discriminatory and exploitative policies and practices that reinforce racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. As a result, the benefits of globalization are unevenly shared while the costs are inequitably distributed. The poor and marginalized, the majority of whom are racial and ethnic minorities, in both the north and south, bear a disproportionate share of the costs.

- The focus of the 2002 Financing for Development (FFD) conference in Monterrey was on financial resources, foreign investment, aid, debt and trade. Environment, women, social development and human rights groups were hoping FFD would not only provide the resources to accomplish the commitments of the conferences of the 1990’s but would also address accountability and governance of the international financial and trade institutions. Unfortunately, despite the Argentin financial crisis, and previous crisis in Mexico, Asia and Russia governments did not live up to what we had hoped.

The same fundamentals were endorsed: export-led growth, foreign direct investment, privatization. Women’s groups responded by saying the “fundamentalism of the market and religious fundamentalism” has brought the world to a very dangerous juncture. The evidence is clear that liberalization is reinforcing the existing disparities between and within countries, and serving the class interests of the bourgeoisie in

national governments and a handful of multinational corporations. If anything this conference revealed the corporate-government alliance.

Contradictions and the Unfinished Agenda

Many of these gains women made in the UN conferences of the 1990’s came about as a result of consistent NGO advocacy to press for solutions to distressing economic conditions in both the North and the South. Women’s groups loudly voiced the social and economic concerns resulting from privatization and economic restructuring programs, which were largely imposed by the policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and more recently by the World Trade Organization (WTO). The commitments, though useful, are not always coherent and sometimes contradictory, as follows:

- There is a commitment to poverty eradication and an acceptance of the need to restructure and reformulate macro-economic policies to achieve this **but** the actions and targets agreed by governments remain at the micro level, do not tackle the structural problems underlying the feminisation of poverty, and emphasize poor women’s access to credit for micro, small and medium scale enterprises.
- There are commitments to ensure that international financial institutions’ policies integrate social development and gender equity principles **but** there is an absence of national and international mechanisms to monitor the practices of these key institutions. Example: EU and US strong-arm tactics with African trade ministers at the recent WTO ministerial meeting in Doha.
- There are strong commitments to uphold women’s economic human rights **but** in the context of privatization and diminishing state power, governments are not proving to be effective at safeguarding these human rights as well as holding corporations accountable to them.
- There is a recognition of the social problems associated with market forces **but** governments nevertheless remain committed to market based solutions as a panacea for most ills.
- There is an emphasis on developing partnerships with the private sector but there is hardly any reference to regulating the private sector, particularly corpora-

tions, and holding them accountable to social development goals and human rights standards. Example: UN Secretary General's Global Compact to forge a partnership with the private sector including TNCs – UNOCAL, Shell, Rio Tinto, Nike – that have appalling human rights and environmental records.

- There is a commitment of government responsibility to people centered sustainable development **but** it is based on the underlying assumption that sustained economic growth, which is inherently unsustainable, will trickle down to the poor.
- There is a commitment to the goal of full employment **but** the means emphasized to ensure this are through liberalizing trade and investment. The role of governments in generating employment is limited to investment in human resources and entrepreneurial activity.
- There is a recognition of the importance of gender equity and equality in implementing the agreements **but** there is a tendency to simply add women onto inherently male biased economic analyses and actions. Example: The concept of full employment is based on a male bread winner model and does not address the role that women play in social reproduction and the double burden that women carry as a result of their entry into paid employment.
- There is a recognition of the links between women's unremunerated work and their increasing poverty **but** the solution proposed is to develop a methodology to measure unremunerated work without specifying how to redress the inequities uncovered by the data and to use such data in macro-economic policy making.

Ten years after the Rio conference and the series of conferences agreements, the need to reconcile these commitments to the realities of the global economy is urgent.

As we have seen in the anti-globalization movement from Seattle to Genoa to Porto Allegre, people have and will continue to take to the streets to express their outrage with the WB, IMF, WTO and more importantly transnational corporations. Others will renew the space at the UN to continue this struggle. The political will of governments, the reorientation of global financial and economic institutions, the regulation of international and domestic corporations and a sustained and strong people's and women's movement in each country will

all be needed to achieve real and sustainable progress on poverty eradication and gender equality and sustainable.

* The text draws on Progress of the World's Women (UNIFEM, 2000) Chapter 2 'Commitments to the Progress of Women: Rights and Targets,' which I drafted.

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Why Women are Essential for Sustainable Development

Results
of the European Women's Conference
for a Sustainable Future Célakovice (Prague)
14th – 17th March 2002

Leading women from NGOs, government and science, met in Celakovice (Prague) to prepare their recommendations to the European Union for the World Summit on Sustainable Development. 120 Women from 30 countries in Western and Eastern Europe and the NIS worked together for 4 days. This publication presents the views and experiences of these participants. We can learn from the successful implementation of a project in Aralsk on the Aral Sea, how economic, social and environmental development are possible in one of the world's best known ecological disaster areas. The testimony of a young Russian woman from the Southern Urals show how health damage due to nuclear exposure leads to severe chromosome mutations in the 3rd generation, and why the world should ban nuclear industry. The views of a Dutch Senator on how to combine employment creation with social and environmental improvement, give strong arguments for a reform of WTO and necessary minimum social and environmental standards for world-wide traded products. The testimony of an NGO leader from Odessa explains why privatization of water utilities goes hand in hand with an increase in poverty in NIS countries and what better alternatives exist. All the contributions show that women are most often effected by the loss of natural resources and pollution. They also show that women are essential for generally supported sustainable solutions. In order for projects and policies to be successful, women should be actively involved in their development and implementation.

Published by:
Women in Europe
for a Common Future
WECF
wecf@wecf.org
www.wecf.org

Price: 8.00 Euro



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for a Common Future **WECF**