



UNEP

United Nations Environment Programme

# PERSPECTIVES

ISSUE No 3

## Peoples' Sustainability Treaties for Rio+20

By Uchita de Zoysa<sup>1</sup>

*The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD2012) or Rio+20 is now just four months away, yet we have only very few ideas on what results it will bring to the world. The process has so far displayed a lack of vision; participation of stakeholders has been low and engagement has been difficult; and political will seems to be missing sometimes. This demonstrates the lack of commitment to the agreements reached twenty years ago in Rio de Janeiro at the first Earth Summit. The world is in a worse place now than it was then, and sustainability has become a much more distant dream. Can civil society, which has been the frontier and guardian of the sustainability agenda, provide the vision and leadership to Rio+20 and beyond?*

### Background: Rio+20 and Civil Society

Many questions remain to be answered at Rio+20. Can governments agree on a transition plan to guide the world towards sustainability? Can they agree on a green economy that can replace the prevalent brown economy and ensure equity and wellbeing for all? Can they agree to reform the fragmented environmental governance within the United Nations system and bring about a coordinated global governance structure for sustainable development? Can they agree to regulate unsustainable consumption and production patterns and forge an agreement on sustainable lifestyles and livelihoods? Can they agree to mandate corporate accountability and assure corporate responsibility? Can they come-up with a renewed blueprint for a sustainable world by furthering the Agenda 21 and Rio Principles?

While these questions are raised in the run-up to the Rio+20 Summit, it remains to be seen who will provide the leadership for a successful outcome. Rio+20 has so far failed to draw the imagination and commitment of many governments. The lack of interest demonstrated by some governments and the low priority given by global political leadership to Rio+20 also stems from their lack of proper engagement in the process. To generate the kind of political interest and commitment from governments that is needed to create a renewed sustainable development agenda at Rio+20, may take a miracle.

A UNEP publication series that presents views from Major Groups and Stakeholders of Civil Society or about issues that are relevant for them. PERSPECTIVES is coordinated by UNEP's Major Groups and Stakeholders Branch/ Division of Regional Cooperation. The presented views are entirely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of UNEP.

The best chance for Rio+20 to have a meaningful outcome is to engage the global civil society which has been the main frontier and guardian of the sustainable development agenda since the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE). If not for the continued interest of civil society, keeping the sustainable development agenda would not have been possible. In the absence of significant interest or contribution from many governments, it has been civil society and their major groups who had provided vision to the Rio+20 process since the first Preparatory Committee Meeting and even before. The 485 submissions to the Zero Draft by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and CSD Major Groups<sup>2</sup> (out of the total 700 submissions) amply demonstrate this fact.

Additionally, the Rio+20 process has provided limited space for civil society and the different Major Groups to contribute effectively. Mostly, CSOs have been left to find their own mechanisms and initiatives to contribute, while the few minutes provided to address the delegates in the official sessions also get divided among the nine Major Groups. The idea that the Major Groups have to find a common statement makes the entire process difficult and sometimes meaningless, because consensus often only demonstrates the smallest common denominator. As a result, many Major Groups stay apart and give way to a usual group of organizing partners who work closely with the Secretariat. Lack of successful fund raising and fund management has resulted in very low Southern CSO contribution to the process so far. Fortunately, the UNEP approach of holding major group consultations at all Rio+20 events and other related global conferences has provided an alternative forum for civil society to voice their opinion and get organized around Rio+20 issues. But the assurance of these consultations ending up in actual inclusions in the official outcomes is yet to be seen and needs more attention when planning changes to sustainable development governance.

Since the adoption of Agenda 21 and Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, engagement of civil society and true public participation in global negotiations and decision-making on environment and sustainable development has not achieved the desirable and promised level. The current discussion on the governance of sustainable development must have a strong emphasis on the rights of people and their civil society representatives to participate and contribute equitably, to ensure that those agreements derived at intergovernmental meetings truly reflect the aspirations and needs of the people.

### Vision: Platform for Civil Society Voice

As a result of the lack of opportunities for engagement within the Rio+20 process, civil society initiated their own treaties. In 1992 at the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the NGO Alternative Treaties were drafted to engage civil society. These treaties were created to bring out the unheard civil society voices and to collectively express the common future they wanted on earth. Twenty years later the struggle to voice their opinion, to be heard and to be included seems to have become even harder. While thousands of CSOs are now accredited by UN agencies and permitted to attend various intergovernmental meetings, their actual engagement in key deliberations and negotiations is still minimal.

The global civil society is fragmented and lacks a coherent and coordinated voice to make a significant impact within the intergovernmental processes. While numerous initiatives are now emerging as we approach Rio+20, many people and their organizations across the world, especially in the developing nations, find it difficult to identify themselves with those.



The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties have emerged in this vacuum to provide a platform for those voices to be collectively expressed at Rio+20.

The objective of initiating the Peoples' Sustainability Treaties is to assist civil society actors to get organized, to generate a collective vision representative of the global people's aspirations and wellbeing, and to create an open platform to voice these visions. Peoples' Sustainability Treaties are intended to provide a forum in which civil society actors can network and engage in a dialogue that can advise the Rio+20 deliberation to agree on a pathway of sustainable futures, and to create collective civil agreements on a way forward through principled action.

## Introduction: Peoples' Sustainability Treaties

Peoples' Sustainability Treaties are proposed as a series of independent collective agreements produced by representatives of major groups and stakeholders of civil society, with the intention of being drafted and published prior to the official UNCSD2012. They are planned as the alternative content outcome by civil society to reflect the public interest and aspirations of a sustainable world, and will serve as collection of proposals for governments negotiating for official outcomes at the Summit.

The treaties are considered as a complimentary process to strengthen the Rio+20 Peoples' Summit and all other independent efforts for creating peoples' visions and voices. The treaties process will aspire to consider any other documented voice by civil society targeting Rio+20 and attempt to integrate those visions and proposals into the relevant treaties as appropriate. The treaties are essentially a forward looking process, and target a future beyond Rio+20. Hence, it will become a living document to advance a global citizens' movement forging the transition to a sustainable world.

The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties acknowledge that sustainable development dialogues must take place beyond the time and space of the UNCSD2012 and the 'Green economy' and 'Institutional framework' themes of the Rio+20 Summit, and must transcend into a broader sustainability discourse. It is important to ensure that the voices and visions of all citizens are brought to the attention of local, national, regional and international policy makers and all stakeholders. As partners in sustainable development, these stakeholders worldwide need to engage in dialogue and policy making in a joint effort to ensure that the discourse of sustainability continues beyond the Rio+20 and Peoples' Summit Rio+20.

The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties call for a UNCSD2012 alternative content outcome to be realized through joint stakeholder efforts. People should engage in a complimentary process to UNCSD2012 with the rationale of producing 'Treaties' a 'Declaration' and an 'Action Plan,' which are to represent and demonstrate the collective visions of the global people and transcend into a Global Movement. CSOs should commit to advancing a collective and coherent global movement committed to a sustainable world.

The Peoples Sustainability Treaties will gather inspiration from the NGO Alternative Treaties of 1992 at the 1st Rio Earth Summit to create a collective civil society engagement. The treaties should reflect on the 1992 UNCED official outcomes such as Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration, and embark on a renewed civil and political commitment towards an action plan to further sustainable development.



They should draw scenarios for future sustainability pathways from the Great Transition Initiative<sup>3</sup>, and aspire to provide a forum for support of a Global Movement. Treaties should follow-up on the Bonn Declaration of the UNDP Conference, which was formulated and endorsed through extensive civil society participation. They should consider all CSO submissions to the UNCSD2012 Zero Draft, in order to include those who have already made proposals to Rio+20. Finally, the treaties should integrate other outcomes documented and proposals made by civil society for Rio+20 into relevant treaties and outcome documents, as appropriate.

## Guidelines: Engagement Methodology

An open invitation is made to CSOs across the world to initiate and facilitate treaties on different topics they believe are necessary to be addressed at Rio+20 and beyond. The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties is a voluntary initiative proposed through joint efforts by participating CSOs. Organizations can volunteer to initiate a treaty jointly, or participate in any existing treaty circle to give their input.

**Process:** The first step in formulating a treaty is to create a Treaty Circle, for respective treaty proposals, with broad geographical representation, while continuously improving membership through an outreach programme and dialogue. The draft treaties should be sent to all Treaty Circle members and subject experts and then the International Editorial Committee will conduct an editorial review. Any editorial recommendations will be forwarded to the respective Treaty Circle for further improvement through dialogue and research. Each treaty draft will be distributed widely for public comments through databases and lists.

Treaties will be finalized prior to Rio+20 and distributed to all government delegates and stakeholders for lobbying governments, intergovernmental agencies, stakeholders and key actors of Rio+20.

**Participation:** Any non-profit and non-governmental civil society organizations are invited to participate as full partners in formulating a treaty. Individuals from any walk of life can participate as contributors, while any person or body, including government or business organizations, can endorse and commit to a treaty. For-profit organizations such as business and industry as well as governments, inter-governmental organizations and donor agencies are encouraged to participate by contributing to the dialogues, contributing with recommendations, and are also invited to join as supporters and sponsors.

**Facilitation:** A treaty on any relevant theme can be convened and facilitated by a joint alliance preferably comprised by at least one organization from the South and North, respectively. Any organization can facilitate only one treaty, but they can participate in any number of treaties. The facilitating organizations are expected to organize an outreach programme to create an open-ended treaty circle, organize online discussions and public hearings, and organize treaty dialogues in Rio+20 as part of the Treaties Platform. The process is envisioned to be a voluntary effort, and each facilitating organization will be responsible for raising required resources depending on the scope and scale of their planned activities.



**Partnering:** There is no limit to the number of partners for each treaty circle, and any organization fulfilling the above participation criteria can collaborate with any number of treaties. They can independently hold Public Hearings to support their Treaty Circles. Any such public hearings should be documented as evidence to each treaty.

**Outreach:** To engage a wider public, the treaties will be formulated in continuous consultation with CSOs and the public. For this, dialogues will be organized by treaty circles and participating actors across the world during the coming months, and whilst social and mainstream media campaigns will be run. CSOs and the public will be invited to send their input to the treaties. The organizing committees will regularly update the treaties, and the progress of producing the treaties will be showcased through continuous updates on a dedicated website<sup>4</sup>.

**Timeline:** The treaties circles will be created and draft treaties written by April 2012. The treaties will be finalized during the month of May 2012. The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties will be released at the end of May 2012, allowing three to four weeks of lobbying prior to the Rio+20 Summit. The treaties will be sent to governments, civil society, major groups and stakeholders across the world. Each treaty circle will lobby their governments and stakeholders accordingly. Treaties dialogues will be held during the three final PrepCom days, four sandwich days, and the three Rio+20 Summit days. The treaties will be open to the public for endorsement and adoption from the 1st of June onwards.



January-May 2012 <b>Pre-Rio+20</b>	J	1 <sup>st</sup> January-31 <sup>st</sup> March: <b>Organizing Treaties Circle, Organizing Treaty Dialogues &amp; Public Hearings, Formulation of 1<sup>st</sup> Drafts, and Media and Advocacy Campaign</b>	
	F		
	M		
	A		
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June 2012 <b>Rio+20 Summit</b>	J	1 <sup>st</sup> April - 31 <sup>st</sup> May: <b>Public Comments, Editing Treaties, Formulation of Declaration &amp; Action Plan</b>	
		1-12 June: <b>Release of the Treaties &amp; Pre-Summit Advocacy Campaign</b>	
July 1 – December 31 2012 <b>Advancing a Global Movement</b>	J	Prep.com 13 14 15	13-21 June: <b>Organizing Treaties Dialogues, Demonstrations, Advocacy and Media Activities in collaboration with other CSO initiatives, partners and supporters, and Media &amp; Advocacy Campaign</b>
	A		
	S		
	O	Sandwich Days 16 17 18 19	22 June: <b>Rio+20 PLATFORM (Joint Public Event)</b> <i>Theme: Advancing a Global Citizens Movement [convened by TWC]</i>
	N		
	D	Official UNCS20 12 20 21 22	23 -30 <sup>th</sup> June: <b>Follow-up action and planning post Rio+20 action, Reporting Results, and Media Campaign</b>



## Organization: A Global Alliance for Rio+20

The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties were initiated by the Centre for Environment Development (CED), Sri Lanka, in collaboration with the partner organizations Climate Sustainability PLATFORM (CSP), Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future (SF), Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED), The Widening Circle (TWC), Green Liberty (GL), South Asian Women's Network (SWAN), Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN), Asian Institute for Technology - Extension (AITE), IBON International (IBON), Initiative for Equality (IfE), Integrative Strategies Forum (ISF), Millennium Consumption Goals Initiative (MCGI), Munasinghe Institute for Development (MIND), and Tellus Institute (TELLUS).

The initiative is envisaged to evolve into a large voluntary effort, and will require international level coordination. The treaties outcome is guided by an International Advisory Board (IAB) comprising Mr. Uchita de Zoysa (*Centre for Environment & Development*), Mr. Felix Dodds (*Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future*), Dr. Paul Raskin (*Tellus Institute*), Dr. Sylvia Lorek (*Sustainable Europe Research Institute*), Prof. Mohan Munasinghe (*Munasinghe Institute for Development*), Prof. Veena Sikri (*South Asian Women's Network*), Dr. Faiz Shah (*Asian Institute for Technology – Extension*), Dr. Ashvani Vasisht (*Ramapo College*), Ms. Leida Rijnhout (*Northern Alliance for Sustainability*), Dr. Deborah Rogers (*Initiative for Equality*), Dr. Janis Brizga (*Green Liberty*), Mr. Jefferey Barber (*Integrative Strategies Forum*), Mr. Paul Quintos (*IBON International*), Dr. Ashish Kothari (*Kalpavriksh*), Mr. Aron Belnky (*Vitae Civilis*), Mr. Rick Clugston (*Earth Charter International*), Mr. Jonathan Love (*The Pachamama Alliance*), and Dr. Philip Vergragt (*Sustainable Consumption Research and. Action Initiative*).

An experienced Editorial Review Committee (ERC) will be appointed to assist the Treaty Circles, IAB and the secretariat to ensure an inclusive and fair process and a qualitative and representative outcome document. The secretariat established under CED will be managed by an international team of volunteers and resource persons.

Participating, facilitating and partner organizations, in collaboration with organizing entities such as the Treaties Circles (TS), International Advisory Board (IAB), Editorial Review Committee (ERC), Media & Advocacy Group (MAG) and the Secretariat will collaborate towards a collective outcome and will invite the global public to contribute.

**Treaty Circles (TC):** Every treaty will be formulated by an evolving TC which is a network convened by the facilitating organizations. Any CSO can join a treaty circle and provide their input by participating in the dialogues and drafting of the treaties. The joint facilitators will appoint an editorial group to write and edit the treaty according to the dialogues, input, and research, and will facilitate a collective output. A Treaty Editorial Team will be selected by each TC and will include experienced civil society leaders having expertise on the relevant subject matter. The recommended team should ideally contain between 3 to 9 members, and should have a representation from both North and South, and ideally at least one member from each region.

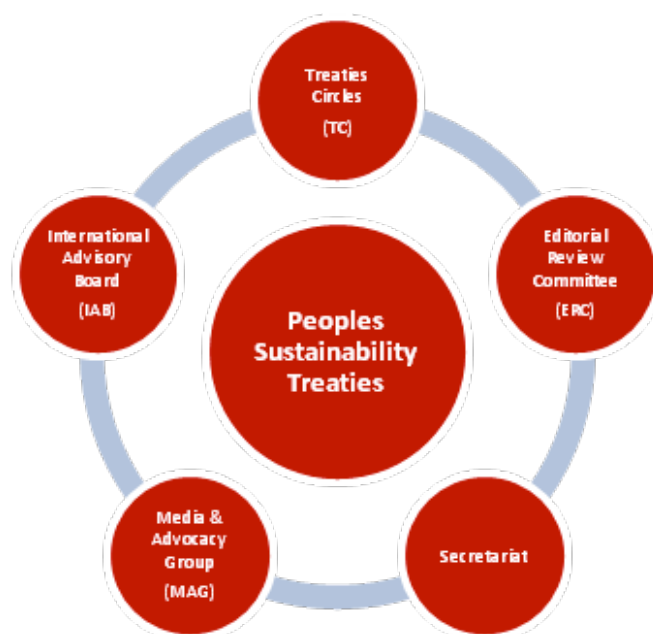


International Advisory Board (IAB): The IAB is comprised of a group of senior civil society leaders from the different major groups and partner organizations which have been invited to guide the entire treaties process. The IAB will act as the caretaker and guardian of the treaties process and guide a participatory and quality outcome. Regular advisory consultations will be held online to periodically assist the progress.

**Editorial Review Committee (ERC):** An ERC will be appointed to act as overall content management of the treaties. Comprised by 5 to 11 invited members with diverse knowledge, CSO management, and editorial capabilities, the ERC will work closely with the Secretariat. A member from each treaty circle will be invited to assist the ERC. In the final outcome document that reflects the input from the treaties circles and public.

**Media & Advocacy Group (MAG):** A MAG will be created to run a global campaign to create awareness, engage public and lobby decision makers. The group will use both mainstream and social media creatively. A Treaties Bulletin will be circulated regularly with news and updates, a website and facebook page will be managed on an interactive basis, and regular articles and news features will be provided to other outreach media of partner and support organizations and media as well.

**Secretariat<sup>5</sup>:** An international secretariat for the Peoples' Sustainability Treaties is hosted by the Centre for Environment Development (CED) in Sri Lanka. It already functions with a Project Director and three volunteer staff from Brazil, Sweden and USA. Each treaty facilitating partner organization will also provide a representative to build-up a volunteer global action team required for organizing this large global initiative.



## Structure: Declaration, Treaties and Action Plan

Peoples' Sustainability Treaties are primarily targeted towards the Rio+20 Summit, and a change towards a more sustainable world after the Summit. Therefore, each treaty will have a relevance to the Rio+20 Summit outcome as well as post-Summit sustainability transition.

### **The outcome document is expected to comprise of three components:**

- Declaration: Commitment to Sustainable Futures on Earth
- Treaties: Peoples' Sustainability Treaties
- Action Plan: Peoples' Sustainability Transition Plan

### **1. Declaration: Commitment to Sustainable Futures on Earth (proposed format)**

- A New Social Order: Sustainable Development Governance
- A New Economic Order: Sustainable Economic System
- A New Ecological Order: Sustainable Lifestyle and Livelihood

### **2. Treaties: Peoples' Sustainability Treaties (proposed format)**

- Preamble
- Principle
- Commitments
- Action Plan
- Signatories.

The treaties are proposed to be clustered under the following sections:

- SECTION 01: Sustainable Economies
- SECTION 02: Sustainable Societies
- SECTION 03: Sustainable Ecosystems
- SECTION 04: Equity, Rights & Governance
- SECTION 05: Peace, Values and Mindfulness

### **ACTION PLAN: Peoples' Sustainability Transition Plan (proposed format)**

- Transition to a Sustainable Society
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Advancing a Global Movement
- Timeline for Change

The process has already commenced and the following treaties have been proposed and work has commenced:

- Sustainable Development Goals Treaty - *proposed by Stakeholder Forum*
- Millennium Consumption Goals Treaty – *proposed by the Millennium Consumption Goals Initiative*
- Sustainable Economies Treaty - *proposed by Centre for Environment and Development*
- Corporate Social Responsibility & Accountability - *proposed by Dialogue on a Convention for Corporate Social Responsibility and Accountability*
- Sustainable Consumption & Production Treaty - *proposed by Northern Alliance for Sustainability*
- Poverty Eradication Treaty – *proposed by Centre for Environment and Development*





- Climate Sustainability Treaty - *proposed by Climate Sustainability PLATFORM*
- Equity and Sustainability Treaty - *proposed by Initiative for Equality*
- Rights for Sustainability Treaty - *proposed by IBON International*
- Sustainable Development Governance Treaty - *proposed by Sustainable Development Governance Network*
- Women's Rights for Sustainable Development Treaty - *proposed by South Asia Womens' Network*
- Spirituality and Sustainability Treaty - *proposed by Earth Charter International*
- Rights of Mother Erath Treaty - *proposed by Pachamama Alliance*
- Higher Education Treaty - *proposed by Copernicus Alliance*

**The process is open to all CSOs and they are invited to initiative treaties and also collaborate to enrich the proposed treaties.**

Following is a step by step guide to formulating a treaty:



## Movement: Advancing a Global Movement

The time has come for global movement to evolve, to facilitate the transition towards sustainability. Civil society is seen as providing the most likely potential leaders to forge such a movement. Rio+20 provides a historical opportunity to convene and organize global civil society towards advancing a global movement for sustainability.

**Rio+20 Platform:** The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties will create a platform to enable a collective voice of civil society at Rio+20. The Widening Circle (TWC)<sup>6</sup>, a growing campaign to facilitate a global citizens' movement, has teamed up with the Peoples' Sustainability Treaties to organize a large public platform on the final day of the Rio+20 Summit on 22nd June 2012. The idea is to bring together leaders of global civil society organizations towards advancing a global citizens movement. All the leaders and participants of the treaties circles and other likeminded initiatives will be provided with a platform to collectively voice their opinions, aspirations, plans and commitments to advance a global citizens movement that can shoulder the responsibility of the transition towards a sustainable world.

The Rio+20 Platform for Advancing a Global Movement is designed to create an alternative vision and effective strategy for realizing it. Consciousness and action must rise to the level of a unified global society. Dominant institutions have proved too timorous or too venal for meeting the environmental and social challenges of our time. Instead, an adequate response requires us to imagine the awakening of a new social actor: a coordinated global movement (GCM) struggling on all fronts towards a just and sustainable planetary civilization. The plan for advancing a global movement post Rio+20 will be ready for discussion at the Rio+20 Platform.

### **Follow-up: Working for the Transition towards Global Sustainability**

The next six months post Rio+20 will be used for further outreach through a "Campaign for the Advancement of a Global Movement" towards a sustainable world. The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties will provide this movement a broad base of global civil society circles and foundations with commitment to an agreed-upon set of principles. The Peoples' Sustainability Declaration will provide the much needed common vision for a transition towards sustainability. The Peoples' Sustainability Action Plan will provide us a set of programmes to compile all the dialogues into an implementable action plan for a transition towards a sustainable world.

## Accepting the Challenge and Demonstrating Proactive Leadership

Failure at Rio+20 cannot be accepted; failure of the official process should not become an obstacle towards successful evolving of a global movement to lead the transition towards sustainable futures on earth. CSOs shall not make a historical mistake of simply being reactive to a weak international agenda on sustainable development; they need to assume their rightful place in global citizenry and provide the vision, leadership, and commitment towards reinforcing a strong agenda and action plan to forge ahead in a transition towards sustainable futures for all, including both humans and biodiversity. The Peoples' Sustainability Treaties is an open invitation to all CSOs to come together to develop an independent, collective outcome for Rio+20, and to plan their actions towards sustainable futures for all.



## Calls for Peoples' Sustainability Treaties

### Box 1

**Dialogue on a Convention on Corporate Social Responsibility and Accountability (DCCSRA) calls for participation in a Corporate Social Responsibility and Accountability (CSRA) Treaty!** With the upcoming Rio+20 Summit, the dialogue on the need for a convention on social responsibility has been restarted. The call for a stronger contribution of the private sector in sustainable development efforts has come from many sectors: Governments, businesses and civil society organizations. It has been mentioned repeatedly through their Rio+20 zero draft submissions. Therefore, we need to build up the momentum and use the platform provided by Rio+20 summit to encourage governments to adopt a binding commitment to develop a national framework on corporate social responsibility that ensures wide compliance of sustainable development principles throughout the sector. The CSRA Treaty will evolve through a global dialogue among existing corporate social responsibility initiatives, corporations and civil society organizations from North and South in order to build consensus. This treaty will be used as a starting point once the UN process for having a convention is approved with a resolution at Rio+20.

*For more information please contact **Mr. Felix Dodds** ([fdodds@stakeholderforum.org](mailto:fdodds@stakeholderforum.org)) or **Jeannet Lingan** ([jlingan@stakeholderforum.org](mailto:jlingan@stakeholderforum.org)) at Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future / DCCSRA.*

### Box 2

**Initiative for Equality (IfE) calls for participation in an Equity and Sustainability (ES) Treaty!** The treaty will facilitate a broad-based civil society dialogue on how the equity dimension should be addressed in global agreements to limit environmental change and promote social and environmental sustainability around the world. The issue of socio-economic equality is central in the effort to achieve sustainable societies. Inequality blocks sustainable development because resources are used up in the pursuit of wealth, with little left for development efforts. Inequality also blocks progress towards cooperative sustainability solutions. Moving towards real equity is essential to collaborative efforts including negotiations, multilateral governance approaches, aid for development, cooperation on green projects, and diversion of funds away from conflict towards needed changes. The Equity and Sustainability Treaty invites all interested organizations to help negotiate the difficult tradeoffs among different parts of the world, and to build the momentum for groups and communities to sign on.

*For further information contact **Dr. Deborah Rogers** ([rogers.deborah@gmail.com](mailto:rogers.deborah@gmail.com)) at IfE.*

### Box 3

**The Millennium Consumption Goals Initiative (MCGI) calls for participation in a Millennium Consumption Goals (MCG) Treaty!** We need MCGs urgently, because unsustainable consumption and production have caused multiple problems threatening humanity's future. MCGs for the affluent would complement the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for the poor. Addressing under-consumption of the poor, the first MCG ensures that basic human needs are met worldwide. Next, addressing overconsumption of the rich, several resource-related MCGs would target: GHG emissions; energy use; water use; land use and biomass; ores and industrial minerals; construction materials; and polluting discharges. Additional MCGs might cover: Food security and agriculture; health, diet and obesity; livelihoods and lifestyles; economic-financial-trade systems; and military expenditures. The MCGs will help



to avoid a global resource and socio-economic crisis, by persuading the affluent to contribute to the solution, instead of viewing them as a problem. MCGs provide targets to motivate the rich worldwide, to consume and produce more sustainably, thereby improving overall well being, reducing environmental harm, freeing up resources to alleviate poverty, and ensuring intra and inter-generational equity. By acting together on the MCGs at Rio+20, we will make the planet a safer and better place for our children and grandchildren.

*For further information contact: **Mohan Munasinghe** ([mohan.mcg@gmail.com](mailto:mohan.mcg@gmail.com)) at MCGI.*

#### **Box 4**

**Northern Alliance for Sustainability (ANPED) calls for participation in a Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Treaty!** Twenty years ago in Rio, SCP was recognized as one of the main challenges for sustainable development. Now, green economy, in the framework of sustainable development and poverty eradication, will be on the agenda for Rio+20. Carrying another name, most of the questions stay the same — and so do the proposed solutions. CSOs instead are seriously questioning the need for economic growth within a concept of green economy. This should be one of the most important outcomes of the Summit and guiding policies for the time Rio+ 20 +. Green economy should follow the principles of ecological economics, which aims at: Efficient allocation of resources; fair and just distribution of wealth; and defining the physical scale of the economy relative to the ecosystem such that adverse effects are not generated faster than positive effects in order to maintain environmental sustainability. The treaty will develop realistic visions on how global sustainable consumption patterns could look like and how they could be reached. They will be based on solid research on SCP and related policies and promising practice examples. A meeting of the SCP Treaty Circle Members is scheduled for 15th March in Brussels to discuss the first draft.

*For further information contact **Sylvia Lorek** ([Sylvia@anped.org](mailto:Sylvia@anped.org)) at ANPED.*

#### **Box 5**

**IBON International calls for a Rights for Sustainability Treaty!** This treaty will aim to promote a rights-based approach to sustainable development as a way of ensuring that inter- and intra-generational equity and justice are central concerns in the reform agenda at Rio+20 and beyond. A rights-based approach to sustainable development is founded on the principles of empowerment, equity and justice. It holds that the realization of human rights is the ultimate aim of development strategies. It recognizes peoples' collective rights to common goods, as well as public goods and services. It acknowledges that the present generation has obligations to safeguard and lay the basis for ensuring the well-being of future generations. It requires -- as a matter of right -- the participation of the ultimate beneficiaries of development in the determination of the goals and means of achieving sustainable development, as well as the design, implementation and evaluation of development policies. CSOs at Rio+20 should draw attention to fundamental roots of the multiple crises and genuine alternatives to the prevailing international system, and bolster the social pillar of sustainable development – underscoring the need to refocus development on enhancing people's well-being and transforming social structures, institutions and power relations that underpin various forms of deprivation, vulnerability and inequality.

*For further information contact **Mr. Paul Quintos** ([pquintos@iboninternational.org](mailto:pquintos@iboninternational.org)) at IBON International.*



### Box 6

#### **The Pachamama Alliance (TPA) and partners call for participation in creating and ratifying a People's Treaty on the Rights of Nature and Mother Earth!**

Humanity's relationship with living world around us return to harmony. Human Beings must realize our place in a larger context of the natural world. A shift in our fundamental relationship with Earth and all life support systems is being recognized as one of the main challenges for sustainable development. Now a true shift in direction will be on the agenda for Rio+20. The Treaty will be based on the principles developed in various documents, including the constitutions of Ecuador and Bolivia; the Declaration entitled "Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth," adopted by the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth; the proposed amendment to UN to make Ecocide a crime and local and municipal resolutions and proclamations. The essence of the treaty will be recognition that natural entities are beings with inherent rights to exist and to thrive. A meeting of the Rights of Nature Treaty Circle Members will be scheduled as soon as possible to discuss the first draft.

*For further information contact **Jon Love** ([jonlove@pachamama.org](mailto:jonlove@pachamama.org))*

### Box 7

#### **Kalpavriksh calls for a Radical Ecological Democracy Treaty!**

Noting that the currently prevalent model of development has fundamental flaws and that governance of natural resources is mostly highly centralized and top-down (both in national and international agencies); We, the peoples of the earth, resolve to work towards a Radical Ecological Democracy, with the following principles: The integrity of the ecological processes, ecosystems and biological diversity that is the basis of all life on earth; Equitable access of all human beings in current and future generations to the conditions of human well-being and happiness; The right of each citizen and community to meaningfully participate in crucial decisions affecting her/his life; The responsibility of each citizen and community to ensure such decision-making is based on the twin principles of ecological sustainability and socio-economic equity; The integrity of the diversity of cultures, ways of living, livelihoods, ecologies and polities (including of indigenous peoples and local communities) in consonance with the principles of sustainability and equity; Collective and co-operative thinking and working, respecting individual freedoms within such collectivities; The right of nature and all species to survive and thrive in the conditions in which they have evolved.

*For further information contact **Ashish Kothari** ([ashishkothari@vsnl.com](mailto:ashishkothari@vsnl.com)) at Kalpavriksh*

### Box 8

#### **The South Asia Women's Network (SWAN) calls for participation in a Women and Sustainable Development (W&SD) Treaty!**

Globally, women are questioning the current economy and trajectory of development on account of the impact unsustainable growth has had on them. From losing control of their knowledge heritage to experiencing the impact of toxic chemicals in their bodies, women embody the results of unsustainability. Within this, women of South Asia bear some of the highest burden of climate change, biodiversity erosion and unsustainable forms of urbanization. The Rio+20 process will bring to the fore the need for a green economy. Some aspects of such an economy, from a gendered perspective, are an economic system that ensures social justice, gender and equity, and protects the ecological balance and creates economic sufficiency. Women's knowledge, skills, wisdom, and



experience offer a pathway for realizing these ideals. The Women and Sustainable Development Treaty will consider the diverse knowledge and strategies that women have successfully used to nurture the planet and sustain human life, while also engage with the challenges facing a transition to a Sustainable Economy.

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#### **Box:9**

**Earth Charter International calls for participation in Treaty on Ethical and Spiritual Values for Sustainable Development!** In addition to three dimensions of sustainable development, there is a fourth dimension: a shared vision of ethical and spiritual values that inspires and guides cooperative action for change. Achieving the environmental, economic, and social goals associated with sustainability requires worldwide collaboration, which is not possible without shared values. The vision of a sustainable future as an inclusive social and ecological ideal that is good, right and just is needed to inspire strong commitment and drive change. The emergence of a new ethical and spiritual consciousness supporting the transition to a just, sustainable and peaceful world is one of the most promising developments of the last sixty years. To make development truly sustainable, our economic, scientific and technological accomplishments must support full human development in a flourishing Earth community. This treaty will enable us to articulate the principles, policies and practices that enable all to awaken to a sense of wonder and interconnectedness with all life, and to establish, as the last Earth Charter principle states, right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth and the larger whole of which all are a part.

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#### **Box 10**

**The Widening Circle (TWC) calls for participation in a Global Citizens Movement (GCM)!** How to change the world? Those concerned about the dangerous drift of global development are asking this question with increasing urgency. Dominant institutions have proved too timorous or too venal for meeting the environmental and social challenges of our time. Instead, an adequate response requires the awakening of a new social actor: A coordinated global citizens movement (GCM) struggling on all fronts toward a just and sustainable planetary civilization. Existing civil society campaigns remain fragmented and therefore powerless to leverage holistic transformation. To create an alternative vision and effective strategy for realizing it, consciousness and action must rise to the level of a GCM. We propose a new organizing campaign with the explicit aim of catalyzing this historic agency. This effort would expand and diversify in a "widening circle", adapting to changing circumstances as it evolves. From the onset, such a project must foster a politics of trust, committed to balancing unity and pluralism on the road to our common future.

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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> **About the Author:** Uchita de Zoysa coordinates the Peoples Sustainability Treaties for Rio+20. He is the author of "It has to be CLIMATE SUSTAINABILITY", editor of the 'Asian Review on Sustainable Consumption', was a member of the committee drafting the 'The NGO Alternative Treaties for Earth Summit 1992' and a co-author of the "Oslo Declaration on Sustainable Consumption". He is the Executive Director of the Centre for Environment and Development, Chairman of Global Sustainability Solutions, Convener of the Climate Sustainability PLATFORM.

**Acknowledgements:** Mr. Uchita de Zoysa, Centre for Environment and Development hereby acknowledge the contributions of the Advisory Board Members and Initiating Partner Organizations as well as the editorial contributions to this article made by Marina S. Karlsson.

<sup>2</sup> **CSD Major Groups:** (i) business and industry, (ii) children and youth, (iii) farmers, (iv) indigenous people, (v) local authorities, (vi) NGOs, (vii) scientific and technological community, (viii) women, and (ix) workers and trade unions

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.gtinitiative.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://sustainabilitytreaties.wordpress.com/>

<sup>5</sup> All communications should be forwarded to the secretariat: [uchita@sltnet.lk](mailto:uchita@sltnet.lk)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.wideningcircle.org/keyIdeas/Vision.htm>



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