

INFORSE WWSD Task Force
INFORSE secretariat,
INFO No 1: Work Plan
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Participants

The Task Force is now being formed. So far the following members have shown interest in participating in the work:

Gunnar Boye Olesen, ove@inforse.org from Organisation for Renewable Energy in Denmark
Emil Bedi, bedi@bratislava.telecom.sk from Foundation for Alternative Energy in Slovakia
Evgeny Shirokov, iae@user.unibel.by from Belorussian Division of International Academy of Ecology (BD-IEA),
Amadu Mahama, newenergy@idngh.com, from New Energy in Ghana
Ganesh Ram Shrestha, crt@wlink.com.np, from Centre for Rural Technology in Nepal
Ms. Lalita Balakrishnan, l_balakrishnan@hotmail.com from All India Women's Conference
Michael Kvetny, mk@inforse.org from Forum for Energy and Development, INFORSE secretariat.

The Task Force will be open and we still hope that more members will participate in the Task Force.

Agenda

The task force is formed with the agenda to influence the preparatory process through national governments and on the international level towards the WSSD meeting.

How to proceed?

We are still in the preparatory phase trying to structure the debate and involve more INFORSE members.

In this preparatory phase I will suggest that we use the mailing list but when we move into a more structured phase of the debate I will suggest that we make the debate more open by using the INFORSE homepage or a broader mailing list. The secretariat will work on these technical communication issues.

Not all of us have been following the preparations for WSSD closely so I see the work of the task force also as an INFORSE capacity building activity where we share our experience with each other.

Hopefully we can reach some common statements to influence our governments and hopefully we can influence the agenda for WSSD. We will also have to talk about participation at the WSSD meeting in Johannesburg but my suggestion is to leave this decision until we know more about what we want.

Themes for the debate

So far there is not much on the official agenda for WSSD. We know that the main objective of the WSSD is to revitalise the global involvement for sustainable development. This has been understood as integrating environmental and development issues as well as the interests of the industrialised countries and the developing countries. Several countries have been talking about a

“Global Deal” which is a political agreement between governments. The Deal should be a visionary follow-up on the Rio Conference but at the same time be a realistic Deal that can be implemented. The last statement means that the deal will comprise a limited number of issues where all parties are willing to invest political power to reach results.

The Deal has only been formulated in general terms:

- to decouple environmental degradation from economic growth (which is a theme that is central in the Climate negotiations)
- to incorporate sustainable development and environmental concerns in the global trading regime (which is a theme that is central in the WTO negotiations)
- to live up to commitments on various international agreements (which is a theme that is central in all negotiations)

These themes show that the results from the WTO meeting in Qatar in November and the International Conference on Finance for Development in Mexico in March 2002 will influence the strategy for WSSD. The preparatory process up to the WTO meeting indicates that it will be difficult to incorporate environmental concerns into the agenda for this meeting.

Until we know the results from the WTO meeting we should concentrate on the theme of decouple environmental degradation from economic growth.

Theme 1: Decouple environmental degradation from economic growth

The Kyoto agreement is only the first step for the industrialised countries to reduce their consumption of fossil fuels. Decoupling demands clear goals and effective measures. In the Task Force we should discuss goals and measures based on earlier INFORSE initiatives.

Vision 2050: During CSD9 INFORSE presented a Vision 2050 as a realistic goal, showing that it will be possible to decouple environmental degradation from economic growth. (A short version of the vision is enclosed). The conclusion from the Vision is that industrialised countries shall commit themselves to the necessary reductions over the next 50 years. We could go a step further and propose that these reductions should be based on the national action plans for sustainable development that all countries are committed to prepare and present at the WSSD in Johannesburg. In this respect it is interesting to know if national governments live up to their commitments from UNGASS in 1997 and it is interesting to know if these plans comprise energy strategies.

Market reforms: During CSD9 the energy caucus focused on the need to change the subsidy structure by phasing out subsidies on environmental harmful fuels and replace these subsidies by targeted support to renewable energy and social development. Part of the preparations for CSD9 was a number of regional workshops on subsidies. We should look carefully on the presentations from these workshops. The presentations can be found on IEA web site www.iea.org/cgi-bin/htsearch Market reforms with a phasing out on subsidies on fossil fuels and nuclear power will release large funds for renewable energy and social development. Especially in the industrialised countries subsidies sum up in hundreds of million US\$. There will be a need for a designated institution to administer the part of this money that could be transferred to renewable energy and during CSD9 it was proposed to establish an International Agency for Renewable Energy.

Final remarks

Please let me hear your opinion on the proposed work plan for the INFORSE WSSD Task Force