

## CONSULTATION REPORT Canadian Environmental Network



Canadian Delegation at CSD-13 in the Canadian Mission  
Back Row from left to right: Vincent, Nancy, Gary, EC Co-op student (?)  
Middle Row from left to right: Steve, Chris, Elissa, Jennifer, Linda, Tom, Dick  
Front Row: person organizing World Urban Forum (?)

### **Title of Consultation :**

13<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-13)

Date(s) held: April 11 -22, 2005

Location : United Nations Head Quarters, New York, USA

### **Author**

Name and Affiliation: Elissa Smith, Youth Environmental Network, Sierra Youth Coalition,  
Youth Round Table on the Environment

### **Number of ENGO Delegates at Consultation:**

3 ENGO Delegates

## Part I: Questions from the Canadian Environmental Network

### 1. What was the purpose of the consultation?

CSD-13 was the Policy Session of the first two-year "Implementation Cycle", it continued to focus on the thematic cluster of water, sanitation and human settlements. It built upon the outcomes of CSD-12 - the review session of the cycle. CSD-13 was intended to take policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation of commitments in water, sanitation and human settlements as contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, as well as the Millennium Declaration.

### 2. What were the outcomes and implications of the outcomes of the consultation?

Twelve pages of recommendations to governments:

[http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd13/csd13\\_decision\\_unedited.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd13/csd13_decision_unedited.pdf)

Outcomes in areas that directly affect, or are of substantial concern to, young people:

- While there is good recognition throughout the CSD decision text of the essential role youth must play in the decision making, planning and management of water, sanitation and human settlements projects, the youth caucus felt that the lack of a specific mention of the vital role youth organizations play in *implementing* projects and raising awareness through peer-to-peer education is unfortunate. The huge resource that is young people must not be forgotten. Highlighting the unique role youth organizations and young people have in the tangible implementation of the A21, JPOI and MDG targets.
- Hygiene education and the provision of basic hygiene for boys and girls in schools is an excellent inclusion in the CSD decisions!
- The importance of micro-finance is included in the CSD decision text. The youth caucus had hoped to see a recognition of the importance of targeting micro-finance specifically to young people, and it is important when going ahead with strengthening micro-finance institutions to remember that making micro-finance available to those who need it most – often women and youth – is hugely affective.
- The right to water was a hugely contentious issue at CSD. Under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, states are obliged to ensure 'adequate ... clean drinking water'. For young people, a 'rights based approach' means that water needs to be available to all, regardless of ability to pay. The civil society, youth caucus included, failed to articulate their ideas about what a 'rights based approach' would mean legally and logistically. The lack of governmental discussion on this topic was concerning, we wish that governments would have transparently communicated their concerns to civil society and other governments so that they could be resolved. Any references to rights in regard to water at CSD13, was lost and this was disappointing to all members of the

civil society.

3. What action, in your opinion, should be taken by the ENGO community in the aftermath of this consultation?

The role of the ENGO community following CSD needs to be two-fold. First we must follow-up on the decisions made at CSD-13, as the chairperson of CSD put it, it is our responsibility to "hold governments' feet to the fire". This means the ENGO community must make public the results of CSD-12 &13 in a format that is easily understood by our fellow ENGO in order to enable them to hold the governments accountable to what they have already decided upon.

Secondly, we must simultaneously be looking ahead to the new CSD cycle, since half of the battle is in getting positive decisions made by the governments at CSD. As always the ENGO community must participate more strategically and actively in international environmental conferences and negotiations. The earlier we begin influencing the process for CSD-14 & 15, which will focus on Energy, Climate Change, Air Pollution and Industry, the stronger we will be.

As per usual, the Canadian position to the themes that are discussed at CSD14 &15 will be determined prior to the actual meeting. The Canadian government was conducting bilateral climate change negotiations at the United Nations Environment Program Governing Council as well as CSD-13. The government is in the position of revising old position papers on climate change to deliver at the G8 summit in Scotland this summer, and the CoP11/MoP in Montreal this winter. Here is the Draft G8 Climate Change and Sustainable Energy text as of May 2nd: <http://www.carroll.org.uk/post/48>. This means engaging in the formulation of Canadian positions for the CSD14 review cycle now.

We must strengthen participation in consultations with Federal Government. We should submit a concise, consolidated ENGO position paper to Environment Canada, Foreign Affairs Canada and the CSD Bureau as soon as possible. The ENGO community should start mobilizing around these 2 major international conference because the decisions adopted by these countries are unlikely to change at CSD-14 &15. We need to identify areas of possible civil society engagement at CSD-14 &15. We should be able to ask questions like : What are the main issues of contention between civil society and government? What can we do to change the governments' mind?

The ENGO community should prepare for meetings with the Canadian delegation at CSD-14! The civil society reps on the Canadian Delegation would call meetings and it seemed as if there was very little to talk about. It would be beneficial to think of questions or topics for discussion before the meetings.

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## **Part II: The youth caucus**

Youth, as one of the nine major groups of civil society, have traditionally had a strong presence at CSD, more so than any other UN fora. Youth campaigning at the CSD generally

focuses on: increasing participation, both in terms of representation from youth organizations and the active involvement of youth representatives in official government delegations; and lobbying for progressive targets in areas that directly affect, or are of substantial concern to, young people.

Canada, Australia, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, UK, and Peru all had youth representatives on their official delegations. The youth caucus called for countries who fund a youth delegate from their own country already to explore the possibility of funding a youth representative from a developing country. Last year the Canadian delegation promised to fund a delegate from a developing country- this did not occur at CSD13, perhaps it will occur next in the next CSD cycle.

At the CSD-13 the youth caucus creatively launched our paper entitled "Youth and the Millennium Development Goals: Challenges and Opportunities for Implementation"  
<http://www.mdgyouthpaper.org/mdgyouthpaper.pdf>

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### **Part III: Youth and the Canadian Delegation**

As part of the Canadian delegation, I attended all delegation meetings and interacted with other members of the delegation. My relationship with the rest of the delegation was positive. The Canadian Ambassador to the Environment, Karen Kraft-Sloan, highlighted the importance of including a youth on government delegations to the entire plenary, and cited me as an example of a successfully engaged youth delegate. I was invited to attend numerous social events. I was really impressed with a few of the individuals on the delegation and used the opportunity to network for my organizations. I was able to use the special access to my government to push forward Youth Caucus and other civil society objectives. I was invited and encouraged to attend JUSSCANZ and JUSSCANZ/EU meetings. On no occasion was I barred out of any meeting. I worked closely with the other ENGO reps on the Canadian delegation, namely Leslie and George. There were two other young people on the delegation who were easy to relate to, one young man from Foreign Affairs Canada and another Co-op student with Environment Canada, another young woman from the U.S. Delegation, by the name of Diane was easy to communicate with as well.

### **Recommendations**

To future young delegates:

- The Guide to Youth Participation at International Meetings was very helpful for me. It's available in English, French, and can be found at [www.unac.org](http://www.unac.org).
- The youth caucus "listserve" [WSSD-YouthCaucus@groups.takingitglobal.org](mailto:WSSD-YouthCaucus@groups.takingitglobal.org) is a great way to get to virtually meet other members of the Youth Caucus and work on collective statements and position papers.
- The CSD-13 can be found at <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd13/csd13.htm>
- The youth caucus for CSD-14 and 15 will probably be coordinated by Matthew Carroll of the United Kingdom, <[m@tthew.org.uk](mailto:m@tthew.org.uk)> (the selection process is ongoing). I would advise asking Matthew if he knows of any official delegate or youth caucus member

who is in need of accomodation. There will be a pull-out couch in your room at the Beekman towers, the room can easily accomodate 2 people (I had as 3 guests).

- Past youth delegates have been Clarisse Kehler Siebert <[clarisse.kehler.siebert@mcgill.ca](mailto:clarisse.kehler.siebert@mcgill.ca)>, Giselle Weybrecht <[gweybrecht@hotmail.com](mailto:gweybrecht@hotmail.com)>, and Aftab Erfan <[aftab.erfan@mail.mcgill.ca](mailto:aftab.erfan@mail.mcgill.ca)>, and me, Elissa Smith <[elissa@elissasmith.ca](mailto:elissa@elissasmith.ca)>. It's a good idea to communicate with past youth delegates, learn from their experiences and strategize with them well in advance of the CSD. We could set up a conference call to answer any questions the new youth delegate has.

#### To Government:

- The two-year youth delegate cycle has been successfully implimented by the Dutch and German delegations. Each youth delegate is part of the delegation for 2 years, there are two youth delegates at one time and their terms overlap. The purpose of the two-year youth delegate cycle is to facilitate introduction to the CSD, and to knowledge share.
- German and Dutch youth delegates were invited to participate in the Inter-sessional Preparatory Meeting, they were better prepared for the policy session.

#### To the CEN:

- Select the youth delegate(s) as soon as possible so they have time to really start to communicate with past youth delegates and other relevent people such as the ENGO delegate. The youth delegate(s) should be selected well in advance of the Intersessional Preparatory Meeting (IPM) and if the youth has never attended a CSD meeting then they should be encouraged to attend the IPM to begin to understand the processes.
- Encourage creative ways to follow up; the German youth delegate took a photo documentary, the Swedish youth delegate spent 20 minutes at the end of each day to visually record the days events, the English youth delegate published her adventures on her personal website, some other youth caucus members talked into a voice recorder at the end of each day.
- Selecting a youth delegate who participated in CoP11/MoP would be beneficial.
- I would be more than happy to act as an active mentor to the new youth delegate at CSD-14 to start the two-year youth delegate cycle.