



# CHAPTER EIGHT

## COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD)

### Members of the Commission on Sustainable Development:

Algeria	Eritrea	Norway
Antigua & Barbuda	Estonia	Pakistan
Argentina	Ethiopia	Panama
Australia	France	Peru
Bangladesh	Gabon	Philippines
Belarus	Germany	Romania
Belgium	Israel	Russian Federation
Benin	Kazakhstan	Saudi Arabia
Brazil	Kyrgyzstan	Switzerland
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China	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Thailand
Colombia	Luxembourg	Togo
Costa Rica	Malawi	Ukraine
Cote d'Ivoire	Malaysia	United Arab Emirates
Cuba	Malaysia	United Kingdom
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Mauritius	United States of America
Denmark	Mongolia	Uruguay
	Namibia	Venezuela
	Netherlands	
	Nigeria	

This year, AMUN will include a simulation of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), one of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Participation on the Commission is open to two members from any country currently represented on the CSD (see list, left). The CSD will meet all four days of the Conference, and will report to a combined ECOSOC plenary session on Tuesday afternoon.

### Purview of the Simulation

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) is a functional commission of ECOSOC that is responsible for providing policy guidance as the high-level forum for sustainable development within the UN. The 53 Member State commission was established in 1992 to review progress of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). CSD holds annual meetings in New York focusing on specific thematic sustainable development issues. The commission supports innovative activities and broad collaboration from governmental and non-governmental actors.

**Website:** [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd\\_index.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_index.shtml)

## SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

An estimated 7 billion people, or 83% of the world's population, will be living in developing nations by 2025. In the last 20 years, the world population growth rate has continuously been higher than the growth rate of the world food supply. The impact of population growth on the global agricultural system has been widespread. Sharply increasing crude oil and fertilizer prices are creating additional strains on agriculture and rural development. At least 40 governments have imposed emergency measures to control food prices while the urbanization rate in the least developed countries of the world continues to increase. Crises in agricultural and rural development are creating pressures on natural resources, social services, and the climate worldwide.

In 1992 the UN drafted a plan of action – Agenda 21 – to address these and other environmental challenges. The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was created to monitor and report on the effectiveness of the implementation of Agenda 21. The Commission continues to address issues relating to sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) to this day.

Since its creation, the CSD has promoted the development of government policies that integrate environmental and agricultural concerns. While non-governmental organizations were increasingly active in promoting integrated policies, the Commission noted that by 1994, only a few countries had done so. The 1996 World Food Summit prompted some progress, and the CSD praised the

pledges and unified political statements made at the 1996 Summit as well as governments' increasing efforts to adopt integrated SARD policies.

The 2002 Summit on Sustainable Development proposed numerous actions to address SARD. The Summit examined market-based incentives to increase food production while addressing environmental concerns and improved coordination between existing initiatives underway at the CSD and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). It also directed technical and financial assistance for small farmers and encouraged governments to ratify the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

The CSD conducted a comprehensive review of sustainable agriculture and rural development policies and progress during its 2008 and 2009 implementation cycle. The Commission's sustainable agriculture policy recommendations focused on sustainable practices, enhancing productivity and food security, establishing social safety nets, and protecting natural resources. Policy recommendations to advance rural development focused on enhancing human and social capital, improving access to infrastructure, strengthening the agro-industrial base, promoting non-farming employment, and natural resource management.

Challenges remain, particularly around initiatives and policies that seek to address either rural development or sustainable agriculture without acknowledging the other. While calories per capita are increasing worldwide, some agricultural practices have fostered high calorie, low nutrition diets. Meanwhile, increased rural development and infrastructure has reduced available agricultural land and has

increased environmental pressures on agriculture. Food losses remain as high as 20 to 40 percent in developing countries, while shifts in agricultural practices and the climate are increasing reliance on irrigation, fertilizers, and scarce technological resources.

The key to the future of sustainable development are policies addressing expanding population and sustainable person/land ratio through maintaining and improving capacity of more promising agricultural lands while conserving and rehabilitating natural resources on lower potential lands. The success of SARD depends on leveraging the achievements so far: policy and agrarian reform, participation, income diversification, land conservation, and improved management. The challenge of sustainable agriculture will be to expand the focus on the support and participation from rural peoples, the public and private sectors, and the international community, specifically in the areas of technical and scientific cooperation.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective on this issue include

- What actions can be taken at the regional level to promote integration of sustainable agriculture and rural development policies?
- What options are available to states for promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development in the face of food insecurity?
- What responsibilities does the international community have in promoting sustainable agriculture in the developing world?
- How do policies on industrialization, genetic engineering, and natural resource management influence policies on sustainable agriculture and rural development?

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- Thurow, Roger. “The Fertile Continent.” *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2010). <http://www.foreignaffairs.com>.

## UN Documents

- A/64/221  
A/64/258  
A/RES/65/1  
A/RES/65/175  
E/CN.17/2008/3

- E/CN.17/2009/2  
E/CN.17/2009/3  
E/CN.17/2009/4  
E/CN.17/2009/9  
CN.17/1995/6  
CN.17/1997/2/Add.13  
A/CONF.199/20  
UNEP/GC.26/INF/23  
Agenda 21  
Johannesburg Plan of Implementation

## Additional Web Resources

- [esa.un.org/unup/](http://esa.un.org/unup/) - World Urbanization Prospects  
[www.planttreaty.org/](http://www.planttreaty.org/) International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture  
[www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd\\_aboutcsd.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_aboutcsd.shtml) - Commission on Sustainable Development  
[www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/agenda21/) - Division for Sustainable Development, Agenda 21  
[www.worldsummit2002.org/](http://www.worldsummit2002.org/) - World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)

## SUSTAINABLE MINING

In the twentieth century, the extraction of ores and industrial minerals grew by a factor of 27, far outpacing growth of the global population and the global GDP. Minerals and ores are required for development. Extraction from the earth is the only way to secure access to these valuable commodities. However, the mining industry has a historical record that includes human rights abuses, environmental degradation, and non-transparency which has tarnished its modern day image. Sustainable mining is one of the five topics in the current two-year cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).

Debate concerning sustainable mining has a history steeped in global dialogue, treaties, and organizations – but lacking in tangible results. The two major international agreements which form the foundation of the CSD acknowledge the need to improve the sustainability of mining throughout the globe in three main areas: social impact, governance/transparency, and environmental impact. The 1992 Earth Summit (Agenda 21) produced the Rio Declaration which includes several principles which closely correlate with the goals of sustainable mining including principles 6 (special consideration for Least Developed Countries), 8 (reduction of unsustainable consumption), and 13 (liability protection against environmentally damaging actions). The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 resulted in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). Paragraph 46 of the JPOI included goals for improving sustainability of mining by calling for the increased participation of local populations, fostering international financial, technical, and capacity building activities, and focusing on worker safety.

The focus of modern day sustainable mining has expanded to include five thematic areas: social responsibility, industry transparency, good governance, economic impact, and environmental impact. The most widely discussed focus in recent years is social responsibility, which includes transparency and good governance. This theme is intricately tied to investment and environmental protection as well.

Programs such as the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the Extractive Industry Technical Advisory Facility (EITAF) are administered by the World Bank Oil, Gas, and Mining Unit. These organizations work to ensure that extraction companies are transparent in their royalty payments and other fees to nations. They also work with LDCs to negotiate stronger contracts with companies. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) operates the Oil, Gas, and Mining Sustainable Community Development Fund (CommDev); it works to create and fund projects which exceed IFC requirements for community development including technical training, poverty reduction, gender equality and more. New IFC disclosure requirements were released in early 2011.

In recent years, significant concerns have been raised over the investment and economic impact of mining practices. The mining industry experienced historic highs in 2008 before succumbing to a historic fall in prices in late 2008 into 2009. Prices began to recover in 2010, but investment in new projects continued to lag due to uncertainty in the world economy and the continued difficulty in extracting, hard to retrieve minerals. During fiscal year 2010, the World Bank estimated that \$180.8 million was invested in 30 mining projects globally, nearly triple of the 2009 level, and that all of these projects were financed by the IFC.

Mining projects are generally funded much closer to the exploratory stage of the project than other extractive industries. This means projects in developing countries have benefited from the increase in international investment. This has been especially true in sub-Saharan Africa, where 62% of the IFCs portfolio is currently located. However, these international investments are contingent upon stringent social and environmental requirements like those found in the IFC social responsibility requirements or the World Bank Institute Governance in Extractive Industries (GEI) documents. The industry is projected to have above-GDP growth through 2015; most of the growth in demand will continue to occur in fast-growing nations, including China and India.

Despite considerable international dialogue regarding the environmental impacts of mining, little action is occurring on this front. Environmental problems include the water and energy intensive requirements of the industry, waste management, acid drainage, mine closure procedures, and unsustainable consumption on a global scale. Some progress has been made by attaching Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) requirements to investment funds and by global campaigns to raise awareness of past environmental disasters in the mining industry. While the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) has discussed the creation of international regulatory measures for environmentally sustainable mining, no primary document has been developed. During the economic crisis in 2009, consumption dropped in many parts of the world. As consumption again grows, the topic will be further discussed at the high level. At this stage, most – if not all – environmental regulation is being established at the national and local level.

When the CSD convened in May 2011, it began the Marrakech Process, which seeks to draft a 10-year Framework of Programs on sustainable consumption and production. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon has called for the Commission to focus on practical solutions that can be immediately implemented to make a difference quickly. With the 2010 Earth Summit (Rio+20) quickly approaching,

a new emphasis is emerging on shifting from talk and agreements to tangible actions. Documents from CSD 18 called for expanded transfer of technology and capacity, as well as increased investment from the global finance community. Some of the major themes to be addressed in the future include the adoption of best practices relating to environmental and social impact assessments of mining; and training and capacity-building in developing countries particularly for resource identification, surveying, mapping and mine closure and rehabilitation. Additionally, challenges around managing and monitoring the environmental impact of mining are likely to be addressed as well.

Calls are also emerging for a UN Framework focused specifically on Sustainable Mining which would finally combine all the themes which have primarily been tackled on an individual basis. No matter what direction CSD 19 takes, it is clear that the time has come for real action on the social, economic and environmental impacts of mining which will promote responsible consumption, social development, and transparency in the industry.

Questions to consider from your government's perspective on this issue include

- What policies, if any, should the CSD promote to rein in unsustainable consumption of extracted minerals and metals?
- What are the key aspects which would need to be included in an international framework for sustainable mining? What organization should be tasked with implementing such a framework?
- How can sustainable mining practices further promote the Millennium Development Goals?

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## UN Documents

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E/CN.17/2003/6  
E/2010/29  
E/CN.17/2010/15  
E/CN.17/2010/7  
Agenda 21  
Johannesburg Plan of Implementation  
Rio Declaration

## Additional Web Resources

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[www.uneptie.org/scp/metals/mining.htm](http://www.uneptie.org/scp/metals/mining.htm) - UNEP – Mining

