



Taking Issue

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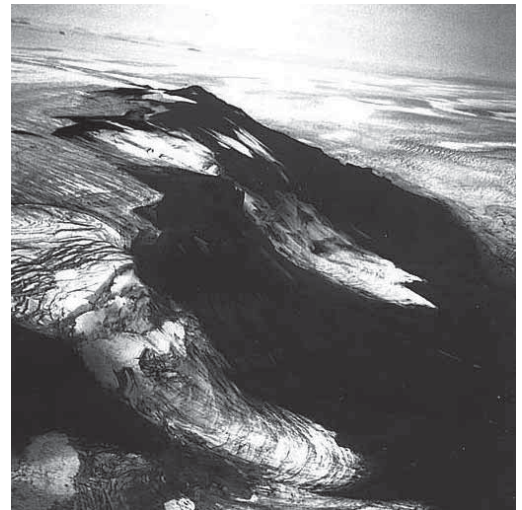
No leadership on climate change

"The question is not whether climate change is happening but whether, in the face of this emergency, we ourselves can change fast enough". Kofi Annan

NGO Statement

Climate Change has become a reality much faster than all scenarios predicted. Climate change is not just an environmental issue, as too many people still believe. It is an all-encompassing threat, to health, to agriculture, to peace and security, to the very ground millions of people live on, to the global economy. We are now at a point where even the last government has given up denying this reality. Storms, droughts and rising sea levels are bleak signs of what we are facing. Large regions will become uninhabitable because they will be either flooded or get hardly any rainwater. Developing countries are going to suffer disproportionately if the global community continues the game that almost everybody waits for someone else to take action. As Kofi Annan said when he opened the Nairobi climate conference in November, there remains a frightening lack of leadership on climate change.

The new IPCC assessment report says that humanity has time until 2020 to reverse the path of constant growing GHG emissions. If we don't act in these remaining 13 years, dangerous climate change will become irreversible.



Melting ice caps

All governments sitting here are signatories to the UNFCCC, that means you are legally obliged to a »*stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system*«.

Yet, listening to the energy debate yesterday, it seems that many governments do not take this commitment seriously. If we want to avoid a climate disaster, we cannot burn all existing fossil fuels. The policies promoted by many governments yesterday clearly favour further expansion of the fossil

energy system and put renewable alternatives on the sidelines. Such policies are incompatible with a stabilization of the GHG emissions. Again I would like to quote Kofi Annan: *The question is not whether climate change is happening but whether, in the face of this emergency, we ourselves can change fast enough.*

Countries that have made the energy revolution their political priority have clearly demonstrated that this creates more jobs than fossil fuels, they have enjoyed more economic growth while putting their

countries in the vanguard of the future energy technology markets. But those countries that are now listening to the tune of the fossil lobby will be paying dearly in the decades to come. And this applies both to industrial and developing countries alike. Countries are now deciding whether they are going to import the windmills, solar panels and efficiency technologies in the future, just as they do import petroleum now, or whether they will create their own booming renewable energy markets.

Climate talks that will continue in May during the second week of the CSD in Bonn and in December in Bali, and the CSD needs to send a clear signal—a signal expecting a swift official start of the negotiations for the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol with deeper and more comprehensive commitments. Environment ministers face a lot of resistance on this path; while the Secretary-General is already thinking of a special summit on climate change, it would be embarrassing if the CSD would let them down. Thank you.

Smoke: you carry a woman's name

By Maria Arce Moreira

Finally, it seems, there will be a firm response to improve the dramatic situation lived daily by millions of women and children affected by the impacts of indoor air pollution across the world. At least, that is what we hope. Smoke has been called the killer in the kitchen, but it does not act alone. This killer has benefited from the complicity of decision and policy makers in the energy and development sectors who fail to recognise it as a real problem; most probably because cooking is, in most societies, a woman's task. Even in conflict situations, cooking is a priority and women will go to any length to provide food for their families—even at risk of their own safety. For poor women, cooking in smoky environments is a fact of life. But, concerns over food, water, shelter, income, health, and education for their children often take precedence over smoke.

Addressing this situation would seem logic, but the failure to gather substantial political and financial support

makes what has been achieved commendable, but insufficient. Addressing indoor air pollution requires strong support to switch to sustainable and affordable fuels. This change must be undertaken with a clear understanding of the specific cooking and heating practices, considering context and culture. We must improve financial mechanisms that allow women to access more efficient cooking and ventilation technologies, while involving them in the selection of technologies, relevant planning and monitoring decisions, and encouraging cross-sector collaboration. In addition, it necessary to prioritize household energy as a priority in the reform of national energy and investment policies.

Governments have recognised the importance of mainstreaming gender in planning, policymaking, and implementation in the energy sector. We now need clear targets that address indoor air pollution to show the commitment to isn't just smoke.

ENERGIA and ENDA invite you to join the following side event and the launch of the new **ENERGIA** publication:

ENERGY AS WOMEN'S BUSINESS

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What you buy, is what's produced



By Lesha Witmer (with thanks to WEDO, Energia, IC SPEC and others)

Sustainable production and consumption (SPAC) is one of the main instruments for the developed world for mitigation of pollution and climate change. It is apparent that SPAC is, and should be a main focus of the CSD, also in view of the 2010/2011 CSD cycle when a review of progress on the development of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes (Marrakech Process) is due.

While developed countries currently have the most unsustainable rates of consumption and production, they also possess the potential for shifting economic development and energy generation patterns toward sustainability.

In the current CSD cycle there is considerable scope for improving energy efficiency & saving in households, the transport sector and industry, including the energy industry, and changing consumption and production patterns, behaviours and lifestyles.

Women are the main buyers

Women are the main buyers and users of household appliances. They are also the main group of workers in support-functions, and therefore the one's doing the day-to-day stock-management in offices for example. Furthermore, women comprise a large portion of shop-owners and owners of small business, and thus influence what people buy. Women put high value on safe and really healthy (environmentally sound) products.

Every marketer can tell you what "demand-driven" means for strategy and product development.

Yet, although women, women's organizations, and consumer organizations could, would and should play a key role in turning towards sustainable production and consumption, so far they are hardly involved in processes such as the Marrakech process, standardizations and labelling testing. Women should be consulted and involved in (national) programs to change lifestyles and behaviour from the design phase on.

Suggestions for policies and actions:

- Create "world's best" mandatory performance standards, appliance and building standards and labels, using one life-cycle method - involving all stakeholders including women's organisations in doing so;
- Create manuals and labels that everybody can understand in order to be able to make an informed choice;
- Stimulate education and awareness-raising campaigns building on local cultural values, which help to change (future) consumer behaviour toward more sustainable lifestyles and which assist people in making informed product choices;
- Actively involve and support non-profit organizations to bring down unnecessary demand and assist people in making informed product choices;

- Stimulate demand-side management programmes to improve energy and resource efficiency & saving and reduce emissions and waste;
- Promote integrated approaches such as 3Rs concept – reduce, recycle, reuse - to save resources;
- Support the Marrakech Process and, for example, the Task Force on Education for Sustainable Consumption and the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, involve more countries, involve all stakeholders and translate it into effective programs for national governments and consumer organizations;
- Stimulate corporate social and environmental responsibility;
- As an example, governments change their consumption and procurement policies;
- Develop short production and consumption supply chains – go local - to avoid unnecessary transport.

As one representative of the industry said recently: if you give us the market, we will create (and sell) the sustainable products. Women, if supported by sound frameworks and solid, reliable information, can help create that new sustainable market and sustainable consumer behaviour. It just takes political will and an email to get started.

Traditional fuels smudge the sky: Africa must rethink

Some of the world's regions rely heavily on solid fuel use at the household level whereas others have made an almost complete transition to cleaner fuels, such as gas and electricity. For example, more than 70% of the population in India, China and Africa continue to cook with solid fuels. 90% of rural households in developing countries that are a total of 50% of all households worldwide rely on polluting biomass fuels that occur naturally in the environment. Taking Issue invited Rose Mensah-Kutin (PHD) to talk about indoor and atmospheric pollution from African perspective.

For Rose who has come from Africa and is a member of the Women's Major Group CSD-15, indoor and atmospheric air pollution resulting from the lack of access to clean energy for cooking and heating has considerable health impacts, especially on women and children. She says the challenges of household energy have not been sufficiently reflected in African policies, funding allocations. And lack of strong political will is also adding to the problem.

In Africa, women relied on a variety of fuels; when more money is available they use kerosene, but wood is the most commonly used fuel in 68% of households. Cow dung, maize cobs and animal dung are almost free and children can collect them, so it requires less adult time to make use of it. Rose says, women that mainly cook and heat the house with wood or kerosene stoves are exposed to Acute Lower respiratory Infections, ALRIs, which

represent 27% of the world's burden of infectious disease.

Africa should choose an alternative development pathway

Research shows that household and industrial energy consumption across the continent is predicted to increase by over 300 percent during the next fifty years with consequent significant growth in sulphur and nitrogen emissions. Rose worries about atmospheric pollution, especially when second and third-hand cars and machines are imported to Africa, which emit air pollutant substances.

Africa should choose an alternative development pathway to achieve societal goals and avoid some of the predictable impacts in order to improve the health of women and children, but also the public at large. Impacts of pollutant gases, such as sulphur dioxide and nitrogen di-



Rose Mensah-Kutin (PHD)

oxide, cause decreases in crop yields and damage forests. According to records, food insecurity in East African countries is a result of the crop yield losses, which is one of the most striking examples of damage related to the combustion of fossil fuels.

The conventional view of the relationship between development and indoor as well as atmospheric pollution suggests a relatively pessimistic view of the future, in which developing nations face increasing pollution as their economic status and the wellbeing of their people increase.

Rose said although Africa is not as such industrialized, urbanization and industrialization have increased concerns with regard to emissions of sulphur and

“Women that mainly cook and heat the house with wood or kerosene stoves are exposed to Acute Lower respiratory Infections, ALRIs, which represent 27% of the world's burden of infectious disease.”

nitrogen oxides. If African countries continue to develop along a 'conventional development pathway' at predicted rates, by the mid-21st century their emissions of sulphur will exceed projected levels in Europe and the USA.

"African countries have the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of Europe and North America and also from the co-operation that achieved emission reduction Protocols."

and surface waters. This has been linked to increased hospital admissions and a higher incidence of respiratory complaints when compared with unaffected rural areas.

Rose agrees that African countries

technologies widely available by 2015. She indicated that there are practical and achievable solutions already available in East Africa where technologies have been transferred and up-scaled across borders in Kenya and Uganda, supported by partner NGOs, women and local entrepreneurs. Therefore, countries should revisit existing sectoral policies regarding energy, health, education and income opportunities that increased access to clean energy fuels for cooking and heating for women.

There is a need to promote existing technologies in developing countries taking into account the cultural and gender context to ensure acceptability and sustainable use. Above all, Africa needs a policy that addresses the problem of indoor and atmospheric pollution; a policy that saves the continent as well as its people.

Clear commitments are needed

A major and growing source of sulphur and nitrogen pollution across Africa is the combustion of fossil fuels in the power generation. But the industrialization process also has its impact. In South Africa, one of the most industrialized countries in Africa, acid rain has already been reported on forests, crops

have the opportunity to learn from the mistakes of Europe and North America and also from the co-operation that achieved emission reduction Protocols. Therefore, clear commitments from donors and states are needed to ensure effective access to clean cooking and heating fuels, and to make improved cooking tech-

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Rethink the Energy Question

With the exception of a few delegates at the IPM's plenary on Energy for Sustainable Development on Tuesday 27 February 2007, the statements made by the majority appeared to have been taken from a prepared script as they all more or less said the same thing.

By Nnimmo Bassey

The worrying refrain that kept coming up was to the effect that fossil fuels will remain the predominant energy source for many coming decades or for the foreseeable future. The certainty of the honourable delegates that this will be the case appears to be based on optimistic "shareholders" projection and does not seem to fit into a cautious stand that stakeholders ought to take in the face of current and future crises.

It is plausible that by over the next three decades, the world will use more than twice as much energy as it does today and that the demand for oil may leap from the current 80 or so million barrels a day to as much as 140 million barrels; and that the use of natural gas will climb by over 120 percent, coal by nearly

"The future energy demand seems certain, no one is clear where all this energy will come from".

60 percent. It is also compelling to note that while "the future energy demand seems certain, no one is clear where all this energy will come from".¹

Post oil civilization

The cautionary statement by former Saudi Arabian oil minister, Sheik Yamani is right on target and should provide profound instructions to delegates and governments concerned with ensuring that the world moves on the path of sustainable development. He said, "The Stone Age came to an end not for a lack of stones, and the oil age will end, but not for a lack of oil."² The world moved away from Stone Age technology when iron and bronze proved to be superior materials. With this in mind, the CSD should be vigorously preparing the world for a post oil civilization rather than pin-

ning our hopes on staying glued to the feeding bottles powered by oil and gas pipelines. The CSD can help wean the world from this bottle of dependency.

This caution should be of particular concern to Africa and other LDCs. As some delegates said, the world should seek ways by which to make renewable energy affordable rather than merely stating that those modes of energy production are too expensive and therefore cannot be popularised. The high costs of climate change and the adaptation and survival challenges it entails is surely much higher than what it would take to research into ways of making sustainable alternative models available if we can overcome the profit barrier.

The wrong end of the stick

African and other LDCs need to reflect on the fact that countries with huge fossil fuel reserves have truly benefited from this resource and that those without the resources are groaning under the high costs of imports. It has been a situation where transnational corporations

1. Roberts, Paul. *The End of Oil*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing plc, 2005

2. Heinberg, Richard. *The Party is Over: Oil, War and the fate of Industrial Societies*. Gabriola Island: New Society Publishers, 2003. Heinberg quoted Sheik Yamani. Saudi Arabia's one time oil minister.

utilise market forces to appropriate profits while on the other hand socializing the costs. Thus, the stakeholders usually end up with the wrong end of the stick. Fossil fuels have provide veritable pipelines for fuelling grave environmental degradation while at the same time deepening systemic poverty levels as well as engendering human rights abuses, wars and other forms of violent conflicts.

African and other LDCs should be encouraged to work for alternative energy models and begin to invest in the cleanup of their environment. If the shift away from fossil fuels catches up with them while unprepared, the burden of readjustment, adaptation and cleanup of the pollution caused by fossil fuel extractive activities may be much higher than the revenues accruing to national coffers of producing nations and the burdens being borne today by importing ones. It is time to ask for the super profits of the oil multinationals to be redirected towards clean-up reparations, and for the transition to safe energy alternatives under democratic control. This is a modest demand if we must hope for a sustainable future.

Unfortunately, mass investment in biofuel, especially from crops, is not a sustainable alternative as many delegates have noted. Apart from the land pressures as well as threats to food supply and other socio-economic costs, biofuel generation is historically dependent on state subsidies. In the prevalent neo-liberal economic models being adopted by African and other LDCs, it is doubtful if poorer countries can afford the levels of subsidies needed to make this work



Plenary in conference room 4

in a sustainable manner. The new scramble for Africa and the partitioning of her territory for biofuel prospectors must be critically reviewed through a comprehensive system of socio-economic, environmental, cultural and political impacts assessment.

Energy sovereignty of all peoples

A call is hereby made to honourable delegates to work with and support community struggles towards energy sovereignty and democratic control of natural resources. This will be the basis for alternative fair and just trade regimes that link producers with consumers, and is a sure way of eliminating corporate led control of our energy systems. For this to effectively happen it is essential

that women are fully involved in all negotiations over energy production and allocation of natural resources in a democratic manner. Energy is a basic socio-economic right and cannot be hinged solely on the profit motive.

Governments around the world should work towards ensuring the energy sovereignty of all peoples. In this sense the statement by the Venezuelan delegate is very instructive. The delegate stated that sustainable development cannot be built only on competitiveness, but rather on solidarity and complementarity. And we agree.

Question of the day

CSD has 15 cross-cutting issues. Why do you think the CSD has not been able to successfully deal with these issues?



Felix Dodds
Stakeholder Forum, Spain

The design of the input from national governments, regional implementation meetings, UN agencies and Major Groups needs to be in a way that would enable cross-cutting issues to be adequately reviewed.



Ana V Rojas
ENERGIA, Costa Rica

Cross-cutting issues are not taken into account because it is so easy to forget about them. They should be fully integrated. The temptation for governments to say that they are already included is too high, in this way governments can easily dismiss them. They try to hide them as dealing with them means more work. Instead they should realize the value of properly addressing them, they would come up with wholesome solutions, which in the end would be more efficient and cost-effective.



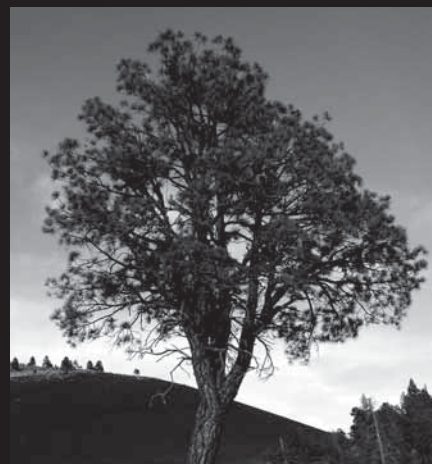
Hira Jhamtani
Third World Network, Indonesia

Actually, I do not know. Maybe we should talk to governments to find out. Perhaps we should do a survey among the delegates that are here now, to find out why the cross-cutting issues are not successfully addressed.

I will take issues with you

I will take issues with you
Unless we walk the same path
I will take issues with you
If you step on my trees
I will take issues with you
If you gulp up my water
I will take issues with you
If climate change makes you smile
I will take issues with you
If you can't stop drilling for oil
If you call dirty development mechanisms clean
I will take issues with you
If you burn up my sky
I will take issues with you
If you pile up ecological debt
I will take issues with you
If you endorse genetically modified crops
I will take issues with you
Unless we walk the sustainable path
...Together

- Nnimmo Bassey
@ the IPM, 28 February 2007



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