

# Policy Matters

Newsletter of the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)

## ECOSPACE, ETHICS AND CONSUMPTION

### Environmental spaces

Consumption, ethics, and environmental space  
in the context of globalization

Franck Amalric

The failure of the WTO ministerial meeting in Seattle in December 1999 has brought to public attention the complexity of managing the global society in a just and inclusive manner. The process of economic, financial, and technological globalization initiated in the 1970s and unleashed by the end of the cold war has brought about an unprecedented degree of interdependence among the people of the world. But at the same time it has been undermining the capacity of existing political institutions at the local, national and international levels to address societal problems. As Matthias Finger argued in the previous issue of Policy Matters, this is the reason for the emergence of the concept of “governance.”

The question of consumption, in particular of “over-consumption” among the consuming class in circumstances of increasing environmental scarcities, should be considered in this perspective, that is in the perspective of increasing the capacity to act for global justice. One cannot be satisfied with setting complex ethical principles to address the question of consumption if these principles have no capacity to bear on reality, in other words if they cannot be integrated within a broader system of governance.

This brief paper presents two approaches to the issue of consumption, namely “the quest for fair consumption” and “the quest for responsible consumption” in this perspective. Both approaches question present levels and patterns of consumption among the consuming class on ethical grounds and suggest ways of addressing it. Both emphasise North-South inequalities in the use and access to natural resources, and call for greater global solidarity and global justice. But they differ in how they conceive this quest for solidarity and justice.

The quest for fair consumption asks us to believe that we – i.e. members of the human family – share the same Earth and the same destiny, and from that starting point suggests ways for living together in a sustainable manner. Nation-states have been built like this, by emphasizing not just common cultural roots but also a commonality of fate. But that view conceals a global reality of sharp inequalities, cultural diversity, and divergent historical trajectories. It assumes away what is maybe the central question: how to develop a sense of solidarity across nations and peoples that can sustain a critical discourse on consumption?

The quest for responsible consumption, by contrast, emphasises the individual responsibility of the consumer towards other persons wherever they may be located. It does not make nor necessarily need grand discourses about the human family. Instead it proceeds by establishing new networks of solidarity along relations of economic interdependence which cut across national and social boundaries. It has a global reach, but not necessarily a universal one. In some campaigns this approach has been successful to change production patterns. But it is far from having made in-roads

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The World Conservation Union

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Commission on Environmental,  
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## About IUCN

IUCN - The World Conservation Union, was founded in 1948 and has its headquarters in Gland, Switzerland. IUCN brings together sovereign states, governmental agencies and non-governmental organisations in a global partnership to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

The Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) is one of six IUCN commissions that draw together a network of expert individuals. CEESP is an inter-disciplinary commission, whose mission is to act as a source of expertise on economic and social factors that affect natural resources and biological diversity; to assist in the formulation of policies for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from this use; to contribute to the IUCN programme and mission; and in performing this mission, to establish itself as a central source of guidance, support and expertise on environmental policy.

# Letter from the chair

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The time has come to say farewell. This is my last letter to you as the chair of CEESP. This has been a tumultuous period in the life of IUCN and a period of identity creation for CEESP. When I took over four years ago, the Commission had a rather circumscribed identity, without a coherent program or overarching vision. Four years later, we have a different problem — not the absence of a vision but an opposition to the vision that we tried to project. Today, the Commission is in a crisis and some people at least in the IUCN hierarchy wish to dispense with it altogether. While they did not have a serious difficulty with an ineffective Commission for thirty years, they do have a problem with the agenda we have tried to put forward. Since this is my valedictory message, this may be a good occasion to summarize the issues as I have seen them.

I am deeply concerned that the political and intellectual trends in the current phase of globalization are leading to a revival of the colonial-type domination of the political structures as well as natural resources of the South. Such domination is not on behalf of Northern political interests, as in the earlier phase of colonialism, but of a power bloc of corporations, financial institutions, and other large, global organizations (e.g. international non-governmental organizations, labor federations and the like). Some institutions, including IUCN, are unwitting allies of the "colonizers" in this phase of global history. IUCN is in danger of becoming, if it has not become already, an instrument for the control of the natural resources of the South on behalf of global interests.

A number of people in IUCN recognized this danger early on. They sought on the one hand to channel the energies of the Union towards a better understanding of and intervention in global policies, especially global economic and trade policies, and on the other hand the strengthening of the capacities of local communities and vulnerable groups in the South. This is, by and large, the CEESP agenda. Along the global dimension, we invested in global governance, trade and sustainable development, and environment and security. At the local and national levels, we advocated support for collaborative management, capacity building, and regional networks. Both of these tracks relied heavily on the social and behavioral sciences, in distinction to the central reliance on natural sciences in other expert commissions.

Unfortunately, people who advocate this agenda have systematically left the Secretariat over the last four years. On the contrary, the Union has edged closer to establishing more explicit ties with trans-national corporations, multilateral financial institutions (especially the World Bank), and global inter-governmental bodies. The result is that the much of the Secretariat, and certainly the headquarters is dominated by technocrats who are neither interested in nor sympathetic to our concerns. The last four years have been a period of consistent and continued friction with the staff of IUCN headquarters, and key members in the governing structure of the Union. It has not been a happy time. It was my hope a year and half ago that the removal of the previous Director General would improve matters, since the new DG is both knowledgeable about and sympathetic to these concerns. However, she too is beleaguered by much the same forces as we are, and the hopes of improvement are slim at best.

In view of this, I proposed to the IUCN Council in February that it should address this issue seriously, and either make an explicit and informed commitment to the economic and social issues championed by CEESP; or, if it were unable to make such a commitment, to put an end to the charade of supporting such a commission. Interestingly, this message is quite consistent with the messages being received from IUCN's major donors, who have withheld the release of grant funding until the commitment to social and development concerns is realized in practice. Be that as it may, instead of responding by re-endorsing the CEESP agenda, the Union has moved in the opposite direction, and at least some have sought to demolish the Commission entirely — thus ending what I have characterized as a charade.

The events that led to this situation include a supposedly independent review of the Commission structure, which not

surprisingly (for those who understand the compulsions that weigh upon the supposedly independent reviewers) has come out in support of whatever was wished by a small power bloc within the Union. The review observed that CEESP (and its predecessors) have never been able to exist comfortably within the IUCN structure, and recommended that it should be abolished, and replaced by a high-level technical committee to advise IUCN on social issues. The IUCN Bureau has drafted a resolution to the WCC containing the recommendation that the future of CEESP be placed in the hands of the Council. It has also not put forward any names for the CEESP chair. Given that a statutorily protected commission has not been able to make much headway in the face of concerted opposition from the IUCN technocracy, it is clear that an alternative process controlled by the IUCN Council will have even less of a chance to undertake meaningful work. This is nothing more than a political spin to disguise the real decision.

Frankly, I am in two minds about this development. Personally, I was never comfortable with the worldviews and orientation of IUCN staff and key members of the governing structure because of their technocratic and anti-poor orientation. I would be moderately happy if the veil that covers these worldviews is torn asunder and IUCN is revealed as an instrument for the re-colonization of the South. If this happens, the time would have come to abandon IUCN, and to work with institutions that have more progressive agendas. However, other members of the CEESP Steering Committee seem to think differently, and have hopes that IUCN would come around to our point of view. I have to admit that if their assessment is correct, and IUCN does indeed redefine its global social role in opposition to the agenda of re-colonization, and does choose to side with the victims rather than the oppressors, that would make me even happier.

In the hope that this is the case, we have collectively drafted an explicit mandate for the commission, and have nominated Dr. M. Taghi Farvar, of CENESTA — a highly innovative NGO member of IUCN - to lead CEESP in the next quadrennium. Taghi has both a deep commitment to community development and environmental conservation at the local level, and long-standing knowledge and involvement with IUCN. For several years he served as Special Advisor on Sustainable Development to the then DG (Kenton Miller), just at the time when equity became coupled with sustainability in the IUCN agenda. In the context of applied innovative field-based work, Taghi is an intellectual leader, yet his particular strength as a nominee lies in his ability to bring to CEESP an emphasis towards practical application of knowledge and lessons learned and an unshakable commitment towards the interests of the underprivileged, and the South in general. The resolution on the mandate and Taghi's nomination has been sent to IUCN. However, the opposition to it is quite strong and will come up at the final IUCN Council meeting at the eve of the WCC. At this meeting, the Bureau's draft resolution will be taken up for adoption. We are proposing the adoption of CEESP's mandate resolution, and the nomination of Taghi Farvar as a candidate for CEESP chair.

All of this will come up at the final IUCN Council meeting at the eve of the WCC. At this meeting, the Bureau's draft resolution will be taken up for adoption. We are proposing instead the adoption of CEESP's mandate resolution, and the nomination of Taghi Farvar as a candidate for CEESP chair. However, the opposition to it is quite strong and we need your help. Please try to get in touch with you Regional Councilors to ask them to support CEESP's resolution and Taghi's nomination.

While there are many other forums to advance the social agenda that I have described above, and I hope you and I will continue to collaborate in those forums, Amman may be our last opportunity to save IUCN's soul.

Whatever happens at Amman, however, A Luta Continua.

— Tariq Banuri



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in addressing the structural problem of over-consumption.

Neither of these two quests for just consumption appear satisfactory. Could they be combined effectively? There may lie one of the keys to sustainability.

## The quest for fair consumption

*Caring for the Earth. A Strategy for Sustainable Living* starts with the following point:

"The first [point] is simple and obvious. It is that we, the world's people, want to survive; but more than that, we want a satisfactory life for all of us and for our descendants. To achieve that goal we need a new kind of development, and we must learn to live differently" (1991: 4).

Unfortunately there is nothing obvious about this point. To assume so is actually to assume away a major if not the main political problem. What is not obvious about it is the "we", the idea that humanity can be considered as having sufficient unity to act together.

## Principles of environmental space

But for the moment let us go along with this assumption, and thus pretend that "we" share the Earth with its limited resources, a limited environmental space defined as "the total amount of energy, non-renewable resources, land, water, wood and other resources which can be used globally or regionally without environmental damage, and without impinging on the rights of future generations" (Carley and Spapens 1998: 9). Environmental space is a multidimensional criterion that does not attempt to aggregate all forms of natural assets into one single measure (unlike the concept of natural capital).

As soon as we put down the concept of environmental space and have assumed that it was limited, two questions follow: how do we measure the environmental space that an individual or a group of individuals use? What is the "fair" share to which an individual or a group of individuals is entitled to?

Measuring the environmental space used in the act of consumption must take into account not only the immediate space taken up, but also all the space used in the course of the production, processing, and commercialisation of the product, what is called the "ecological backpack" of the product. While there are technical difficulties, in principle doing so is possible and a number of studies have already put forward some measures (see for instance Carley and Spapens 1998).

If we stick to the assumption that "we" share the world as equals, calculating "fair" shares should also be quite straightforward. For each type of resource, the fair share is simply the global environmental space available divided by the world population. These individual shares can then be aggregated to assess the "fair" share for groupings like nations.

Let us emphasise that a fair share of environmental space is not an endowment. It is not a starting point, but an end point, something to aim for, a target which helps us to visualise the magnitude of the changes which are desirable if not necessary, and assess the relevance of different measures in order to achieve them. For this reason, the principle of living within one's fair share of environmental

space automatically raises limits to trade and appropriation, at least because one would not be allowed to trade and therefore accumulate shares in environmental spaces.

## From principles to implementation

Let us come back now to the assumption of a world-wide "we". The concept of "fair" share makes practical sense at the level of a group, that is at an intermediary level between the individual and the world. For this reason it is almost always conceived as a national concept. It enables to assess how much efforts a nation should make to reduce its use of environmental space, or how much space left a nation has for economic development. While objectives are set by world citizens, action relies therefore on the political will expressed by citizens of particular nations: global limits in the use of different resources or in the emissions affecting the biosphere are set; principles for sharing this space among nations are defined, followed by the setting of national targets mutually agreed upon; and each nation-state is responsible for adopting the appropriate measures to meet the targets set.

There is a tension however between the concepts of national and world citizenship, in particular when looked at in relation to natural resources. Control over one's territory and its resources is central to the very notion of a nation. The principle was re-asserted in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development: "States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of environmental law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental law and developmental policies..." (Principle 2) This principle provides another way of defining legitimate shares for non-global resources like forest or land, simply as the environmental space available on the territory of the nation. For instance, France's fair share of land could either be defined by the extent of arable land in France (principle of national sovereignty), or by the extent of arable land in the world multiplied by the ratio of France's population to the world population (principle of world citizenship).

Moral philosophers have recognised that a key problem with the idea of fairness, notably in relation to John Rawls's concept of "justice as fairness", is to define the composition of the group within which the concept applies. As Sen (1999: 118) has argued, neither the conceptions of "Grand Universalism" – "The domain of the exercise of fairness is all people everywhere taken together", nor of "National Particularism" – "The domain of the exercise of fairness involves each nation taken separately" provides us an adequate understanding of the demands of global justice. The first one puts too much emphasis on the idea of world citizenship, while the other one does not sufficiently recognise the need to redress inequalities between nations.

Another problem is that the existing structure of international decision-making gives precedence to national citizenship over world citizenship, since representatives of nation-states are the ones who negotiate. These negotiations are therefore dominated by national interests, as constructed and interpreted by existing national political institutions.

The tension between national and world citizenship is further exacerbated by the

profound inter-national inequality in uses of natural resources. Implementing fair shares would require different levels of efforts from different countries. These may be just according to abstract principles and at the same time politically unrealistic. George Bush's statement in Rio that the American way of life was not negotiable is an indication of the nature of the problem.

Recent international negotiations on the ozone layer, global warming, Agenda 21, biodiversity have provided good tests of the capacity to implement the principles of environmental space. By and large these international environmental negotiations have been unsatisfactorily weak (on climate change, see for instance Molitor 1999). In an interview given at the time of the Special General Assembly devoted to the review of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), five years after the Earth Summit in Rio, then UNEP Executive Director Elizabeth Dowdeswell recalled what Rio had been all about: "Thousands of photographs were taken of heads of state and of governments, committing their countries to taking concerted action to protect and improve the quality of life on earth." Rio was a great show, a moment of celebration meant to raise awareness of the challenges ahead of us, and thereby provide the momentum for change. "But, astonishingly, even this great event, unprecedented in the history of the human race, has failed to alter the course of humanity sufficiently to put us on a sustainable trajectory" (IPS, 1997).

So in the end, how do we assess the contribution of the concept of environmental space to assessing the issue of consumption? First and foremost it is undoubtedly useful as a method to structure information on the use of natural resources, and as way to raise awareness about the current inequalities across countries and the scale of the changes that would be necessary in the high-consuming ones. This information in itself participates in the shaping of a planetary conscience.

Beyond this, current applications of the concept to nation-states do not yield many promises of change, because it relies on old communities of solidarity (the nation) instead of nurturing new ones. This problem, however, is not constitutive of the concept of environmental space itself, but stems from the way the world is divided in order to apply the concept. It could be imagined, for instance, to divide the world by resources and sectors of human activities related to it instead of dividing it by nations, like Petrella (1998)'s proposal of a world contract on water. What matters is to ensure that the process of applications do not rely on pre-assumed solidarity, but instead participates in the emergence of new forms of global solidarity.

## The quest for responsible consumption

The very act of consumption has often side-effects which are up for ethical considerations. The consumer herself or himself may be affected in negative ways, which is the moral basis for the prohibition of some addictive products in many parts of the world. Other persons may also be affected, for instance in the case of second-hand smoking or other forms of pollution produced as a side-effect of consumption. As a general rule, there is

agreement that these practices should be regulated — through government intervention, market mechanisms, peer-pressure,... — to ensure that one behaves responsibly towards others. This is what we may call the quest for responsible consumption.

One of the important domains in which the quest of responsible consumption is taking place relates to the forms of production and processes supported by consumption. While consumption is not the immediate problem, the economic demand generated by consumption participates in supporting and encouraging practices which are at times ethically questionable. Civil activism has for a long time attempted to make consumers more aware of these linkages and use their purchasing power more responsibly. Thus Action 5.5 of *Caring for the Earth* sets to "encourage "green consumer" movements". "Consumers in upper-income countries can use their buying power to strengthen the market for goods that do the least possible harm to the environment. (...) As a "green" consumer, the individual can do something positive, however serious the problem, and whatever the government of the day is doing" (1991: 49).

This touches upon a potentially huge array of issues, getting ever larger and more complex with the increase in trade relationship. Just to mention a few problems:

- illicit appropriation of natural resources: there are today many conflicts around the world where local community opposition has arisen to commercial interests which are targeted to global markets at the expense of local livelihoods. The oil and mining industries, but also the tourist, paper, fishing and agro-business industries are particularly involved. A number of international campaigns — for instance against Shell's policies in Nigeria — have raised public awareness on some of these issues.
- illicit externalisation of costs in the process of production: the problem is similar to the previous point. Mining activities, for instance, may lead to the pollution of rivers.
- illicit forms of production: when for instance minimum environmental or social standards are not respected.

According to economic theory these problems have solutions within the existing institutional framework: clarifying and strengthening property rights, and "internalising the costs" in order to "get the prices right" are what it would take.

However there are major structural constraints hindering the implementation of these solutions. In particular, it seems unrealistic to expect that local property rights and the rule of law will be usually respected in the face of very high differences in economic power between commercial interests acting in the global economy and local communities defending their livelihoods. Corruption of public officials is a much more likely scenario, as analysis of on-going local conflicts over natural resources repeatedly show. More generally, the privatisation of the state (i.e. the use of state power for the pursuit of private benefits) is almost inevitable when there exist globally valued natural resources within the national territory in otherwise economically poor circumstances. In these cases, the

respect of property rights and the rules of law, more generally good governance, will require more than down-sizing the state and ensuring greater transparency and accountability through the holding of multi-party elections.

Campaigns by consumer groups in the North, in alliance with affected citizen groups in the South, have played and continue to play a significant role in making consumption more responsible (Zadek and Amalric 1998; Morehouse 1998). Significant campaigns have targeted sweatshop labour by the GAP and Nike or environmental destruction and violations of human rights by Shell in Nigeria. More recently, a number of home improvement retailers in the US, including Home Depot and Menards, respectively number 1 and 3 on the market, in response to an international campaign waged by the Rainforest Action Network have announced they would stop selling wood from endangered old growth forests within a few years (RAN 2000). Oversight and monitoring by citizen groups, in particular consumer groups in the North, thus complement efforts towards democratic governance in the South to respect people's rights, protect ecological sustainability, and promote sustainable human development.

The creation of new alliances involved in the quest for responsible consumption participates in the emergence of new communities of solidarity. It does not rely on, but actually challenges traditional communities of solidarity, by emphasising the plurality of the constituencies towards which individuals should feel responsible. This illustrates Sen's idea that "the starting point " of an alternative approach to global justice in contradistinction to grand universalism and national particularism "can be the recognition of the fact that we all have multiple identities, and that each of these identities can yield concerns and demands that can significantly supplement, or seriously compete with, other concerns and demands arising from other identities" (ibid. 120). He calls this approach "plural affiliation".

The important point to be noted is that these different identities are not articulated according to a pre-established hierarchy, as there is no simple relationship between the communities of solidarity to which they refer. The fact that the nation is part of the world introduces a hierarchical relationship between national and world citizenship (one way or the other). In this case the communities of solidarity overlap in complex ways, without anyone encompassing the other ones.

The major shortcoming of the responsible consumption approach is its limitation to specific campaigns. It is unclear whether it can actually proceed from single to structural problems, from targeting one specific company to altering consumption patterns. However, these campaigns may have played an important role in stirring Northern citizen attention towards economic practices in Southern countries, and paved the ground for on-going debates on the environment and labour standards, as for instance the OECD Guidelines for Multinationals. Furthermore, there are clear ways in which the role of consumers could be strengthened, like labelling is one of them, or imposing social and environmental audits.

## Combining the two approaches?

The fair consumption approach states that the consumption of some is the cause of the deprivation of others. The responsible consumption approach focuses on specific conflicts and shows how consumers can help transform unjust economic practices by using their purchasing power. The shortcoming of the first one is its inability, or unwillingness, to trace down clear responsibilities. The shortcoming of the other one is its incapacity to address the structural problems. Closer co-operation between research institutes working along the first approach, and advocacy groups working along the second on specific issues could be a step forward in bridging the gap between the two approaches.

The issues could focus on what has become the main environmental problem today, the increasing scarcities of the basic resources that are water, land, forests, and fisheries which provide livelihoods for a majority of humanity. What is at stake now is not the theoretical possibility for people in the South to catch-up with Northern lifestyles, but the sustainability of their livelihoods.

In this regard, perhaps one of the more interesting recent ideas for sustainability is Riccardo Petrella's call for a global social contract on water and the creation of a world parliament on water (Petrella 1998). The parliament would set to monitor the use of water world-wide, ensure the rights of all to clean water, and address on-going conflicts. Such an institution would look at both the structural and specific problems, and could therefore contribute to fostering the two quests for fair and responsible consumption at the same time.

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# Efficiency and Sufficiency

Wolfgang Sachs

Twenty years ago, 'limits to growth' was the watchword of the environmental movement worldwide; today the buzzword of international ecology experts is 'global change'. The messages implied are clearly different. 'Limits to growth' calls on *homo industrialis* to reconsider his project and to abide by nature's laws. 'Global change', however, puts humankind in the driver's seat and urges it to master nature's complexities with greater self-control. While the first formula sounds threatening, the second has an optimistic ring: it believes in a rebirth of *homo faber* and, on a more prosaic level, lends itself to the belief that the proven means of modern economy - product innovation, technological progress, market regulation, science-based planning - will show the way out of the ecological predicament.

The cure for all environmental ills is called 'efficiency revolution'. It focuses on reducing the throughput of energy and materials in the economic system by means of new technology and planning. Be it for the light-bulb or the car, for the design of power plants or transport systems, the aim is to come up with innovations that minimize the use of nature for each unit of output. Under this prescription, the economy will supposedly gain in fitness by keeping to a diet that eliminates the overweight in slag and dross. The efficiency scenario, however, seeks to make the circle square: it proposes a radical change through redirecting conventional means. It confronts modern society with the need to reduce drastically the utilization of nature as a mine for inputs and a deposit for waste, promising to reduce the physical scale of the economy. Conversely, it holds out the prospect of achieving this transformation through the application of economic intelligence, including new products, technologies and management techniques; in fact, this scenario proposes the extension of the modern economic imperative, that is, the optimization of the means-ends relationship, from the calculation of money flows to the calculation of physical flows. 'More with less' is the motto for this new round in the old game. Optimizing input, not maximizing output, as in the post-war era, is the order of the day, and one already sees economists and engineers taking a renewed pleasure in their trade by puzzling out the minimum input for each unit of output. The hope that goes along with this strategic turnabout is again concisely stated by the World Bank: 'Efficiency reforms help reduce pollution while raising a country's economic outputs.'

No doubt an efficiency revolution would have far-reaching effects. Since natural inputs were cheap and the deposition of

...FROM ENERGY SAVING TO POLLUTION ABATEMENT AND RECYCLING, CONTINUOUSLY STAVING OFF THE DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS OF GROWTH IN TURN REQUIRES NEW GROWTH. WHAT REALLY MATTERS IS THE OVERALL PHYSICAL SCALE OF THE ECONOMY WITH RESPECT TO NATURE.

waste mostly free of charge, economic development has for long been skewed towards squandering nature. Subsidies encouraged waste, technical progress was generally not designed to save on nature, and prices did not reflect environmental damages. There is a lot of space for correcting the course, and *Agenda 21*, for example, provides a number of signposts that indicate a new route. But the past course of economic history in the East, West and South - though with considerable variations - suggests that there is little room for efficiency strategies in earlier phases of growth, whereas they seem to work best, and are affordable, when applied after a certain level of growth has been attained. Since in the South the politics of selective growth would be a much more powerful way to limit the demand for resources, to transfer the 'efficiency revolution' there wholesale makes sense only if the South is expected to follow the North's path of development.

Even for the North skepticism is in order. Those who hail the rising information and service society as environment-friendly often overlook the fact that these sectors can grow only on top of the industrial sector and in close symbiosis with it. The size of the service sector in relation to production has its limits, just as its dependence on resources can be considerable for such sectors as tourism, hospitals or data-processing. Even commodities without any nature content - for example patents, blueprints or money - derive their value from the command over a resource base they provide. More specifically, gains in environmental efficiency often consist in substituting high-tech for energy/materials, a process that presupposes the presence of a resource-intensive economy. In short, the efficiency potential that lies in well-tuned engines, bio-technological processes, recycling technologies or systems thinking is indigenous to the Northern economies. But the efficiency obviously plays into the North's hands: this way, they can again offer the South a new selection of tools for economic progress, at a price that will

scarcely differ from that paid in the decades of technology transfer.

Environmentalists who refer exclusively to efficient resource management concentrate social imagination on the revision of means, rather than on the revision of goals. Their ingenuity lies in advocating a strategy that emphasizes what business has always been best at, and their strength is to propose a perspective that is far from putting the growth imperative into question. But the magic words 'resource efficiency' have a shady side, and staring at them for too long leads to blindness in one eye. Many environmentalists have already succumbed to this malady. In praising 'resource efficiency' alone, they obscure the fact that ecological reform must walk on two legs: scrutinizing means as well as moderating goals. This omission, however, backfires, and threatens the ecological project. An increase in resource efficiency alone leads to nothing, unless it goes hand-in-hand with an intelligent restraint of growth. Instead of asking how many supermarkets or how many bathrooms are enough, one focuses on how all these - and more - can be obtained with a lower input of resources. If, however, the dynamics of growth are not slowed down, the achievements of rationalization will soon be eaten up by the next round of growth. Consider the example of the fuel-efficient car. Today's vehicle engines are definitely more efficient than in the past, yet the relentless growth in number of cars and miles driven has cancelled out that gain. And the same logic holds across the board, from energy saving to pollution abatement and recycling, not to mention the fact that continuously staving off the destructive effects of growth in turn requires new growth. In fact, what really matters is the overall physical scale of the economy with respect to nature, not only the efficient allocation of resources. Herman Daly has offered a telling comparison: even if the cargo on a boat is distributed efficiently, the boat will inevitably sink under too much weight - even though it may sink optimally! Efficiency without sufficiency is counterproductive; the latter must define the boundaries of the former.

However, the rambling development creed impedes any serious public debate on the moderation of growth. Under its shadow, any society that decides, at least in some areas, not to go beyond certain levels of commodity-intensity, technical performance or speed appears to be backward. As a result, the consideration of zero-options - that is, choosing *not* to do something that is technically possible - is treated as a taboo in the official discussion on global ecology, even to the point of exposing some agreements to ridicule. Take, for example, *Agenda 21's* (Chapter 9) section on transport: although

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# Ethical issues in conserving biodiversity

Jeffrey A. McNeely

*Ethics are part of the way humans adapt to their social and environmental settings. They help to ensure that human behaviour is guided in directions that are socially appropriate, seeking a balance between private and public interest that enables societies to function in their particular ecological, social, political, and historical settings. Because such settings vary, so do ethical systems; while certain ethical principles may be universal, their expression will differ from place to place and from subject to subject. This paper is an initial effort to explore ethical principles involved in biodiversity. A key issue will be building an explicit understanding of the values that are promoted through different types of conservation programmes, production systems and institutional arrangements.*

It may well be that different sets of ethics are required at different scales, with global ethics for dealing with transnational biotechnology corporations, other sorts of ethics for guiding relationships between governments, and yet other sets of ethics for dealing with relationships between the private sector, local communities, and protected areas. Even individual scientists, conservationists or farmers may have

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the 'population' of cars grows at the present rate four times faster than the population of humans, Agenda 21's authors were incapable of suggesting any strategies for avoiding and reducing traffic, or, of course, any option for low-speed transport systems. There are many reasons for this failure but, on a deeper level, it shows that the development syndrome has dangerously narrowed the social imagination in the North as well as in the South. As the North continues to set its sight on an infinite economic future, and the South cannot free itself from its compulsive mimicry of the North, the capacity for self-mobilized and indigenous change has been undermined worldwide.

Politics that choose intermediate levels of material demand remain outside the official consensus; the search for indigenous models of prosperity, which de-emphasize the drive for overdevelopment, has become an apostasy. Clearly, such a perspective would in the first place be at the expense of the wealthy, but without a politics of sufficiency there can be neither justice nor peace with nature.

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somewhat different ethics at different levels, including individual, professional, and institutional. Thus ethical values need to be clearly defined at each level as a way of identifying contradictions or compatibilities as well as to enable the researcher, conservationist, or private sector firm to build trust with local communities. Farmers, foresters, fishers, and their communities are likely to hold ethical values that might be somewhat different from those of scientists, conservationists, or corporations; and different communities might have different ethical values based on their specific ecological setting, history, or other factors. Thus any code of ethics proposed by CEESP must be sufficiently flexible that rural communities be reassured that their cultural values will be recognized and respected, while also providing guidance to governments, researchers, the private sector, and the conservation community.

## THE CBD: A STATEMENT OF ETHICS

Perhaps in recognition of the importance of taking stronger ethical positions, the international community has incorporated explicitly ethical statements into its latest conservation conventions. One outstanding example is the Convention on Biological Diversity, which entered into force in December 1993 and has now been ratified by over 175 governments. Its three objectives — conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of biological resources, and equitable distribution of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources — are accompanied by a number of ethical statements in relation to conservation of biodiversity. In its preamble, the Convention recognizes "the intrinsic value of biological diversity and of the ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational, and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its components". The Convention affirms that the conservation of biological diversity is a common concern of humanity, but that states have sovereign rights over their own biological resources. The CBD also explicitly recognizes that conserving and sustainably using biological diversity needs to provide benefits to both present and future generations. It thus builds into its considerations a temporal dimension as well as an ethical one.

These statements also carry some ethical baggage. Many indigenous peoples,

for example, feel that they have sovereign rights over the biological resources found in their own territory, and that state governments should not claim sovereignty over that which more properly belongs to the indigenous peoples. Further, by emphasizing issues such as sovereignty, access, prior informed consent, and mutually agreed terms, the CBD could promote economic or commercial values of genetic resources at the cost of the common interests of humanity at large, leading to restrictions on agricultural research rather than the free flow of the genetic material on which scientists, plant breeders, farmers and the seed industry have all depended for many years.

The Convention recognizes the close link between biotechnology and biodiversity, not least because biotechnology needs to build on the genes and species that are found in both natural ecosystems and agricultural ecosystems. Ethical issues arise because biotechnology could both enhance biodiversity and reduce it, the former through generating new genotypes and the latter through promoting a few "super-varieties" that are widely promoted and replace more genetically-diverse local varieties. It is also possible that new biotechnology could enable agriculture to expand into the agriculturally-marginal habitats that are now so important for conserving "wild" species and their genetic variety. And because biotechnology is highly privileged, its processes are available only to a scientific elite; this could lead to polarization between haves and have nots, with significant social, economic, and ethical implications.

Agricultural researchers and biotechnology firms are faced with other ethical difficulties, even conflicts, because their research results are very likely to provide unpredictable and differential benefits to various groups at various scales. Understanding the competing interests and values of such groups requires an understanding of social processes as well as an understanding of how biodiversity provides different benefits to different interests. For efforts to conserve biodiversity to be of greatest social benefit, they need to be decentralized and well adapted to specific local conditions, ensure operational transparency, build on a variety of accepted basic concepts, and ensure a broad political base.

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The CBD is not the only “ethical” convention addressing biodiversity. For example, the World Heritage Convention symbolizes the spiritual values that this generation gives to outstanding natural properties that it would like to see passed on to future generations. It assigns a quasi-sacred character to those sites deemed essential to the world’s memory, at a time when many things appear to be in danger of being swept away by accelerated demographic, economic, social, cultural, and environmental change. World Heritage Sites “of outstanding universal value” might be seen as the spearhead of an international conservation ethic, though some might charge that these sites are more like living museums than living landscapes.

## THE ETERNAL PROBLEM OF DEFINITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

Part of the problem facing modern conservation has to do with basic definitions. Conservationists often think that they are conserving “pristine wilderness” or “virgin nature” with a particular focus on “native species”. The concept of “wilderness” is very popular in the western world, emerging from western history and experience in temperate zones. This almost mystical belief in an untouched and untouchable wilderness has permeated global policies and politics in resource management from the tropics to the deserts, causing serious social problems because the reality is that some people actually live in “wilderness” and consider it their home. When their wilderness home is sold as a timber concession or made into a national park, they quite naturally are resentful about whose interests are being served. And “naturalness” is a relative term that is changing over time and will continue to change. It is not a definition but rather a descriptive continuum of human intrusions that range from the most idealized pristine end to the most humanly degraded end of the ecological scale. Ultimately “naturalness” is based on the perceptual acceptability of observable human disturbances to the environment. Similarly, “nativeness” is not a definition but rather a descriptive continuum in time that ranges from the most ancient, continuous, habitation in an area to the most recent immigration into an area.

Modern production systems employ advanced technologies, from chemical fertilizers to hydroelectric dams, that are external to the local environment. Those technologies have the potential to impose irreversible transformations on the environment that cannot be predicted by traditional knowledge (i.e. cumulative knowledge specific to the local environment). The conservation movement recognizes that people have the ability to destroy the environment on a much

greater scale than ever before in human history. When we speak of protecting undisturbed habitat or wilderness, then, it is important to clarify that the word “undisturbed” refers to the absence of disturbance by modern technologies.

We often are also limited by our view of why biodiversity is being lost. Many conservationists see biodiversity loss as a problem arising from the relationship between people and the environment, when it more accurately should be seen as the outcome of the relationships among people that determine how biological resources are to be utilized. Thus biology is not the answer to the problem but only the background to it.

Many conservationists assume that their objectives may be achieved through a vigorous combination of education, better research, state regulation, and improved

IN MODERN CONSUMER SOCIETIES, RIGHTS TEND TO EMPHASIZE THE DEMANDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND DISALLOW THE CLAIMS OF THE COMMUNITY, SO THAT TODAY ALWAYS PRE-EMPTS TOMORROW.

technical remedies, when the real problem often is the politically incendiary issue of gross inequity in access to resources. We must recognize that any measure that we recommend for conservation will inevitably advance the interests of some while prejudicing others, and we too frequently ignore the need to identify “winners” and “losers”. Even the elusive “win-win” solutions are misleading, because inevitably “losers” lurk in the background and are well prepared to make their losses good. The important questions are who owns the land, who controls decision making, who should manage the commons, and in whose interest.

Perhaps we could experience more success if we took a slightly more cynical perspective. Perhaps the hope that potential benefits for society at large will substantially change individual behaviour is a forlorn dream. A more realistic perspective is that short-term individual gains must outweigh short-term individual costs if we expect to achieve results beneficial to the group — for example, long-term reduction in over-consumption of resources.

We also need to be aware that the CBD has made concern about biodiversity an instrument of government power, forcing those concerned to focus on technical aspects of the problems of conserving biodiversity. The removal of the social dimension of the biodiversity crisis has tended to impoverish the political debate of the key issues, instead leading to sterile

debates over how to get northern governments to transfer more funds to the south.

## SOME MAJOR ETHICAL ISSUES

As indicated above, biodiversity is a fertile field for ethical issues. An indicative list of such issues follows, with a short discussion of some of the elements of debate.

### Animal Rights

An ethical dimension that has become more prominent in recent years is the conflict between animal rights and conservation. For example, experimentation on animals that has led to saving hundreds of thousands of human lives is considered unethical by some, as is the sustainable harvest of furs by native Americans in ways that are essential to conserving their traditional culture. And why is it ethically more acceptable to eat meat from domesticated animals that have been kept captive, have never seen the sky and end their days in slaughterhouses, rather than to eat the meat of wild whales which have lived their lives in freedom and have been killed in a few minutes? In short, the moralistic language of animal lovers, who want to save every wild life, is as greedy as the stockman who wants to eliminate every living wild thing which competes with his stock. The public interest here lies in a balancing of competing goods, seeking moderation and resisting the call of greed no matter from which direction it comes. Very strict regulations have been adopted to ensure that laboratory animals are treated humanely, and are not exposed to unnecessary experimentation; and that animals for human consumption are killed as painlessly as possible. This certainly is laudable, but it seems strange that we have not yet developed measures that are nearly as effective in regulating human behaviour that leads to the extinction of plant and animal species, or even to the loss of biodiversity. How can ethics help promote a productive dialogue between conservation and animal rights?

### Proprietary biotechnology

Over the past several hundred years, science has been mostly in the public domain, with results published in the peer-reviewed scientific literature. Modern biotechnology has changed all of that, and converted scientific knowledge into a commodity to be bought and sold. Life itself is now being patented, and the private sector is earning royalties on knowledge freely shared by indigenous people. Patents and other forms of intellectual property rights are raising important new ethical issues about who owns what, and for whose benefit. How can the remarkable potential of biotechnology be channelled in ethical directions that provide equitable benefits to society?



## Ethical issues in conserving biodiversity

### Economics

Part of the CEESP mandate is to address economics, which has become an especially powerful force in modern discourse. In arguing for biodiversity, we often are left trying to balance the “good” of ethics with the “goods” of economics. It is difficult to assign economic values to species preservation because of the factors of irreversibility accompanying species extinction, difficulties in measuring the preferences of future generations, the problem of comparing present benefits and future costs, and the distinction between commodity value and moral value. It is often necessary to contrast what is economically beneficial to individuals against what is beneficial to society as a whole; and of course, the latter judgement is ultimately a political one. How can ethics be made a more productive part of economics?

### The Ethics of Science

The “precautionary principle” argues that we should avoid irreversible decisions until all of the information is in; but how can we wait for all knowledge to emerge before acting? And science is an infinite source of ignorance because we will never have “all the data”. And even if we could one day have all of the data, we would still have different ways of interpreting that data; indeed, controversy and conflict help to drive scientific progress. Thus we need to avoid using the uncertainty inherent in the scientific enterprise as a valid alibi for inactivity of politicians in matters relating to biodiversity. How can CEESP help to insert ethics into conservation science, and into politics?

### Urbanization

People living in cities, which now total well over half the population in most of the world, have only a very distant relationship to biodiversity, and what they appreciate is not their inter-connection with biodiversity but rather its instrumental value. Urban people often give a sentimental or aesthetic value to “nature” as something beautiful or magnificent or peaceful, or as a reminder of what they are not. But because of their political power, urban people often have a very strong voice in determining the biodiversity policies that affect rural people. What ethical principles are available to mediate urban vs. rural perceptions of biodiversity, and the implications of those perceptions on public policy?

### CONCLUSIONS

The critical ethical issue remains the same one that has challenged societies for thousands of years, namely the balance between the rights of the individual and the rights of the group. In modern consumer societies, rights tend to emphasize the demands of the individual and disallow the claims of the community, so that today always pre-empt tomorrow and the short term view overwhelms the long-term future. This is not a recipe for conserving biodiversity for the benefit of all humanity.

Ultimately, issues of the conservation of biodiversity boil down to a problem of human rights. As long as we consider biodiversity to be an issue that is privileged to the scientific elite, we will miss the critical importance of involving philosophers, authors, jurists, indigenous peoples, and the general public in the process of assessing whether people have the right to drive thousands of species into extinction in the name of human expediency.

We must now progress beyond biodiversity as primarily an issue of science, because the introduction of new biotechnologies, new approaches to property rights, and rising human demands for material goods are posing critically important philosophical and ethical questions that have not yet been addressed. As we enter the 21st century, we are facing new challenges that require input from philosophy, religion, ethics, and jurisprudence, history, and culture. I challenge CEESP to bring these additional perspectives into the biodiversity debate.

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# Ecospace and Self-Determination

SABINA ALKIRE

**People like to be loved. I could qualify that statement with lots of cultural detail, but I think you know what I mean. People like to be adored, thought well of, genuinely loved for their own sake by other people, both little and big, near and far, friend and stranger. Why start an article on biodiversity ethics in an alley of human psychology?**

Because discussions of applied ethics tend to skip over the full-blooded concept of human person that implicitly undergirds their statements. Hence in this collection of articles I decided to balance out my friends’ discussions of ecospace ethics, and politics on continental dimensions, with a reflection on the human process of communication and judgement and motivation that will be required to implement their ethics and preserve our ecospace. In the next few pages, then, I am going to observe gimmicks that are used to “draw people in” to the conversations on ecospace and ethics – guilt, fear, urgency, responsibility, job opportunity, expertise. I will argue that while these “gimmicks” are part and parcel of most live ethical discussions, the relationship between these necessary emotions and commitments, and the rational process of argument, law, and formal conventions, is not well specified. On an issue of such fundamental importance as consumption and ecospace, the ethical discussion would do well to compass human beings and groups who will enact ethical recommendations or fail to do so.

Consider a panel charged with generating an ethical statement on Consumption and Ecospace for CEESP, and subsequently moving people to act in accordance with their statement. The panel included a Haitian Lawyer, a Nepalese economist, a Ugandan environmental scientist, and a Lebanese community development expert. There are two stages at which I would like to pause and make trouble for this group’s statement of purpose. The first is the unexposed assumption that it will “think on behalf of the world.” The second, is that implementation involves “moving people to act” by understanding, owning, and adhering to their recommendations.

An ethical statement is a statement about “what shall we do” – what we humans shall do – in this case in order to protect the ecospace. Why would this committee set down to draft such a statement? Depending on your school of thought you might say, “in order to preserve the earth” or “for the sake of future generations” or “on behalf of all people.” Let me use an inclusive formulation, and say that the committee intends to draft a statement “on behalf of the world.” Now it is quite normal in this era to suspect that this committee *needn’t* think on behalf of the world – they could think on behalf of their nation and their conversation could be a power struggle; they could act in their professional self-interest and write to curry favor or to maneuver their own profession into dominance; they could collude and create a statement that would generate an institution giving them power and tenure for life; they could be so busy and distracted that they threw sentences together with little thought or motivation, just to get it done and collect their paycheck and cv points.

My first point in gesturing to range of possible interests is actually to say something constructive: that if a working group is assumed to work “on behalf of the world” – in an ethical sense – this must be construed to be possible. This is, in my view, a step forward in a dialogue that has been beleaguered by suspicion and deconstruction.<sup>1</sup> Of course practically there are competing interests about and they will persist – so our working group does need what might be called “incentives to be wise” (those who actually do think and reflect widely, outside of their boxes, are to be the most loved). Presuming this group will write an “ethical

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statement" *without* trying to counterbalance the competing interests just mentioned, is a near certain way to end up with a statement that has little to do with ethics.<sup>2</sup> But, and this is the positive observation, the undertaking of ethical reflection on grounds of truth or reasons, not only power, is itself judged to be possible.<sup>3</sup>

The second point I would like to make and develop throughout the remainder of this essay is that in fact the working group participants are not sitting and reflecting on behalf of the "world" but rather on behalf of other people – free human agents. Now you will say, "of course – they, we, consider the well-being of the poor, and we are all concerned that the protection of the ecospace does not come at the cost of the livelihoods of the destitute, but rather at the cost of the paper wrappers of the rich."

That is very important, but I am not going to discuss this only because others have already brought this issue into the conversation. Again, I presume that consideration for the well-being of the poor is already included in ecospace ethics. So instead I refer to the *human agents* in various countries. How does each member of the working group picture their human 'audience'?

Alasdair MacIntyre began his famed *After Virtue* with the story of a cataclysm, and pointed out that unless ethics was systematic it had no cutting power; it was actually just a complicated and more than slightly arbitrary vehicle for justifying what people decide to do.<sup>4</sup> My point is different but related: unless applied ethicists also have a coherent picture (at least in the back of their mind) of their audience, their writing, however technically acute, has only a hit-or-miss chance of being useful to real human beings.

Why? A panel of experts, however, exalted, would not generate sensible guidelines for us humans if they wrote with turtles or bunyan trees in mind. And if we scrutinize any set of ethical recommendations we can trace out implicit assumptions about what kind of people the "listeners" and "enactors" are (and sometimes, alas, the sketch indeed resembles a turtle).<sup>5</sup> If the Ugandan scientist thinks that we humans are by and large sinful weak-willed, greedy little beings, then she is going to design very detailed prescriptions, and recommend, without misgivings, manipulative techniques of propaganda, guilt, and coercion. She will press for funds to attract job applicants, develop expertise, and disseminate urgent, even apocalyptic, messages that change people's behavior by hook or by crook or by gimmick. The outcome is that people will be bullied, or legislated, or manipulated into acting in an environmentally friendly way. Not only is this situation precarious politically, it could also be oppressive. If on the other hand the Lebanese community development specialist thinks we humans are noble, lofty, knowledgeable beings then he might set out a few general guidelines and informative analyses, and leave people to respond as they will. If perchance we are not as nice as he anticipated, then the outcome may be oppressive (much in the way that the current situation is oppressive). These are extremes of course, but these extremes are not unpopulated by contemporary ethicists.<sup>6</sup>

Now there are two big problems here. One is that the ecospace panel is unlikely to agree about exactly what their "conception of human action" is. Yet this is not an insurmountable problem, for there are sound ways of leaving room for internal plurality, so long as a few fundamentals are in place.<sup>7</sup> The other problem is that the panel may not be inclined to articulate their implicit conception of the human person. They may be more interested with bringing their technical expertise to bear than with countenancing issues beyond their expertise.

Let me not be dogmatic; I am more interested that the ethics panel *consider* this question and keep it in mind than that they write out their personal philosophies. And yet I raise this question with some dogged vigor. Why? Certainly there is the problem of philosophical coherence, but that is not why I bring this up. The

main reason is the far simpler issue of suitability – will the Ugandan scientist's missionary zeal conduce towards ecospace preservation<sup>8</sup> and ethics?

For example, one feature of human life that some of us have high regard for is self-determination. That is, we appreciate that human societies and cultures exist in diverse forms, of which there is no 'best' arrangement. Rather, there are diverse 'good' arrangements, and some particular practices can be deemed, all things considered, to be particularly oppressive or particularly good.<sup>9</sup> Different considerations pull us in different ways. Yet our decisions are important not only because they empower us, but also because our identity as individuals and societies is a byproduct of these decisions. Similarly the choice of institutional arrangements is important not only for its direct results on ecospace, but also because it has a network of other effects. If a child inside a tent sees her sister's shadow walking by and throws a ball at her, the direct effect will be whether or not the ball startles the sister; the network of effects includes whether the ball creates a billow, doesn't even budge the canvas, or topples the whole thing over and gets the child in trouble. Now how do you join the concept of "self-determination" to the tent example? I suggest that the child would be in a position to exert self-determination if she knew vaguely the range of possible

consequences of throwing the ball and the likelihood of each. She could then decide how important, on balance, it was to tease her sister in this way, and would or would not hurl the ball at the shadow.

Let us come back to the ecospace discussion. Wolfgang Sachs uses Hans Opschoor's concept of environmental

space to frame his ecological criteria, and I will inherit that definition without alteration. Environmental space is "the area that human beings can use in the natural environment without doing lasting harm to essential characteristics." How could the ethics panel spell out the appropriate relationship between "consumption" "ethics" and "ecospace" if it conceived of persons as valuing self-determination?

We have already rejected the Ugandan Scientist's approach, in which she develops a comprehensive detailed strategy to be politically enforced. And we have rejected the Lebanese who disbands the committee after reiterating the Brundtland Commissions' guidelines, on the grounds that local communities will figure out what they should do. I would propose that the policy approach of the multidisciplinary "expert" ethics panel towards a self-determinative society or societies might be as follows:

## 1. Introduce objective facts ("scientific") only in conjunction with their degree of dispute or authoritativeness within the scientific community.

Economists, who are not known to be the most participatory of folk, nonetheless declare the error margins of their data, and also acknowledge the competing hypotheses that their data could support. Such professional practice does "respect" the intellectual capability of the listener and should similarly be adopted. I, for example, am no environmentalist, and so could not tell whether a statistic that 20% of the population consume 80% of the world's resources was more likely to be generated by an eco-feminist or by Larry Summers or whether perchance they would in this case agree. Aware of this ignorance I am disinclined to believe the statistic until assured otherwise (as indeed I have been). It would be helpful to know more often 1) the rough degree of convergence or dispute on an analysis or figure (all the data are never in), and 2) if there were a bias, its likely direction.

## 2. Give a "menu" of policy options, not just one comprehensive framework.

Let's say that we live in Bhutan. The panel might present the different 'ecospace' considerations that could come into play – from pollution to soil erosion to solid waste. They might then design three to five feasible broad-stroke policy options, in which different variables are treated in different ways, and also different variables are treated or omitted. This suggests to the readers the

UNLESS APPLIED ETHICISTS ALSO HAVE A COHERENT PICTURE OF THEIR AUDIENCE, THEIR WRITING HAS ONLY A HIT-OR-MISS CHANCE OF BEING USEFUL TO REAL HUMAN BEINGS.

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latitude they have for adapting the policy options (conversely, if there is only one feasible and urgent policy for pollution control, it will appear in all three frameworks, with an explanation of why it is both uniquely possible, and absolutely necessary).

### 3. Raise questions of value: trace out foreseeable impacts the policies will have on wider institutions.

The really decisive issue to a community may not be the direct impacts on ecospace variables, but indirect impacts it has on their family life, or their religious customs, and so on. If you, as an expert, love and respect Eva, as a person, it will dawn on you that her interests and values extend to issues beyond ecospace. And, in deference to her values you will be at pains to find out on her behalf what implications different courses of actions may have for her life, and share them with her, so that she can make a decision as to whether or not she can undertake that choice with integrity – while remaining the Eva you know. This kind of research on foreseeable side effects may in fact not be within the competence of technical experts; however if they have a potent enough curiosity they could hire an appropriate researcher to undertake the analyses.

### 4. On fundamental or overarching issues, quibble about values.

If your great grandma hates Racial Group A, then you are unlikely to challenge her. You may observe that she is not known for changing her views. And you may recognize that it doesn't much matter, as she is not likely to meet a person from Racial Group A, much less to express or act on her views. However, if your great grandma hates Racial Group B and she is referred to an expert physician from that group, your stance may be a bit more proactive because it is actually quite important that she be seen by this doctor and take the advice seriously. Similarly, Sachs Loske and Linz et al, in their 1998 *Greening the North*, notice 'the elegance of simplicity' and the value of being 'rich in time rather than goods'. That is, they attend to the change in values that would be necessary in order to alter consumption in the way that they propose. And they offer to the reader not just guilt-inducing statistics why this is urgent, but also a "vision" as to the substantive values that they would be moving *towards*.

All four of these mechanisms together might generate applied ethical recommendations that not only are technically acute, but also embody a genuine "respect" for the person or community who is undertaking to preserve their ecospace. While gimmicks may inspire action through guilt or fear or the manipulation of self-esteem, this formula belies a disrespect for the "audience." It also likely overstates the certainty of the experts (there is always new data coming in) and understates the latitude communities actually could have to adapt recommendations to their wider values. In contrast, a true and genuine respect for the reader requires a different approach, such as that sketched swiftly here.

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*(The views expressed here represent those of the author and cannot be attributed to the World Bank.)*

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- 1 Foucault 1980, Escobar 1984-5, Crush 1995.
- 2 Chambers 1994, 1997
- 3 "When there are no reasonable grounds for disagreeing, agreeing, and resolving disagreement, the only bases for social cooperation are subrational motivations such as lust or terror, self-reference or inertia. If worldviews are incommensurable, we have no reason to accept a scheme of social decision making, a constitution, a Rule of Law. For each person, then, the challenge is simply to become and remain one of those who are in charge." Finnis 1997:217
- 4 Our contemporary morality, he said, is like a collection of fragments of paper which have been gathered up from the ruins of a cyclone-struck library. We have read them and memorized moral phrases, ideas, opinions. But we do not know the theory they come from, or understand them fully. So we have adopted the habit of simply picking and choosing the outcome that seems best to us, and explaining it by whichever school of reasoning will work. The problem is, *these disparate conclusions may have been generated by totally incompatible forms of moral reasoning*. MacIntyre's book became so enormously popular because it pinched: it provided a description of current applied ethical reflection which fit (and still fits), and then made one, exceedingly obvious criticism of it: if people use ethics to rationalise what *they* wish to do, then the entire field of ethics is bankrupt and there is no such thing as moral deliberation which is disquieting, challenging, inspiring, or critical and which can be taught to others. Basically, if ethics is not systematic, then it functions to rationalize what we want to do, not to guide us in reflecting on what it is right to do.
- 5 Give it a try, for example in different chapters of Crocker and Linden, Ed 1998.
- 6 For example, those who have very specific environmental decrees and argue for their authoritarian enforcement belong to the former (Victoria Höslé); those who propagate only very general statements may belong to the latter.
- 7 See for example, Cass Sunstein's "Incompletely Theorized arguments", and Finnis 1997.
- 8 If the readership of the ethics panel output on ecospace recognize that they are being manipulated, that the authors have a dim view of their intellectual and moral musculature, that the authors are insensitive to the other concerns and values that they may have, then they may or may not refuse to comply in practice. If they do not, then the direct goal of ecospace preservation will not be realized.
- 9 For example Finnis 1983 refers to the "architectonic" role of self-direction (he calls it practical reasonableness) in ordering the plural good-in-themselves ends people have (and incidentally this is why I value self-direction – not on consensus grounds alone; see Finnis 1998). The particular angle of interest here is the ethical role of the beneficent "expert" towards an autonomous person or group, whose values are wider than the variable at play and who is "competent" to understand information and make choices. The school of "informed consent" arose in medicine as an ethical response to this classic situation that takes into account both autonomy and expertise. See Beachamp and Childress 1994.



# Agriculture: Africa's double-edged sword

Yemi Katerere and Ryan Hill

## Summary

**Poverty has been and continues to be widespread in Africa, and has been identified as a major cause of environmental degradation and human insecurity. At the same time, the agriculture sector has vast potential to alleviate poverty through growth. Water is a key constraint limiting agricultural development, and the pressure for expanding irrigation is enormous. Unfortunately, expanding irrigation could itself have adverse effects on the environment and ultimately human security. Developing countries in Africa must recognize these potential adverse effects and take action to ensure that developments are sustainable and aimed at improving human security. Unfortunately, the nature of globalisation and multi-lateral trade agreements present constraints that will undoubtedly limit the ability of nations to control the type and magnitude of effects from agricultural expansion. These constraints must be understood and addressed.**

## Poverty in Africa

The poverty picture for Africa is complex, predominantly rural and according to Maxwell (1998), rising in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite development efforts, real incomes declined in the 1980s for almost two-thirds of countries in sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 1988). However, poverty is not just measured by income. The poor include those most vulnerable and least able to cope with changes to the environment whether it is due to human activities or natural occurrences. The poor are vulnerable to natural disasters, droughts, wars, and disease. The poor can be landless people, female headed households, youths/orphans, immigrants, unskilled and semi-skilled farmers, and elderly people, many of whom have not historically benefited from international aid efforts (World Bank, 1988). For much of Africa the poverty situation is exacerbated by the AIDS pandemic.

Poverty is seen as a major cause (and consequence) of environmental degradation. It has been correctly pointed out that the priority for many rural Africans is on survival and not environmental conservation (Munro, 1999). When faced with a choice between cutting trees for firewood or not eating, concern for the environment comes second. If these people escape poverty, they will have the luxury and power to choose to protect and conserve the environment.

## The potential of agriculture in the fight against poverty

Agriculture is a key sector in Africa's fight against poverty. Agriculture can potentially contribute to poverty reduction through increasing indigenous food security, providing employment for unskilled and semi-skilled workers, generating inputs for the manufacturing sector and earning foreign exchange. While it is generally true that agriculture is important to Africa, some countries are more dependent on it than others. For example, while the average contribution of agriculture to GDP is about 40 percent, in Botswana, Lesotho and Congo it contributes less than 10 percent. So clearly, Africa is not a homogeneous continent.

Africa's agricultural potential is vast. It has 23 percent of the world's land but less than 25 percent of the arable land is actually cultivated, and only 2-5 percent (3 to 5 million ha) of that land is irrigated (Veit, et al., 1995). In southern Africa for instance, only 40 million hectares or 6 percent of the available land is arable. Like the rest of the continent, less than 25 percent of the potential arable land is currently under cultivation. (Moyo, 1999). Hence the potential to expand agricultural land is a real option. It seems logical that increased investment in this sector could potentially change the fortunes of Africa.

## Water constraints on agriculture

The key to successful agriculture is water. Globally, agricultural water use contributes to 69 percent of the total human water use. In Asia and Africa this figure could be as high as 86 and 88 percent respectively (Hoekstra, 1995). While Africa has an immense agricultural potential, the reality is that most of its agriculture is sustained by direct rainfall that, for the most part, is variable. Unfortunately, at least one third of the continent has a mean annual rainfall below 700 mm, an amount considered too low to support reliable rainfed agriculture (Khroda, 1996). If combined with frequent droughts and uneven distribution, the erratic nature of Africa's rainfall undermines the ability of the continent to produce adequate food.

At a continental level, Africa can be said to have abundant water. It has nine major rivers basins namely the Nile, Congo, Zambezi, Okavango, Orange, Volta, Niger, Lake Chad and Senegal. According to Khroda (1996) Africa has about 2.4 percent of the world's artificial large reservoirs. While most of them were designed for hydropower generation they are also used for other purposes such as irrigation. In addition, there is a huge number of small dams used for irrigation, but many of them are silting up due to poor land use practices and planning. Unfortunately not all of Africa's water is in areas where there is demand for agriculture, and water is particularly limiting in the arid and semi-arid zones. The cost of delivery to areas of use can be high. Surface water from lakes and such perennial rivers as the Congo, Niger, Senegal, Limpopo and Zambezi is not used for crop irrigation as much as it could. Additionally, the fact that many of the major river basins are shared requires transboundary protocols to monitor and manage them to the benefit of regional environments and economies. This can act as a further limiting factor to the use of this water for agriculture.

## Importance of irrigation

When rainwater is supplemented with irrigation from surface and underground water from rivers, natural and artificial lakes, catchments and subterranean aquifers, the potential for increased production in the lower rainfall areas can be enhanced. Presently it is estimated that 36 percent of the world's harvest comes from the 16 percent of the world's cropland that is irrigated (Hoekstra, 1995). It has also been estimated that Africa can potentially expand the area under irrigation from the current 3-5 million hectares to about 17 million hectares.

To achieve greater agricultural output and food security through irrigation requires that either the efficiency with which existing water is used be greatly enhanced, or that land under irrigation is expanded quantitatively and qualitatively. The threat to increased agricultural production caused by the nature of Africa's rainfall is likely to contribute to a growing emphasis on irrigation. Khroda (1996) reports a growing interest in irrigation in Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya and Somalia. There are plans to either improve efficiency or expand existing irrigation schemes in some countries such as Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania and Senegal.

The potential of irrigation to increase agricultural production cannot be overstated. In the last 40 years or more many countries in Asia and Latin America have been undergoing a revolution with dramatic yield increases. The green revolution is reported to be responsible for a fivefold increase in the global irrigated area since the turn of the last century. In Africa on the other hand, yield increases of staple crops have been very modest, resulting in the observed difference in overall economic growth between Asia and Africa (Rukuni, 1999). For Africa, production increases in agriculture have been largely through an expansion of area under rainfed conditions rather than through improvements in yield per unit of land. If African agriculture is to contribute more meaningfully to overall economic development, African countries must endeavour to achieve greater productivity in terms of increases in yield per unit of input be it land, water or labour.

# Agriculture: Africa's double-edged sword

## Pressure from globalization to expand irrigation

It is important to understand why irrigation is important within the context of globalization. The globalisation process is placing greater emphasis on market-based and trade-driven mechanisms to drive economic development. The development of a dynamic agricultural system is increasingly important for national competitiveness and economic growth (Bathrick, 1998), especially for many African countries whose economies are closely linked to the agricultural sector. Agriculture becomes an essential element for broad-based economic development while enhancing the environment and human wellbeing. As part of broader economic reforms and structural adjustment programmes, there is a shift from the traditional role of agriculture of contributing to national food self sufficiency and subsistence, to one that links very closely with other key economic sectors. Agriculture becomes a key component within a food and agro-industrial system. A dynamic agricultural sector will seek to expand in a manner that is cost-effective and risk sensitive. It will link to other sectors, create economic growth by generating employment, and reduce poverty and food insecurity.

The need to earn foreign exchange has been one primary reason for a growing interest in irrigated cash crops such as tobacco, wheat, sugar and cotton. More recently there is a growth in the horticultural sector producing fresh flowers and vegetables for the export market. For these reasons there has been an accelerated planning of and investment in irrigation schemes in some parts of Africa. For governments and the private sector, irrigation is a clear target for restructuring and modernising the agriculture sector. In some instances the government will transfer irrigation management to water user associations or water catchment boards. In other instances there will be an expansion of the area under irrigation using both private and public funds.

## Potential effects of expanding irrigation

Clearly irrigation is likely to expand in Africa in response to globalization and food supply needs. However, irrigation is a double-edged sword. While it is undoubtedly a key to economic growth and mitigation of poverty caused by drought and other factors, development of new or expansion of existing irrigation schemes could, if mismanaged, ultimately undermine both human and environmental wellbeing in the form of disease, further land degradation through salinisation and pollution, and water shortages for essential ecosystem functions and other users. The high water consumption by the agricultural sector combined with water scarcity has created a contradiction between irrigation as a solution in agriculture and irrigation as a cause of water shortages and environmental problems. For any irrigation system to contribute to national development objectives, it must manage land and water resources in an integrated manner including the interface of the system with human wellbeing. The long-term sustainability of irrigation systems must provide human, economic, food and environmental security. This means preventing or minimizing adverse physical effects and threats to human security.

The point to be made is that there are compelling arguments and pressures for expansion of the agricultural sector, particularly irrigation, but that we need to understand its full implications. The shifts that are likely to occur with respect to irrigation need to take into account the increasingly complex environmental issues affecting natural resource management and human security. There are also equity considerations associated with an expansion or re-organisation of irrigation schemes. The competition for water between agriculture and other uses including maintenance of ecological systems will always be an issue. There are questions around water rights such as the validity period for each right, and whether water rights can be traded between rights holders or not. Allocation of plots within the scheme, the incentive systems for different users to adopt certain technologies or management approaches, the overall knowledge base and availability of investment funds are key policy and social issues to be addressed.

Environmental consequences of irrigation systems have

become increasingly critical to decisions about future investment in agriculture. Over the past 20 years or so, there has been a growing interest and focus on environment and natural resource issues fuelled in part by the global trends in information and technology, and also a growing culture of stewardship of the environment. Since agricultural production systems are linked to and directly dependent on the natural resource base, they have not escaped this focus on the environment. Agriculture is a user and at times an abuser of natural resources such as land and water which are critical inputs into crop production (Alex and Steinacker, 1998). Despite the contribution to food security of some major irrigation development projects, there is a growing criticism of such projects because of their perceived adverse social and environmental impacts.

The environmental and social impacts of irrigation are manifestable within and beyond the irrigation system itself. The impacts of irrigation that affect agricultural productivity are quantity and quality of irrigation water, soil productivity, and labour productivity. Those that affect resources not directly used in agricultural production include changes in the quantity and quality of runoff or underground water not used for irrigation, loss of species habitats and biodiversity, and changes in air quality. At times, certain impacts will affect both irrigation productivity and the environment. Understanding where the impacts of the irrigation system are being felt is critical to developing and implementing appropriate policies and mitigation measures. The distinction between environmental impacts on the irrigation system on the one hand and impacts beyond the irrigation system on the other hand, is useful when allocating benefits and costs and also in monitoring.

Short-term environmental and social impacts of irrigation include loss in crop production from season to season, crop losses due to pests and diseases, and certain human diseases. Longer-term impacts are those resulting from adverse physical changes such as salinity, erosion, silting, loss of habitats, and loss of species. Understanding whether an impact is short or long-term in nature will assist in designing mitigation strategies.

The collapse or possible irreversibility of some forms of resource degradation will reduce both social (aesthetic and physical) and economic values of the natural resources. For instance, an unsustainable irrigation system may deteriorate to a point that productivity declines are irreversible and the system can no longer provide economic, food, social, and environmental security to the primary producers. When irrigation water has to be pumped further and further and when there is growing competition with other users over the same resource, then environmental considerations become as critical as economic and social ones. In addition, land can be lost to salinisation or water quality reduced as a result of poor resource management practices.

## Constraints of globalization on sustainable agriculture and food security

Clearly there are potential adverse effects of agricultural expansion on the environment and long-term human security. Unfortunately, although it is hoped that economic growth will offset some of these problems by reducing poverty, the nature of globalization presents some constraints to achieving this goal. There is evidence that global trade agreements such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) will erode the power of nations to implement policies at a national level for the benefit of the environment or human security. Specifically, the WTO does not generally allow products to be discriminated against based on the process used during production. Consequently, financial and other policy incentives to promote the use of particular technologies (e.g., those that benefit the environment) may be considered illegal. For example, the US attempted to ban imports of shrimp from countries that used catch methods that also caught endangered sea turtles (consistent with the US Endangered Species Act), but this ban was overturned by the WTO (Munro, 1999). In light of such decisions, it is likely to be increasingly difficult for

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African nations to encourage particular agricultural practices (e.g., avoidance of particular fertilizers or pesticides, crop rotation to encourage nutrient replenishment, avoidance of monocultures) through policies or financial incentives. The WTO Secretariat (1999) and numerous environment and development organizations (USEO, 1999; Sampson, 1999) have recognized the potential problem of the WTO undermining environmental regulations, and have suggested that multi-lateral environmental agreements should be the forum for international environmental regulations. Whether such agreements will be effective remains to be seen.

The impact of the decreasing power of individual nations is most alarming in relation to the agriculture sector and food supply. In 1985, the world produced more food per person than ever before in human history (nearly 500 kg / person of cereals and root crops), yet more than 730 million people did not eat enough to lead fully productive working lives (Daly, 1987). Daly (1987) pointed out that this is due to a lack of policies that "ensure food is produced where it is needed and in a manner that sustains the livelihoods of the rural poor." Clearly, multi-lateral trade agreements that take power away from nations could hinder the implementation of such policies. Although food available per capita has decreased in the 1990s on a global scale (Worldwatch Institute, 1997), there is still abundant supplies that could meet global needs with improved distribution.

Worldwide, food distribution is controlled more and more by corporations and less by governments. For example two companies controlled 50 percent of U.S. grain exports in 1994, and have shown their ability to retaliate to competition and exercise monopolistic control of the market (Lehman and Krebs, 1996). These powerful companies have a responsibility to their shareholders, not to promoting food security in particular countries or regions. If the trend continues, it is likely that the agriculture sector in Africa will also eventually be largely controlled by multinational corporations, perhaps not directly through land ownership but through control of various distribution, marketing, financial and other support systems.

The WTO in particular has given corporations increasing legal protection from national and subnational governments, and therefore increasing power (Nader and Wallach, 1996). The WTO could create a power system where developing countries are especially vulnerable to exploitation by the global market. Major corporations have significant influence on trends in world trade, and could potentially promote agreements that benefit the wealthy at the expense of the poor. Developing countries including those from Africa recently expressed dissatisfaction at their degree of influence during the 1999 round of WTO negotiations in Seattle. Agriculture is currently a major area of discussion for the WTO, so now is a crucial time for African nations to understand the potential influence of the WTO on that sector.

## Conclusion

In light of the above, there are many challenges to African nations to manage growth in the agriculture sector in a sustainable manner. Integrating social, economic and environmental issues into any production system is a major challenge and can prove to be very difficult. While current and future investments in irrigation systems are key to the future economic development of many developing countries, they will undoubtedly bring appreciable social and environmental problems with them that cannot be ignored. Irrigation, like any other agricultural activity will always have an impact on the natural resource base and the environment because of the complex relationship between the biophysical and human elements of the production system. It is important to understand these relationships and their inter-relatedness so that the right decisions can be made and priorities set in a manner that does not undermine the environment while at the same time responding to human needs. Equally important, an understanding of how globalization could affect the ability to follow through on such decisions is critical.

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# Ecospace for Sustainable Development:

## *Confines of history versus boundaries of nature*

Maritta R. von Bieberstein Koch-Weser

### **Ecospaces**

Take a pencil and place a political map of the world on your table. Your task will be to circle "ecospaces", nature's major neighbourhoods on earth. Think of ecospace as important, inseparably interconnected ecological systems, which must be managed in an integrated way, if we hope to achieve "sustainable development".

You would for instance place a generous circle around each of the world's regional seas, including a slice of the adjoining coastal zones, with their cities, factories, tourist resorts or agriculture — the Mediterranean, the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, the Caspian, the Aral sea, and many more. You would repeat this kind of exercise around the world's great lakes, and most importantly you would apply it to the grand riverbasin systems, from the mountains to the sea — the Amazon, the Ganges, the Nile or the Mekong, to name a few. Stand back and look at your sample of "ecospaces". Behold the number of national borders criss-crossing each one of them. Note also that — from a national, administrative vantage point — several such eco-spaces intersect in one country. For instance, the Maghreb countries share a "front yard" ecospace, the Mediterranean, and a "backyard"— the Sahara Desert.

You knew this before. We are all aware of the challenges of transboundary environmental management. The point is that your knowledge is not enough. We need to make a difference and see stepped-up, patient attention to achieving more holistic regional ecosystem management.

We must assure that there will be fish in the rivers and oceans and uncontaminated and sufficient waters for the generations that follow us. Above all, IUCN's new Programme stresses that we must concentrate on addressing the extinction crisis. In spite of much good legislation and the tireless work of so many committed people and institutions around the globe, Earth is still being depleted in the most permanent, devastating ways. Biological species vanish and the climate is changing. The ecospace map you have just drawn up provides one of the political-institutional explanations for the limited success on the ground our environmental activism has had to date. Where there is poor transboundary environmental co-operation, it remains difficult to achieve and sustain satisfactory, ultimate environmental results.

### **The Space of Nations**

We think and act in national units, and our mechanisms for ecospace management remain weak. Nations have been delimited in accordance with historical patterns of occupation, their boundaries have been set more by wars, tribal, cultural or religious divides, and around smaller environmental units than those in which we need to think today.

Historically, nature of course played an important role — that of a local subsistence base. Thinking in large ecospace was not urgent. With fewer people, less industry, less consumption, less emissions and less technology — the pressure humans put on large ecosystems like regional seas or major river basins may not have been life threatening, nor bothering to downstream neighbours. There may have been no compelling reason to organise in environmental neighbourhoods.

Thinking local or national was good then, but is not good enough now. Today, the much talked-about globalisation may in fact be less of a threat to sustainable development, than the lack of coherent regional thinking for the environment. Laws are national. Development projects are national, elections are national. Regional accords, or funding for regional environmental initiatives are hard to come by. All who tried to put an ecospace based environmental action plan together, can tell the story.

Poorly managed ecospace are at the core of many of the failure to reach ultimate sustainable management or conservation results. Here the political economy matters most pragmatically for the survival of life on earth.

### **The role of IUCN**

In today's international system, we need to address the in-congruence of political and natural spaces. We need institutions and actors that can promote integrated ecospace management.

This is a task to which IUCN can make a significant contribution. United by its mission, IUCN-The World Conservation Union can provide a forum for co-operation, wherever its membership, its Regional Committees, so wish.

In its new Programme IUCN has set out ecosystem management and ecosystem integrity as overarching objectives, in conjunction with the need to reverse trends of biodiversity loss. This includes local, national and regional programs — based on nature's own map.

As in the past, we hope to bring together our membership — States, Government Agencies, and Civil Society organisations — and our Commissions to work on all sides of national borders.

Because IUCN is well placed to support transboundary environmental co-operation, we have chosen "ECOSPACE"

as the background theme for our interactive sessions during the upcoming World Conservation Congress in Amman. CEESP, as the expert group concerned with our social and economic policies, is singularly well placed to take a lead role in the development of approaches and of our new IUCN program.

In terms of ecospace, all other Commissions also have key contributions to make - from Ecosystem Management to Species Survival, Protected Areas, Environmental Law to Education and Communication. This is where IUCN can add value in the larger context of an international system, whose sustainable development strategies at times seem caught up in a traditional country based approach, which fails to pay some of today's environmental bills.

In Amman we hope to look at promising examples of ecospace management, and to learn from them. Attempts in upgrading ecospace management are underway in many parts of the world. While none of them is a resounding success, they nevertheless have advanced the agenda, and they may provide lessons for the future - the Mekong or Danube initiatives, the Rhine valley, the Meso-american Environmental Corridor, the challenges of action plans for the Mediterranean, the Black Sea or the Baltic. We hope that participants will bring their experiences and chart the future course.

In Amman, our hosts, and especially our patron H.M. Queen Noor, have ably spoken up for better water management and regional water sharing. They have pointed not only to the Middle East, but to the many places where peace on earth will be threatened, unless scarce shared resources are managed sustainably and equitably among regional neighbours — much in line with IUCN's quest for "A just world, that values and conserves nature". The World Conservation Union's combination of people power, political clout and scientific knowledge is a powerful one. Meetings like the Amman Congress enable IUCN to set the conservation and sustainable development agenda for the coming years — and to become a driving force in putting them into action.

Let us come out of Amman with a strong long-term program. IUCN needs to make a difference on the ground, it needs to help its members to achieve more together, in Union, than they could otherwise hope to do.

True to our mission, let us continue to influence, encourage and assist societies to do their share for sustainable development.

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# On Ecospace

Tariq Banuri

**E**cospace — in the words of Wolfgang Sachs, "the area that human beings can use in the natural environment without doing lasting harm to essential characteristics" — is a succinct representation of the idea that the biosphere is a finite and shared resource, and that it needs to be both husbanded and used fairly. This idea, the finiteness of resources, is obviously an attractive one and, not surprisingly, lies behind much of the theorizing on conservation. It was popularized as early as 1972 by the publication of the Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth*. It is at the heart of various attempts to measure the aggregate impact of human activity on natural resources (that is, "ecological footprints", rucksacks, or throughputs) as well as the variety of prescriptions for reducing such impact (that is, de-materialization, Factor 10, de-linking).

Yet, it needs to be stressed that by itself the notion of finiteness does not have any moral, ethical, or political content. It can produce diametrically opposite ethical and political consequences. On the one hand, today it bolsters the agenda of restraint, nonviolence, and peace. On the other hand, not too long ago fascist political parties invoked a strikingly similar concept — the supposed need of every society to a "living space" (*liebensraum*) — to justify colonization, conquest, and even genocide, and some deep ecologists are still accused of racist and xenophobic sympathies.

Leaving aside such extreme examples, even mainstream uses of the concept are politically and ethically unpredictable. Although for some it implies the placing of restraints on the rich and powerful,

JUSTICE IS PRIMARY;  
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COMMITMENT.

to others it justifies constraining the lives of the poor and the vulnerable — who are already constrained in every conceivable dimension, and who pose a threat, if any, not to the environment but only to themselves. The latter type of analysis tends to view the rich as more environmentally responsible than the poor. It focuses, for example, on the demographic and economic growth of the poor, not on the lifestyles of the rich, nor on the latter's ability to export both their problems and the blame for the problems. It focuses on the greater institutional and technical capacity of the rich for restraint, for living within their limits — not on their historical inability to use this capacity. Paradoxically, therefore, it seeks to strengthen the capacity of the rich, and advocates restraints on the poor.

The fundamental difference between the concepts of "ecospace" and "living space" lies not in terms of the awareness of the finiteness of resources, but rather in their respective commitment to social justice or political domination. This is why I prefer the broader agenda of sustainable development to the narrower one of the conservation of nature. Recall that although disagreement persists over the

precise definition of sustainable development there is nevertheless a convergence on three foundational aspirations. First, that human beings should be able to enjoy a decent quality of life; second, that humanity should become capable of respecting the finiteness of the biosphere; and, third and most importantly, that neither the aspiration for the good life nor the recognition of global biophysical limits should preclude the search for greater justice in the world. The concerns for human welfare, ecological integrity, and social justice are together constitutive of the idea of sustainable development.

These are not idle philosophical observations. They lie at the heart of the debate over the future of IUCN. Some of the Union's protagonists, primarily but not exclusively from the North, wish to see it as a scientific body, morally and ethically neutral, and committed only to the conservation of nature — all other commitments being derivative of this one. For these groups, ecospace would be a neat idea for organizing and guiding their actions. Others, however (largely, but not exclusively from the South) have long argued that the primary issue is a moral and ethical commitment to social justice. Justice is primary; and everything else, including the awareness of the finiteness of resources or the limits to growth, is derived from this primary commitment.

The ultimate question, whether one thinks of ecospace, conservation, or IUCN, is whether those whose primary commitment is to social justice can find common cause with the technocrats who now dominate both the Union and Northern conservation agenda.

## CEESP Task Force on Climate Change

PREPARED BY FATIMA DENTON,  
ASSISTANT TO THE CEESP TASK FORCE  
ON CLIMATE CHANGE

In December of 1999, Dr. Youba Sokona was asked by the CEESP Chair to form a task force which would analyze the relationship between climate change, sustainable development and biological diversity in order to make policy recommendations to IUCN and assist the Union in pursuing its institutional and environmental mission.

Under Youba's leadership, a number of leading practitioners and international experts on climate change, conservation of biological diversity and sustainable development were invited to take part in the task force. Today, the distinguished list of task force members includes Ogunlade Davidson, Charles Di Leva, Joyeeta Gupta, Emilio La Rovere, J. Amber Leonard, Irving Mintzer, Mohan Munasinghe, Adil Najam, Brett Orlando, Kilaparti Ramakrishna, and Leena Srivastava. Dr. Sokona, a leading expert in the field, is also director of the Energy Programme of ENDA-Tiers Monde, a Dakar-based NGO with extensive experience in sustainable development throughout West Africa and beyond.

The process of drafting the concept paper, which has been led by Dr. Sokona, has captured the more elusive dynamics of the climate change and human vulnerability. The paper, to be circulated more broadly in the fall of 2000, focuses in part on extreme climatic events as indicators of the potential impacts on vulnerable populations, and in this way, as exposing disparities within and between countries. Through its analysis the paper urges that these inequities be granted their proper importance in the development of strategies and policies for mitigating climate change. Its main thesis - the relationship between climate change and human security - attempts to shift the focus from the physical impacts to the imperative role of equity in minimizing the human toll of climate change.

Currently, the concept paper is undergoing the process of review and revision. The Task Force plans to present its findings at the Amman World Conservation Congress in October.

For more information contact ENDA: Dr. Youba Sokona *Coordinateur de Recherche Environnement et Développement du Tiers Monde* [energy2@enda.sn](mailto:energy2@enda.sn) <http://www.enda.sn>

## IUCN-CEESP Environment and Security Task Force

PREPARED BY JASON SWITZER, PROJECT OFFICER, ENVIRONMENT AND SECURITY TASK FORCE

Can environmental conservation be harnessed to prevent disaster and conflict? An emerging body of research is confirming what conservation practitioners have long suspected: environmental degradation and scarcity are key factors in disaster risk and in social tension. Long-term investment in sustainability is hampered, however, by failing aid budgets, a growing poverty gap, and the need to divert ever-greater resources towards coping with international humanitarian emergencies.

On July 30th and 31st, the CEESP Task Force on Environment and Security met for the second time in Geneva, Switzerland at the offices of the International Institute for Sustainable Development, to debate these questions and develop recommendations for IUCN and its members. The Task Force is under the chairmanship of Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, a former member of the Brundtland Commission and a special advisor to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan on African issues. It is made up of leading academics in the Environmental Security field from Europe, North and Central America, a former Minister of Defense and Minister of Environment from the African Great Lakes Region, an Environmental Risk Manager from Swiss Re Reinsurance, the director of IUCN Pakistan and a representative from the Director-General's office.

The Task Force's year-long mission has been to determine the extent to which the Union's mission —conserving the integrity and diversity of nature, and ensuring the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources - may be a significant factor in mitigating disaster risk, reducing social tensions and avoiding conflict, and present these results to the IUCN membership at the World Conservation Congress in October. To that end, and with the support of several IUCN regional offices and of Swiss Development Cooperation, it has commissioned a series of case studies that examine the linkages between environment and security from the perspective of the Union (see figure 1, below).

Among the key conclusions of the task force:

- Livelihoods, especially in the developing world and among indigenous peoples, are highly susceptible to failure due to the degradation or rising scarcity of natural resources (e.g. soil, irrigation water, forest products and fisheries). Loss of livelihood leads to social tension, migration, settlement in areas most-vulnerable to disaster, and conflict.
- Environmental Impact Assessments have in the past focused on pollution and biodiversity effects, among other issues, but have neglected to take into account a project's impact on livelihood security. A broader type of impact assessment is needed.
- Environmental management reduces disaster vulnerability and risk of conflict, and can bring otherwise-opposing parties together in dialogue over a common interest. Environment may be the aspect of a conflict most-readily amenable to resolution.
- The environmental movement has developed creative institutional solutions for bringing communities into decision-making processes around such issues as forest management and water use. These types of solutions, if applied more broadly, can have a positive impact on social tension and disaster risk.

The task force will present the cases and results of its deliberations in Amman at the Earth Forum on October 4, and during its full-day interactive session on October 5. During the interactive session, a wide cross-section of IUCN member organizations, Commissions and others will make presentations on related-topics, to be debated by a panel made up of task force members and others, as well as with Congress attendees. The interactive session panelists, with the help of the presentations and the session attendees, will craft a set of recommendations to the Union and its members on how to draw together its activities in ways that best support environmental security.

For more information contact IISD Secretariat:

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Tel: 41.22.979.9353, or Jason Switzer, Project Officer, E&S; [jswitzer@ictsd.ch](mailto:jswitzer@ictsd.ch),  
Tel: 41.22.979.9630, Fax: 41.22.917.8093

FIGURE 1. CASE STUDIES COMMISSIONED BY CEESP ENVIRONMENT AND SECURITY TASK FORCE

Case Study topic	Author
Central America Hurricane Mitch	Dr. Pascal Girot (Univ. Costa Rica)
Africa Rwanda-Great Lakes; Zimbabwe – Inequitable Land Distribution in Matabeleland North	James Gasana (Intercoop, Berne) Yemi Katerere & Ryan Hill (IUCN ROSA)
OECD Countries Canada-Spain Turbot Wars; Australia Kakadu Uranium Mine	Dr. Beth Desombre (Colby College, US) and Dr. Sam Barkin (Univ. of Florida), Peter Hitchcock (Consultant, Australia)
Asia Pakistan North West Frontier; Indonesia Forest Fires	Richard Matthew & Asif Ali Zaidi (UC Irvine, IUCN Pakistan) Chip Barber (WRI)
Briefs (30) Haiti land degradation, Oil concessions & indigenous communities, Nile River, Island States and Climate Change...	Jason Switzer (IISD)



## CEESP Regional Policy Networks

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PREPARED BY MARK HALLE, RPN COORDINATOR

In recent years, CEESP has prioritized the fostering of two, and now a third, Regional Policy Networks. Regional Policy Networks (RPNs) are an innovative construct for policy development, comprised of leading individuals and institutions from both IUCN membership and wider policy constituencies, but drawn from within a particular region of the world. The general goal of an RPN is to provide governments and civil society with greatly-improved access to the best in both indigenous and international policy analysis and options relating to sustainable development, enabling them to identify their national and regional interests in respect of macroeconomic policy and global change. A number of developments surrounding CEESP's established RPNs are outlined here.

The Central America RPN launched its agenda with the meeting of Junta Directiva under the chairmanship of Pascal Girot, CEESP's representative in Central America. The RPN's initial meetings were held in June to set up working groups on Trade and Security. The Trade group will build on the INCA network, a network enabled by funding from the Ford Foundation, which focuses on the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Under the RPN, it will expand to embrace a global (WTO) focus and provide policy backing to the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD). The Trade group will be based out of CINPE in Costa Rica, with leadership provided by Carlos Murillo and Olman Segura.

The Security group will be coordinated by Pascal Girot, with assistance from Alberto Cortés from the University of Costa Rica. A regional scoping study, commissioned by IUCN and prepared by Luis Guillermo Solis, will provide the starting point for the working group. Both the Trade and Security groups will meet in September to prepare their project proposals.

In March, the South Asia RPN informally convened in Delhi with key policy leaders. The focal point of the discussion was the need for a greater focus on India, since the RPN has been concentrating heavily on other South Asian countries thus far. A larger, more formal meeting of Indian policy institutions and leaders will be held after Amman, following which the RPN will formally be launched.

The West Africa RPN will hold its initial meeting in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on 18 September. Thus far, much interest and enthusiasm has been expressed for its prospect. CEESP has chosen to work with two regional institutions which have shown outstanding commitment to the goals of sustainable development. The first is ENDA-Tiers Monde, a Dakar-based NGO with extensive experience with sustainable development throughout West Africa and beyond. The second is the regional office for West Africa of IUCN, based in Ouagadougou. A design team will soon be identified to take the initiative forward. This team will be comprised of experts from West African countries, with CEESP's representative, Mark Halle, playing a continuing advisory role, and serving as a liaison with the parallel projects in South Asia and Central America.

For more information, contact: Mark Halle, European Director, IISD and RPN Coordinator, at [mhalle@iprolink.ch](mailto:mhalle@iprolink.ch).

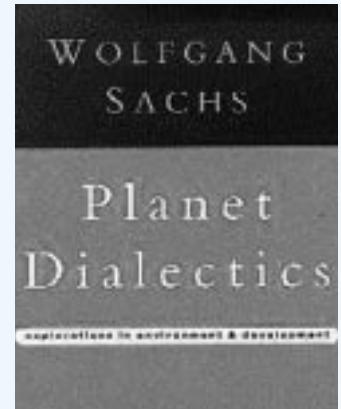
## New book explores development and the environment

TITLE: *Planet Dialectics — Explorations in Environment and Development*

AUTHOR: Wolfgang Sachs, Wuppertal Institute

### KEY POINTS

- The first collection of the most important writings of one of Zed's best-known authors
- Essential reading for students of development and cultural studies, environmentalists and activists



### ABOUT THE BOOK

Wolfgang Sachs is one of the most thoughtful intellectuals to tackle the crisis in the Western world's relations with nature and social justice. In this book readers will find trenchant and elegant explorations of some of the foremost issues the world faces in the new century: Efficiency — the mantra of our times; Speed — the love affair with modernity; Globalization — a market inevitability and the juggernaut of history?; Sustainability — oxymoron as rhetoric; Development — the 20th century's great undelivered promise; Limits — a new principle for the coming century

NEW FROM ZED

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Wolfgang Sachs is a senior research fellow at the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy, and currently also chairman of the board of Greenpeace in Germany. He is the author of *For Love of the Automobile. Looking Back into the History of Our Desires* (Univ. of California Press, 1992), the editor of the enormously influential and frequently reprinted *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power* (Zed Books, 1992), and *Global Ecology* (Zed Books, 1993).

His most recent book in English, *Greening the North: A Post-Industrial Blueprint for Ecology and Equity*, marks an important shift of agenda beyond critique to envisaging concrete alternatives and feasible processes of social transition (co-edited with Reinhard Loske and Manfred Linz, Zed Books, 1998). Wolfgang Sachs travels widely as a public speaker and university lecturer in Europe, North America and the South.

# RING News

Prepared by Viv Davies,  
RING Co-ordinator

The Regional and International Networking Group (RING) is an established global alliance of predominantly Southern independent research and policy organisations that seeks to enhance and promote sustainable development through a programme of collaborative research, dissemination and policy advocacy

In the period that has following its 6th International meeting, in New Delhi in March 2000, the RING has been actively engaged in developing its research agenda at both regional and international levels, and is now poised to launch into a new and exciting phase of activity. The planned RING activities will be incorporated into a 'global' proposal, and support will be sought from major funding agencies for the full proposal and for the sub-component regional research projects independently. It was agreed at the New Delhi meeting that IIED should retain the role as RING Secretariat for the next phase of activity.

## Regional Workshops and Collaborations

Three regional collaborative workshops have been undertaken by the South Asia RING partners (Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), Development Alternatives (DA), and Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)) and collaborative project proposals developed on the themes of Land-Water Sustainable Livelihoods, Sustainable Industrial Production, Adaptation to Climate Change, Trade and Environment, and Renewable Energy. The workshops took place in Delhi (March), Islamabad (June) and Dakar (August), and were facilitated by George Varughese, Adil Najam and Saleemul Huq respectively.

Similarly, a proposal workshop involving research teams from the Nigeria Environmental Study Action Team (NEST), Environnement et Développement du Tiers Monde (ENDA), and Zimbabwe Energy Research Organisation (ZERO) is now scheduled to take place in Nigeria. Project proposals are expected to be developed around the themes of Sustainable Livelihoods, Climate, and Desertification.

International Institute for Environment and Development- América Latina (IIED-AL) is currently developing a project proposal, in collaboration with Suez Lyonnais des Eaux and the Laboratory for the Future (France), for a pilot study for the provision of multi-utility services for low-income households in Buenos Aires (see later section).

In the UK, IIED's Sustainable Markets Group is planning to work with RING organisations in developing an assertive view on trade and sustainable development. Nick Robins from IIED will be taking this forward with RING research driver, Adil Najam.

## The UN Global Compact

The RING has recently become involved with the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan's Global Compact – a UN initiative designed to bring business, labour organisations, NGOs and civil society together in support of more socially and environmentally responsible business. As part of a UNEP contracted effort (under the umbrella IIED) the RING was identified as an appropriate network of environment-development NGOs to engage with the Global Compact initiative.

A high level meeting took place in New York in July, 2000, attended by senior level representation from business, civil society organisations, labour organisations, other associations, and the UN. The meeting was chaired by Kofi Annan, and on the panel were John Ruggie (Assistant Sec. Gen), Mary Robinson (OHCHR), Mark Malloch Brown (UNDP), Klaus Toepfer (UNEP), Juan Somavia (ILO) and Amir Dossal (UNFIP). Representing the RING were Tariq Banuri, Nigel Cross, Youba Sokona, and Viv Davies.

Tariq Banuri presented the RING summary statement, highlighting the RING's focus on poverty issues and the local level livelihoods economy. Whilst there was little scope during the meeting for reasoned debate or discussion, the tone of the interventions and statements demonstrated an overriding sense of commitment from all sides. Whilst the UN Secretary General's (SG) office had made it clear that it had no mandate to monitor business or to set codes of conduct, it was interesting to note that virtually all of the other UN panelists, NGOs and Labour groups, made it quite clear that the Compact would never succeed without some degree of monitoring and verification. This resonated well with the RING's statement, which, rather than being confrontational or threatening about monitoring, referred to its necessity as part of a logical and practical process from the ground up.

The SG's office were appreciative of the RING input to the event, indicating that several of the Southern ambassadors present at the meeting had explicitly expressed their appreciation of the RING's intervention. If the RING had not been there, the Southern voice and the poverty and livelihoods issue would not have been raised. RING representatives also met with Mark Malloch-Brown (Administrator, UNDP) and other UNDP staff to discuss

the scope and potential for RING collaboration with UNDP at national and regional levels within the framework of the Global Compact.

## RING/Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux Collaboration

Following the Global Compact meeting, RING representatives met with Mr. Yves-Thibault de Silguy (Senior Executive Vice President) and Mr. Francois Kaisin (Director of Environment) of Group Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux (SLDE). The meeting was a follow-up 'confirmation and commitment' from previous discussions in Paris. SLDE made explicit reference during the Global Compact plenary to the positive discussions and collaborative plans made with the RING. Their commitment is now to engage with the RING in a practical project within the context of the Global Compact, initially involving IIED-AL as the lead RING organisation, but subsequently including wider RING engagement. The broad outline of the partnership will be along the following lines:

1. providing multi-utility services for low-income households;
2. assessing the social and environmental impact of Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux activities in developing countries;
3. providing inputs to corporate strategy, stakeholder dialogue enhancement;
4. undertaking a comparative study of urban water services in major cities in Africa, Latin America, and Asia..

In a first phase, SLDE will undertake with the RING (particularly with IIED-AL and the Laboratory of the Future, from France) a low-income communities pilot project in a city like Buenos Aires, as a starting point for the partnership. Other cities, and the provision of services such as energy and waste management, may also be studied.

## RING Plans

The next few months are critical for the RING in terms of (1) Consolidation and Expansion; (2) Proposal Development; and (3) Fundraising. Plans are currently underway to enlarge the RING network, which will initially involve expanding both the African and Latin American components. Finalisation of the regional project proposals is scheduled for September, which will be followed by a RING strategy and planning meeting in October and subsequent fundraising missions and initiatives.

*If you would like further information on RING activities please contact RING Co-ordinator, Viv Davies, at viv.davies@iied.org.*

# The Amman Congress

IUCN's World Conservation Congress, expected to be the biggest environmental gathering ever to be held in the Middle East, will be held in Amman, Jordan from 4-11 October 2000. This event will bring together IUCN's Commission networks, State and non-governmental members, and partners in an attempt to set the Union's focus for the first years of the new millennium. This is also the forum in which members will elect the President and all other IUCN officials, approve the Union's Programme and budget and craft resolutions. For an overview of the Congress activities, a timetable and daily programme can be found on IUCN's website: <http://www.iucn.org/amman/index>.

The theme of the Amman Congress is "ecospace", a term IUCN has adopted to express that environmental protection at various geographical scales is a prerequisite for the social, economic, and even political security of people. Explains Director General Maritta Koch-Weser, "we will try and bring home the message that transboundary management of eco-systems is vital for the environmental agenda. Look at the ways in which national borders cut across ecological spaces. Watersheds, river basins, oceans. Eco-spaces need to be managed jointly by neighbors to achieve true sustainability." It is hoped that this approach can link ecosystem conservation with the need to stem the global loss of biodiversity, and thus build on IUCN's traditional strengths in species and protected areas.

Twelve Interactive Sessions will take place in Amman, with six to be held in parallel on October 5th and the other six in parallel on October 7th. Each of the topics is intended to address a major issue for conservation organisations as we enter the 21st century. A sampling of sessions is provided below:

- Session 3: Environment and Security (information below)
- Session 5: Ecospace and a Global Culture of Sustainability (Franck Amalric, co-Chair of the CEESP Working Group on Ethics is slated to give a keynote presentation in Session 5 on ethics within the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity.)
- Session 6: Making Waves: Strategies for Averting the World Water Crisis
- Session 8: Sowing the Seeds for Sustainability: Agriculture, Biodiversity, Economy and Society
- Session 9: The Role of Local Solutions, Cultural Diversity and Social Equity for Conservation
- Session 11: Integrating Biodiversity Conservation Science into Environmental Policy and Management

## Environment and Security Interactive Session:

This workshop, which will take place on October 5th, from 9 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., aims to draw upon the research and deliberations of the CEESP Task Force on Environment and Security, as well as the wisdom and experience of the World Conservation Congress attendees and invited participants, to design and implement a program for IUCN within the Environmental Security field in the period 2001-2004. The workshop is designed to explore the following issues with regard to Environmental Security:

- An opportunity for enhancing international and intercommunity security through cooperation over environmental actions.
- The damage to environmental quality due to weapons of mass destruction, refugee movement and social disruption resulting from war.
- Environmental mismanagement – resource degradation and inequitable distribution - as an underlying causal factor in conflict.
- Its use as a rhetorical device for broadening access to funding and forging novel partnerships across society in favour of environmental activities.
- And more...

Invited panelists include Pascal Girot of IUCN ORMA, Richard Matthew, Director of the Global Environmental Change and Human Security Project at University of California at Irvine, James Gasana, consultant and former Minister of Environment and Minister of Defense in Rwanda, Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, Special Adviser to Kofi Annan, and former member of Brundtland Commission (WCED), and Jeff McNeely, Chief Scientist, IUCN Secretariat.

## Earth Forum:

The Earth Council, in association with IUCN, is organising an Earth Forum under the theme of "Where are we going: Prospects for Earth in the New Millennium". This high-level meeting is designed to evoke a provocative and stimulating inter-active dialogue on some of the principal issues confronting the environment and sustainable development movement at the advent of the new Millennium. The Opening Ceremony of the Earth Forum will feature introductory remarks by Mr. Maurice Strong, Chairman of the Earth Council, and Ms. Maritta Koch-Weser, Director-General of IUCN. The first of the plenary sessions will immediately follow the opening ceremony.

Of the four 1- hour sessions that comprise the Forum, "Emerging Environmental Conflicts: how do we deal with them?" has been organised by the CEESP Environment and Security Task Force. This session will focus on the increasing potential for conflicts arising out of competing claims in respect of shared, transboundary resources and other security-sensitive areas.

Invited speakers of the Environment and Security Session include Dr. Richard Matthew of the University of California-Irvine (USA), Dr. Oscar Arias of the Oscar Arias Foundation for Peace (Costa Rica), Thomas Price of the Organisation for Security Cooperation in Europe (Austria), and Dr. Yemi Katerere of the IUCN Regional Office for Southern Africa (Zimbabwe).

The Forum will be held in the Grand Hyatt Hotel in Amman on the 4th of October commencing at 08:30 am. If you are interested in attending any or all of the Earth Forum sessions, prior registration is required. Please refer to the IUCN website for more information: [www.iucn.org/amman/index](http://www.iucn.org/amman/index).

## The CEESP Meeting:

CEESP is planning a two-day meeting in Amman, which will take place on October 3rd and 4th, in Ya Halla Hall (room SC120 of the Sports City Complex). The meetings aim to meet two objectives: the first is to showcase selected aspects of the work CEESP has undertaken in the period since Montreal; the second is to provide a forum for the discussion of social and economic issues in conservation and how these can best be addressed within the IUCN Programme. In particular, we will wish to discuss the CEESP Resolution, as well as other resolutions of concern to our members (prior to the Congress, more information can be requested from Erika Spanger-Siegfried ([esiegfried@tellus.org](mailto:esiegfried@tellus.org)) and Rachael Dobson ([rdobson@tellus.org](mailto:rdobson@tellus.org)) at the CEESP Secretariat)

## See You in Amman!

If you would like information on how to attend the Congress, please visit the Amman website at <http://www.iucn.org/amman/index>. For hotel information and reservations, please contact the reservation coordinator, Nadine Kharoba, at [nkharoba@alrajwa.com](mailto:nkharoba@alrajwa.com). If you wish to book a room in the same hotel as other CEESP members, be sure to request accommodation in the CEESP block at the Dana Plaza Hotel. If you will be arriving later than October 4th, but still would like to participate in CEESP activities, please check for updates on the notice boards which will be located in the registration area, and/or contact CEESP members at the Dana Plaza Hotel (address: Sweifeyeh - 6th. Circle, Amman; phone: (962 6) 592 4455; fax: (962 6) 593 2424). ...And, lastly, if you cannot attend the Congress, but are concerned about the CEESP agenda, please contact and advise those IUCN and Commission members who will be in attendance.