

Dear Delegates,

My name is Justin Lamb and I would like to welcome you to the 2008 Southern Regional Model United Nations Conference (SRMUN) and the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). I will be serving as your director for this year's conference and I look forward to working with each of you in order to address the serious issues relating to sustainable development. This is my fifth year of participating in Model UN. Last year I served as the assistant director of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at SRMUN and prior to that, I was a delegate at SRMUN in 2006, and a delegate at the Berlin Model United Nations Conference (BERMUN) in 2003 and 2004. I am currently a senior pursuing a degree in International Business at Campbell University.

The CSD was founded in 1992 under General Assembly Resolution 47/191 to ensure the implementation and follow-up of the agreements made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit). Over time, as the UN has focused considerable efforts on promoting sustainable development, the CSD has developed into a high-level forum that brings together governmental and nongovernmental actors to discuss and develop solutions to a broad spectrum of sustainable development issues. The most recent meeting of the CSD ended on May 16, 2008 and focused on the issues of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land, Drought, Desertification, and Africa. In response to the topics that were addressed by the recent session of the CSD and considering this year's SRMUN theme of "Promoting Partnerships for a Sustainable Future", the topics that will be discussed by the CSD at the conference are as follows:

- I: Meeting the Unique Sustainable Development Needs of Africa
- II: The International Water for Life Decade (2005-2015): A Discussion of Water Resources and Management
- III: Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Land Management Practices

The background guides that are available for the topics provide a good foundation for your research. Additionally, the links provided in the technical appendices provide further detailed information on different aspects of the topics and should be very useful in preparing for the conference. In order to ensure a high quality simulation, thorough preparation for each topic will be expected of every delegate and will assist in facilitating meaningful discussion at the conference. The background guides and technical appendices are a useful initial step in the research process, but delegates should conduct independent research and are encouraged to employ a variety of other sources in their conference preparations.

In addition, each delegation is required to submit a position paper for consideration. It should be no longer than two pages in length (single-spaced) and demonstrate your country's position, policies and recommendations on each of the three topics. For more information regarding the position papers, please visit the SRMUN website at <http://www.srmun.org>. Position papers must be submitted on-line via the SRMUN website and will be due by Midnight on October 24, 2008.

I sincerely look forward to working with each of you as the Director of the Commission on Sustainable Development. I wish you the best of luck with conference preparations and I am very excited to be a part of your SRMUN staff this year.

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History of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development

The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was founded as a functional body of the Economic and Social Council in 1992 under General Assembly Resolution 47/191.¹ The purpose of the CSD is to ensure follow-up of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED also referred to as the Earth Summit) by overseeing the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development that was formed at the conference.² In pursuing this mandate, the CSD has functional authority for seeing that environmental and development issues are integrated into the UN system, evaluating reports by Member States on the implementation of Agenda 21, and providing recommendations to the General Assembly relating to the implementation of Agenda 21.³ The CSD also provides guidance to multiple actors such as Member States, intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), UN bodies, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), which describes the CSD as a high-level forum for sustainable development within the UN system.⁴

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), which developed the definition of sustainable development that is widely used in the UN system, defines it as "...development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".⁵ Prior to the Earth Summit and the establishment of the CSD in 1992, sustainable development was considered in terms of environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources. While sustainable development is still viewed this way today, it now also focuses on Member States using resources to achieve economic stability and growth.⁶ In pursuing its mandate, the CSD was directed by the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly to actively cooperate with other UN bodies, NGOs and IGOs.⁷ The commission was also directed to interact closely with eight major groups that are directly affected by or can further sustainable development which includes youth, indigenous peoples, women, farmers, trade unions, the private sector, the scientific community and local authorities.⁸ To accomplish this, the CSD has established an inclusive process that allows for widespread participation by various actors, as evidenced by the fact that NGOs can submit written reports on policy issues and openly addresses the commission.⁹

The CSD is comprised of 53 Member States that serve three year terms and represent various geographic regions including Africa (13 members), Asia (11 members), Eastern Europe (6 members), Latin American and the Caribbean (10 members), and Western European and other States with 13 members.¹⁰ This allocation of

¹ "About CSD." Commission on Sustainable Development. June 14, 2007. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/aboutCsd.htm>

² Ibid.

³ A/RES/47/191. *Institutional arrangements to follow up the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.* United Nations General Assembly.

⁴ "About CSD." Commission on Sustainable Development. June 14, 2007. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/aboutCsd.htm>

⁵ "Our Common Future, Chapter 2: Towards Sustainable Development ." The Conference of NGO's. <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm#1>

⁶ John Allphin Moore, Jr and Jerry Pubantz. *The New United Nations: International Organization in the Twenty-First Century.* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development". ANPED: Northern Alliance for Sustainability. <http://www.anped.org/index.php?part=32>

⁹ John Allphin Moore, Jr and Jerry Pubantz. *The New United Nations: International Organization in the Twenty-First Century.* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006.

¹⁰ "CSD Members". Commission on Sustainable Development . June 7, 2007. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/members.htm>

membership makes the CSD unique in that it represents primarily developing Member States that are most affected by a lack of sustainable development, and best comprehend the unique requirements to achieve sustainable development. The members of the commission meet annually in New York, in two-year cycles, with each cycle focusing on specific thematic issues. While the complete realm of sustainable development topics addressed by the CSD range from biotechnology to sustainable tourism, the main thematic issues for the 2008/2009 cycle are:

- Agriculture
- Rural Development
- Land
- Drought
- Desertification
- Africa¹¹

Although these are the main themes for the cycle, other overarching issues such as poverty eradication, gender equality, natural resource management for development, sustainable development for Africa, and education permeate all cycles and are considered to be of vital importance to fulfilling the commission's mandate
Current Member States of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development:

CAMEROON, CAPE VERDE, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO, DJIBOUTI, GAMBIA, GUINEA, SENEGAL, SOUTH AFRICA, SUDAN, TUNISIA, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE, BAHARAIN, CHINA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF KOREA, INDIA, INDONESIA, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, JAPAN, KUWAIT, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, SAUDI ARABIA, THAILAND, BELARUS, CROATIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, POLAND, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SERBIA, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, BELIZE, BOLIVIA, CHILE, COSTA RICA, CUBA, GUATEMALA, HAITI, MEXICO, PERU, AUSTRALIA, BELGIUM, CANADA, FRANCE, GERMANY, ISRAEL, ITALY, MONACO, NETHERLANDS, SPAIN, SWEDEN, UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

¹¹ "Multi-Year Programme of Work for CSD: 2004/2005 to 2016/2017" Commission on Sustainable Development. February, 2008. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd11/CSD_multyyear_prog_work.htm

Topic I: Meeting the Unique Sustainable Development Needs of Africa

Introduction

Despite billions in foreign aid, most African Member States have been unable to achieve sustainable development and long term economic growth. The definition of sustainable development that is most often used by the United Nations was developed from the World Commission on the Environment and Development in 1987 and states that “Sustainable Development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.¹² While most nations have made progress towards sustainable development and poverty reduction, in 2004, 41 percent of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa still lived on less than a dollar a day.¹³

While there are many reasons why sustainable development has remained elusive for most African Member States, some of the main causes include the reduced productivity of the population caused by diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, instability resulting from numerous armed conflicts in the region, insufficient access to education, and the environmental effects of desertification.¹⁴ The fact that many African countries are already in heavy debt has also hindered development on the continent. The extent of Africa’s debt problem is so severe that “thirty-two of the world’s 38 heavily indebted poor countries are in Africa” and “...for every US\$1 given in aid; nearly 50 cents have gone to the rich nations in debt-service payments.”¹⁵ While the debt problem is a concern for many African nations, in recent years the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have sought to lessen Africa’s debt burden through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), which has provided \$49 billion in debt relief to date.¹⁶

The overall goal of sustainable development is to improve living standards and promote long-term economic growth. However, this goal has so far been unobtainable in Africa--at least in the economic sense. For example, average real per capita income in Africa remained unchanged from 1980-2005, which shows that no real growth or development has taken place.¹⁷ While Africa’s past efforts to achieve sustainable development have been mostly unsuccessful, there is hope that efforts to promote sustainable development in Africa will be more productive in the new millennium. This hope can be seen since real gross domestic product (GDP) growth in Africa has been increasing from 5.9 percent in 2005, to 6.1 percent in 2006, and is estimated to be 7.0 percent in 2007 which is evidence that, “...for many (African) countries, recent years have seen the strongest growth performance since independence”.¹⁸ Also, recent efforts by the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have strengthened the African Union’s ability to promote security and peace management, which has the potential to reduce the number of armed conflicts in the region and increase stability which would foster further sustainable development.¹⁹ All of these efforts and trends show that there is hope that with continued UN and other international support, sustainable development may finally be within reach for many African Member States, but further action is still desperately needed.

¹² “Brundtland Definition- Three Dimensional Concept” “United Nations NGO Committee on Sustainable Development”
http://www.unngocsd.org/CSD_Definitions_percent20SD.htm (LINK DOES NOT WORK)

¹³ “Sustainable Development Topics” United Nations Economic and Social Council” (check parentheses)
<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/africa/africa.htm>

¹⁴ *Ibid* (Comma or Period? Also, IBIDs were not italicized in introduction)

¹⁵ “Africa Facts and Figures” The International Development Research Centre. .
http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-84239-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

¹⁶ “Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative” The International Monetary Fund. March 2008
<http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm>

¹⁷ *Africa- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economics and Social Council. February 21, 2008

¹⁸ *Ibid* (CHECK)

¹⁹ “Sustainable Development Topics” United Nations Economic and Social Council” (Check parentheses)
<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/africa/africa.htm>

The CSD is trusted with ensuring the follow-up to the main United Nations resolutions and agreements pertaining to sustainable development, and as such, it is at the forefront of the UN system in attempting to achieve sustainable development for Africa.²⁰ The CSD monitors follow-up to such important UN development agreements as the Earth Summit, Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development, and most recently the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.²¹ Through these UN agreements, the UN plan of action for achieving sustainable development is already in place, but the implementation of these agreements can be slow. By bringing together governmental and non-governmental actors to discuss sustainable development issues and review UN actions to implement the various development resolutions, the CSD is in a prime position to ensure that UN commitments aimed at sustainable development in Africa are actually fulfilled.

History of the United Nation's Focus on Sustainable Development and Africa

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in 1992 led to the adoption of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development as well as Agenda 21, which set the stage for the UN's focus on sustainable development.²² While the focus of the Earth Summit and the resolutions adopted following the conference were mainly focused on how sustainable development related to the environment, the conference recognized that poverty eradication and economic growth were essential for long run environmental protection.²³ The Rio Declaration specifically describes eradicating poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development and gives special priority to the development needs of least developed countries.²⁴ Following the Earth Summit, the CSD was established through General Assembly Resolution 47/191 to monitor the implementation of the actions decided in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21.²⁵

As a result of the global community's work throughout the 1990's, the United Nations created the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that focus on specific goals to be achieved by 2015, which are essential for sustainable development.²⁶ The MDGs range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and will go a long way towards creating the institutional framework necessary for long-term sustainable development.²⁷ The MDGs are extremely important for Africa because most of the problems that the goals hope to combat are most prevalent on the continent and further UN action must be taken in Africa if the goals are to be achieved. As it stands, "...sub-Saharan Africa is not on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals related to poverty and hunger"²⁸, so further UN action is necessary to meet the unique sustainable development needs of Africa if the goals are to be achieved by 2015. To meet the goal of halving extreme poverty by 2015, "...requires that the current pace is nearly doubled" in Africa.²⁹ Table 1 lists the MDGs and shows why immediate UN action must be targeted towards sustainable development in Africa if the goals are to be met.

Table 1. Africa and the Millennium Development Coals

²⁰ "About CSD." Commission on Sustainable Development. June 14, 2007. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/aboutCsd.htm>

²¹ Ibid.

²² "Agenda 21: " UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (Date? 1992? – I'm not sure if we should, but we are citing the actually document Agenda 21) <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/index.htm>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ A/CONF.151/26(Vol. I) *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development*. United Nations General Assembly.

²⁵ "About CSD." Commission on Sustainable Development. June 14, 2007. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/aboutCsd.htm> (Check Font Sizes)_

²⁶ "UN Millennium Development Goals" United Nations. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/index.html>

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ *Africa- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economic and Social Council. February 21, 2008

²⁹ "Africa and the Millennium Development Goals" United Nations. June 2007. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/docs/MDGafrika07.pdf>

Millennium Development Goal	Why Specific Action Must be taken In Africa
1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who is income is less that \$1 per day.	Nearly half of Sub-Saharan Africa's population continues to live on less than \$1 per day.
2. Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.	Primary school enrollment in Africa grew 3 percent over the last decade. At this rate, Africa will not achieve universal primary education until 2100.
3. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and to all levels of education by no later than 2015.	At the current pace, Africa will not achieve the goal of eliminating gender disparity until 2035.
4. Reduce by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015, the under five mortality rate.	Almost one in five children in Africa will not live till the age of five. At the current rate of progress, this goal will not be met in Africa until 2140.
5. Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio.	It is estimated that 250,000 women each year die from complications from childbirth in Sub-Saharan Africa and Africa has the world's highest maternal mortality ratio.
6. Have halted, by 2015, and have begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS.	Over three-quarters of all AIDS deaths occurred in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is estimated that 25 million out of the world's 40 million people infected with HIV, live in Sub-Saharan Africa.
7. Have, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water.	Access to safe drinking water in Africa declined slightly in the 1990's and at the current rate this goal will not be achieved in Africa until the 2050's
8. Develop a global partnership for development.	Achieving this goal relates largely to Africa's ability to participate in the global economy, but since the 1980's many African countries have experienced extremely slow economic growth.

Source: United Nations Development Programme³⁰

In 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development took place in Johannesburg to review the progress on the implementation of the agreements made at the Earth Summit relating to sustainable development. The result of the conference was the adoption of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), which sets forth new priorities, and areas of focus for achieving sustainable development.³¹ The JPOI recognizes the need for specific action in Africa if sustainable development is to be achieved and states that sustainable development in Africa has been, "... hindered by conflicts, insufficient investment, limited market access opportunities and supply side constraints, unsustainable debt burdens, historically declining levels of official development assistance and the impact of HIV/AIDS."³² In order to assist the African continent in achieving sustainable development, the JPOI calls for technical and financial assistance to support local initiatives aimed at all facets of development including energy, the environment, clean water, infrastructure, HIV/AIDS, ect.³³ The JPOI also specifically highlights the belief that the

³⁰ "The Millenium Development Goals in Africa: Promises and Progress" United Nations Development Programme. http://www.undp.org/mdg/MDG-in percent20africa_promises.pdf

³¹ "Johannesburg Plan of Implementation" UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. August 2005. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POIToc.htm

³² "Johannesburg Plan of Implementation- VIII. Sustainable development for Africa" UN Department of Economic and Social. December 2004. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POIChapter8.htm

³³ Ibid.

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) should play a key role in promoting sustainable development on the continent and encourages giving support to its efforts. ³⁴

Recognizing the need for a greater emphasis on sustainable development, African Member States formed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001.³⁵ The NEPAD is a comprehensive initiative to be taken by African nations in cooperation with the international community to promote actions and create the framework necessary for sustainable development.³⁶ According to the NEPAD, the conditions and actions necessary for sustainable development in Africa are peace and security, good governance, regional cooperation, and capacity building.³⁷

There are vast arrays of concerns and requirements that must be addressed to attain the overarching goal of sustainable development in Africa, but two of the most important issues are ensuring access to financial capital and secure property rights, as well as the need for infrastructure development. These two topics are utterly important to achieving sustainable development on the continent because they form the very foundation of what is necessary for sustainable development to occur.³⁸ If local citizens in Africa lack access to financial capital or are confronted with insecure property rights, they lack the ability or are unwilling to make the necessary investments that promote long run economic growth.³⁹ The level of infrastructure in a country is another key determinant of economic growth and sustainable development.⁴⁰ Without transportation, communications, energy, sanitation, or governmental infrastructure, a country's population will be hindered or unable to engage in commerce and stimulate the economy. This can be easily seen with the example of a farmer who grows a crop in the region but who is unable to transport the crop to market because of inadequate transportation infrastructure. While the issues of access to financial capital and infrastructure development are by no means the only requirements for achieving sustainable development in Africa, if these two issues are addressed, the necessary foundation will be developed that will make possible all the other aspects of sustainable development.⁴¹

Financial Capital and Secure Property Rights for Sustainable Development

Secure property rights and access to adequate financial capital are necessary for sustainable development in Africa. Large parts of the economies of most African countries are dominated by agricultural activities where property rights and access to capital are key determinants of whether investments will be made to improve productivity and thus food availability.

“The way property rights are defined and enforced is crucial to the way land and other natural resources are utilized. There is an incentive for farmers to invest in land if land tenure is clearly defined and ownership or use rights are legally protected. Likewise, access to credit is an essential determinant of agricultural investments. Restricted access does not allow farmers to undertake the needed investments to boost productivity.”⁴²

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ “ Sustainable Development Topics – Africa. ” United Nations Economic and Social Council. April 2008. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/africa/africa.htm>

³⁶ “NEPAD in Brief” The New Partnership for Africa's Development. April 2006. <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/inbrief.php>

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² *Africa- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economics and Social Council. 21 February 2008

Unfortunately most African economies lack secure property rights and are plagued by armed conflicts that have resulted in limited investment in Africa, which means there is limited access to financial capital in the region.⁴³ The extent of the problem is so large that in 2006 African countries attracted less than 3 percent of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).⁴⁴ The problem is made even worse considering the fact that, “Capital inflows play a major role in the development process. Coupled with a solid level of national savings, they permit the capital accumulation needed for industrialization.”⁴⁵

In Africa the problem of a lack of FDI is somewhat corrected by official development assistance (ODA) from foreign governments and aid agencies. Africa is the largest recipient of ODA with \$33.9 billion in 2006 and in many African countries ODA accounts for a large part of a country’s gross national income (GNI).⁴⁶ While ODA is extremely important in the region, the way the assistance is used is the best determinant of its long-term effectiveness. Recognizing the importance of how ODA is used the CSD claims, “Investments in infrastructure and utilities are... priority projects for international cooperation in Africa, as they condition long term growth in the region.”⁴⁷

Another promising way of improving access to capital in Africa is through the use of micro-credit programs. These programs usually involve very small loans, often USD \$100-\$200, to allow for the opportunity of productive self-employment. One of the best examples of the effectiveness of micro-credit institutions is the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, which has reached over 2 million people and has provided over \$2.1 billion in loans.⁴⁸ The success of these programs means that they can be extremely useful in eradicating poverty at the local level, since financial aid can be provided directly to individuals who need it. This reduces the chance of the aid being misused by corruption or ineffective national priorities. Recognizing this, the UNDP Administrator Mark Malloch Brown stated, “Microfinance is much more than simply an income generation tool. By directly empowering poor people, particularly women, it has become one of the key driving mechanisms towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals, specifically the overarching target of halving extreme poverty and hunger by 2015.”⁴⁹

The potential for microcredit to foster sustainable development is tremendous since it puts money directly into the hands of the people who need it and who can use it to start small businesses that promote a country’s long run economic growth. It may seem hard to believe that a small loan of a few hundred dollars can make a real difference to a country’s economy, but it’s important to note that, “...of the 4 billion people who live on less than \$1400 a year, only a fraction have access to basic financial services.”⁵⁰ These people may have the human capital or ideas on how to start a business, but they simply cannot acquire the necessary start-up capital to turn their dreams into a reality. In many countries a few hundred dollars is a significant amount of money and can allow individuals to engage in enterprises that not only promote economic growth, but also employ people in their local communities.

Microcredit also ties in with the second issue of infrastructure development because it provides people a stake in the quality and availability of infrastructure. Recipients of microcredit usually engage in activities that require a certain level of infrastructure, so they have an incentive to lobby governments or local communities to make the necessary infrastructure. While individuals on their own may not be able to engage in infrastructure development, as more and more people in local communities engage in commerce, they can combine their resources to acquire whatever

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ A/52/628/Add.6. *Role of Microcredit in the eradication of poverty*. United Nations General Assembly. December 18,1997.

⁴⁹ “Resource Library-Recommended Reading” International Year of Microcredit 2005.
http://www.yearofmicrocredit.org/pages/reslib/reslib_recreading.asp#kit

⁵⁰ “About Microfinance and Microcredit” International Year of Microcredit 2005
http://www.yearofmicrocredit.org/pages/whyayear/whyayear_aboutmicrofinance.asp

infrastructure is required and their business also provide governments with the tax revenues that make infrastructure development projects possible.

Need for Infrastructure Development

The lack of infrastructure in Africa is a major hindrance to the regions efforts to achieve sustainable development. Africa experiences the most significant problems in the quality of transportation and energy infrastructure, which limits the ability of individuals in the region to engage in commerce and foster economic growth.⁵¹ In terms of transportation, “only 12 percent of sub-Saharan African roads are paved” which results in, “the median transportation costs of trade within Africa are twice those of East and South Asia, accounting for a significant part of the poor export performance of African countries.”⁵² In order to deal with Africa’s infrastructure problem, the International Food Policy Research Institute suggests a multi-stepped approach that evaluates existing institutional frameworks, learns from and replicates the positive impact of market led reforms, encourages public intervention, forges public-private partnerships, and takes into account local demand for services.⁵³ Regardless of the specific action to be taken, immediate improvement in Africa’s transportation infrastructure is essential if the continent is to be competitive in global exports.⁵⁴

Access to energy infrastructure is also a major problem in Africa. In 2005, only 26 percent of the African population had access to energy and energy access was only 8 percent for rural households.⁵⁵ Access to energy is essential for sustainable development as it increases the productivity of the population. In Africa 60 percent of energy, use comes from traditional sources like fuel wood that pose potential health problems and require a considerable amount of time to collect.⁵⁶ Recognizing the importance of energy for sustainable development, the JPOI sets the objective of securing access to energy for 35 percent of the African population within 20 years and places a special emphasis on rural households.⁵⁷ One of the greatest potential ways to improve energy access in Africa is through the use of renewable energy sources that are readily available in Africa.⁵⁸ The use of renewable energy sources has a large potential to be developed in Africa because, “(it is)...estimated that only 7 percent of hydroelectricity and less than 1 percent of geothermal potentials on the continent have been exploited”.⁵⁹ A good example of how renewable energy can be used for rural development in Africa is the Cows to Kilowatt project in Nigeria which is expected to use methane produced from cow waste to provide energy for 2000 households in a neighborhood.⁶⁰ Recent years have seen numerous improvements in the types and efficiency of renewable energy sources which could offer enormous benefits for Africa because, “...traditional energy sources are clearly not efficient enough to service energy intensive activities...” so improvements in energy infrastructure is essential for sustainable development in the region.⁶¹

Conclusion

⁵¹ *Africa- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economics and Social Council. 21 February 2008.

⁵² *Ibid*

⁵³ Maximo Torero and Shyamal Chowdhury. “Africa-Increasing Access to Infrastructure for Africa’s Rural Poor” International Food Policy Research Institute.2005. <http://www.ifpri.org/PUBS/ib/ib32.pdf>

⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵⁵ *Africa- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economics and Social Council. 21 February 2008

⁵⁶ Youba Sokona “Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa” <http://www.helio-international.org/Helio/anglais/reports/africa.html>

⁵⁷ “Johannesburg Plan of Implementation- VIII. Sustainable development for Africa” UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POIChapter8.htm

⁵⁸ “International Conference on Renewable Energy in Africa” United Nations Industrial Development Organization. <http://www.unido.org/index.php?id=o76539>

⁵⁹ *Ibid*.

⁶⁰ *Africa- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economics and Social Council. 21 February 2008.

⁶¹ Youba Sokona “Energy in Sub-Saharan Africa” <http://www.helio-international.org/Helio/anglais/reports/africa.html>

Sustainable development is one of the key issues currently being addressed by all parts of the UN system. While numerous UN actions and agreements relating to sustainable development have been undertaken, there has so far been little progress in promoting sustainable development in Africa. The MDGs are among the most ambitious goals that the UN system has sought to address and there has been significant progress in achieving these in most regions of the world, but unfortunately, Africa is currently not on track to achieve any of the goals and is still a long way from obtaining sustainable development. The overarching issue of what is necessary for sustainable development is incredibly broad but addressing the foundational issues of access to financial capital and infrastructure development can go along way in providing the necessary framework for sustainable development.

Committee Directive

The Commission on Sustainable Development is charged with ensuring the implementation of the actions adopted following the Earth Summit including Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration, and the JPOI, which puts the committee in an effective position to help meet the unique sustainable development needs of Africa. While there has been some improvement in Africa's development, further actions are still desperately needed in order to achieve the MDGs and ensure a sustainable future for the continent. Recognizing the importance of promoting sustainable development in Africa, the CSD has made Africa one of its main thematic issues for discussion at its session this year. The CSD's broad participation from government and non-governmental actors place it in a prime position to take the lead on addressing the sustainable development needs of Africa. Without a doubt, Africa is the region of the world with the greatest need for sustainable development, but the process of achieving this goal is likely to be long and require considerable resources. It is unlikely that one comprehensive plan can achieve immediate success in promoting sustainable development on the continent, so the best course of action is to focus on the issues of access to financial capital and infrastructure development as they provide the necessary foundation for the other aspects of sustainable development. The task of meeting the unique sustainable development needs of Africa may seem daunting, but with a general understanding of the underlying problems and the current situation in the region, meaningful discussion can take place and detailed resolutions to address the issue can be developed.

Topic II. The International Water for Life Decade (2005-2015): A Discussion of Water Resources and Management

Introduction

Water resources are essential for satisfying daily human needs, protecting public health and ensuring food production, energy and the restoration of ecosystems, as well as for social and economic development.⁶² Although water is the most common natural resource on earth, only 2.5 percent of the world's water is drinkable.⁶³ Of the freshwater, two-thirds are contained in glaciers and permanent snow cover.⁶⁴ What is available in lakes, rivers, and aquifers are now increasingly coming under pressure from several directions at once.⁶⁵ Thus, the issues surrounding freshwater are of both quantity and quality. Appropriate management of the world's water resources is essential for meeting the demands of a growing population and for expanding water uses.⁶⁶

According to the U.S. Agency for International Development (U.S. AID), "the minimum quantity of water recommended for household and urban use alone is close to 100 liters per person per day."⁶⁷ The amount of water a

⁶² "Global International Water Assessment." The United Nations Environment Programme. <http://www.unep.org/dewa/giwa/>

⁶³ Kirby, Alex. "Dawn of a thirsty century." *BBC News*. 2 June 2000. <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Hillary Mayell. "UN Highlights World Water Crisis." *National Geographic News*. 5 June 2003. <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news>

person needs can vary. For example, a person engaged in manual labor in a tropical region will need more water than someone sitting at a computer in a temperate region. The World Health Organization (WHO) suggests that two to 4.5 liters of water a day for drinking, and another 4 liters for cooking and food preparation are the bottom-line limits for survival. This, however, does not take into account the water needs for agricultural irrigation. Statistics show that more than 1.1 billion people lack access to clean water, and nearly 2.6 billion people lack access to a water sanitation facility.⁶⁸

Moreover, the situation is exacerbated by increasing demand of water resources due to population growth. Within the next 50 years, the world population is expected to increase by another 40 to 50 percent—resulting in an estimated 40 percent increase in water usage.⁶⁹ Population growth combined with the limited availability of drinkable water is likely to mean that supply will be unable to keep pace with global demand.⁷⁰ With a growing worldwide population and a limited supply of water, the future could be plagued with untold misery and conflict.⁷¹

Realizing the magnitude of this issue, the United Nations declared 2005-2015 the *International Water for Life Decade*.⁷² The primary goal of the 'Water for Life' Decade is to promote efforts to fulfill international commitments made on water and water-related issues by 2015.⁷³ These commitments include the Millennium Development Goals to reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water by 2015 and to stop unsustainable exploitation of water resources.⁷⁴ In response to these goals, the CSD along with other UN entities such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), have developed special initiatives to help foster discussion on the various and complex water related issues. For example, CSD held a series of capacity building workshops in Latin America, Africa and Asian countries discussing the need for improving performance of Water Utilities in the regions.⁷⁵ These workshops served as a forum for sharing knowledge and experiences gained in improving the governance of public water utilities, especially from the regional perspective.⁷⁶ The issues addressed in these workshops ranged from the management of water and sanitation services in urban areas to strengthening institutional governance and accountability. ⁷⁷

Causes and Effects of Water Scarcity and Degradation

The major cause of water degradation is population growth.⁷⁸ Between 1970 and 1990 available per capita water supply decreased by nearly one third due to the population boom.⁷⁹ Current estimates show that the world

⁶⁸ United Nations. Economic and Social Council. World Health Organization. "Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Links to Health Facts and Figures." Nov. 2004. http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/facts2004/en/

⁶⁹ "Water Crisis." World Water Council. <http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/index.php?id=25>

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² "About The Decade." United Nations International Decade for Water. <http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/background.html>

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ "Freshwater Workshops." United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. August 2007. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/water/workshops.htm>

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ "Water and Sustainable Development." The United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. <http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/news/iraq.shtml>

⁷⁹ Ibid.

population is likely to increase from 6 billion to 9.3 billion by 2050.⁸⁰ Currently, 434 million people face either water stress or scarcity.⁸¹ Depending on future rates of population growth, between 2.6 billion and 3.1 billion people may be living in either water-scarce or water-stressed conditions by 2025.⁸² For tens of millions of people in the Middle East and in much of Africa today, the lack of available fresh water is a chronic concern that is growing more acute and more widespread.⁸³ The problem is worse than it often appears on the ground, because much of the fresh water now used in water-scarce regions comes from deep aquifers that are not being refreshed by the natural water cycle.⁸⁴ In most of the countries where water shortage is severe and worsening, high rates of population growth exacerbate the declining availability of renewable fresh water.⁸⁵ While 25 countries currently experience either water stress or scarcity, between 36 and 40 countries are projected to face similar conditions by 2025.⁸⁶

Another cause of water degradation is agricultural demand and trade.⁸⁷ A growing population consumes more food, which, in turn, requires larger volumes of water. According to the United Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), globally, 71 percent of freshwater is used for irrigation.⁸⁸ Since the 1960s, irrigation based agriculture has contributed 80 percent of the increases in food production.⁸⁹ At the same time, irrigation practices deplete rivers and aquifers and degrades water, soil and wildlife habitat.⁹⁰ In most areas, the diversion of rivers and increased water storage capacity has facilitated irrigation development.⁹¹ In a few areas, including parts of South Asia, groundwater extraction makes irrigation possible.⁹² Irrigation water is often used extremely inefficiently. For example, in the arid Senegal River Basin, less than 50 percent of the water is used productively, particularly for rice.⁹³ Many farmers do not recognize the economic cost of wasting water, or lack the capital to install appropriate irrigation systems.⁹⁴ Additionally, environmental problems from irrigation are not limited to developing countries. In Australia, for example, 80 per cent of its water flow has been diverted primarily for agriculture.⁹⁵ This has resulted in the extensive alteration of the river line and has caused the widespread salinization of groundwater.⁹⁶ Salinization

⁸⁰ “About the Issue: Population Matters.” The Populations Institute.
http://www.populationinstitute.org/teampublish/71_234_4084.cfm

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ “Agriculture and Water Resources.” United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization.
http://www.fao.org/ag_wtr/_id_2318.htm

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ “Irrigation Practices and Water Degradation.” National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service.
www.attra.org/downloads/water_quality/irrigation

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

is the condition in which salts accumulate in soil—usually to toxic levels. If these salts reach groundwater, or any source of drinking water, they can pose significant health risk.⁹⁷

The impacts of water degradation will undoubtedly compromise health.⁹⁸ Water related diseases are among the most common causes of illness and death, affecting mainly those living in developing and Least Developed Countries (LDCs).⁹⁹ Water-borne diseases causing gastro-intestinal illness, such as diarrhea are caused by drinking contaminated water.¹⁰⁰ Vector-borne diseases like malaria and schistosomiasis are passed through insects and snails that breed in aquatic ecosystems.¹⁰¹ In 2000, the estimated mortality rate due to water sanitation diseases was 2.2 million.¹⁰² There were an estimated 1.4 million deaths due to malaria.¹⁰³ Further, over 2 billion people worldwide were infected with schistosomes and soil transmitted helminthes.¹⁰⁴ The majority of those affected by water related diseases are children under five.¹⁰⁵ According to World Health Organization (WHO), the vast majority of these illnesses are preventable and that the best way to mitigate the number of water-borne diseases is to provide access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation.¹⁰⁶ “If those in poverty were extended improved water supply and basic sanitation, infectious diarrheas would be reduced by 17 percent annually. If well regulated water supply and full sanitation were achieved, this would reduce the burden by 70 percent annually.”¹⁰⁷ Thus, easy access to clean water could reduce the spread of disease and improve the overall quality of health for people in developing countries.

Water Resources in Africa

Due to the current levels of extreme poverty and drought, which have created a grave strain on clean water resources, Africa represents a high level of conflict and human suffering relating to water scarcity.¹⁰⁸ From 1992 to 2001, an El Nino-related drought in Eastern Africa cost the Kenyan economy alone about \$2.5 billion.¹⁰⁹ From 1991 to 1992, a drought in Southern Africa resulted in a GDP reduction of \$3 billion due to reduced agricultural production, increased unemployment, and reduced industrial production.¹¹⁰ In 1984, the single worst African drought disaster killed 300,000 people in Ethiopia, and 14.3 million people were affected by the drought.¹¹¹

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ “The New World Health Report 2001 – Mental Health: New Understanding, New Hope.” The World Health Organization. <http://www.who.int/whr/2001/en/>

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ *UNDP 2004 Human Development Report*. The United Nations Development Programme. <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/>

¹⁰⁸ “Water in Africa: Management Options to Enhance Survival and Growth.” United Nations. Economic and Social Council. Economic Commission for Africa. [http://www.uneca.org/awich/Water percent20in percent20Africa.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/awich/Water%20in%20Africa.pdf)

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

In sub-Saharan Africa, 42 percent of the population is still without improved access to water, and sanitation coverage is only 36 percent.¹¹² About two-thirds of Africans live in rural areas, where water supply and sanitation services coverage is the poorest.¹¹³ An estimated 82 percent of urban residents in sub-Saharan Africa have access to safe water and 55 percent to sanitation facilities, but urban statistics combine the richest and poorest residents in a single average.¹¹⁴ This displays the unequal coverage and quality of water within urban areas amongst the wealthy and poor.¹¹⁵ The urban poor usually pay four to ten times more per liter than the metered rates of those living in elite residential areas.¹¹⁶

The UN predicts that water will be the main cause of conflicts in Africa over the next 25 years.¹¹⁷ One prime example is the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan. The limited water sources in the region were diverted to Khartoum, Sudan.¹¹⁸ This resulted in a bloody conflict between sedentary black farmers and semi-nomadic Arab herders in Darfur.¹¹⁹

For Chad, Nigeria, Cameroon, and Niger, Lake Chad provides the livelihoods for 20 million people in west-central Africa.¹²⁰ The once imposing body of water has lost 90 percent of its surface area in the past 30 years.¹²¹ In the 1960s, Lake Chad was larger than the state of Vermont but is now smaller than Rhode Island.¹²² Global warming and a change in weather patterns have hastened the lake's shrinkage.¹²³ Seasonal monsoon rains usually replenish the lake, but over the past few decades, the region has experienced a series of devastating droughts.¹²⁴ Along with untimely droughts, the need for water for irrigation in the four countries that share the lake has increased fourfold, further draining the lake.¹²⁵ Other factors for the shrinkage include the damming of rivers feeding the lake for hydroelectric systems.¹²⁶ As population and irrigation demands continue to increase, the problem is expected to worsen in the coming years.¹²⁷ For now, there will be enough water for the local population to consume and use for crop irrigation, but the ecosystem of Lake Chad will be destroyed if current water use patterns continue. As a result,

¹¹² "Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Links to Health Facts and Figures." World Health Organization. http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/facts2004/en/

¹¹³ "Water in Africa: Management Options to Enhance Survival and Growth." United Nations. Economic and Social Council. Economic Commission for Africa. http://www.uneca.org/awich/Water_percent20in_percent20Africa.pdf

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ "Water in Conflict." World Water Organization. <http://www.worldwater.org/conflict.html>

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Natalie Pawelski. "Africa's great shrinking Lake Chad." *CNN.com*. 27 February. 2006. <http://archives.cnn.com>.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Andrew Bomford. "Slow death of Africa's Lake Chad." *BBC News*. 14 April 2006. <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>.

¹²⁴ Natalie Pawelski. "Africa's great shrinking Lake Chad." *CNN.com*. 27 February. 2006. <http://archives.cnn.com>.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Andrew Bomford. "Slow death of Africa's Lake Chad." *BBC News*. 14 April 2006. <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>

¹²⁷ Natalie Pawelski. "Africa's great shrinking Lake Chad." *CNN.com*. 27 February. 2006. <http://archives.cnn.com>.

the lake's fish will be absent from the local population's diet.¹²⁸ Without better management, Lake Chad will turn into a puddle, and the 20 million people in west-central Africa will be without water.¹²⁹

At current development funding, sub-Saharan would not fulfill the goal of halving the number of people without access to water until 2024, and the sanitation target will not be met until 2076. Another \$10 billion per year is needed to reach the 2015 target date.¹³⁰ Using the simplified model of society's response to water scarcity as a guide, the key issues in Africa are investing in the development of Africa's potential water resources, reducing drastically the number of people without access to safe water and adequate sanitation, ensuring food security by expanding irrigation areas and protecting the gains of economic development by effectively managing droughts, floods, and desertification.¹³¹

Multilateral Cooperation for Water Resource Management

Ensuring multilateral cooperation in water resource management is an important consideration when discussing water resource shortcomings. Several current, promising projects highlight experiences that may be used as models for future efforts.¹³² The World Bank initiated a partnership between the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to create sustainable water management policies that include environmental protection in its formulation.¹³³ The partnership was established to create lessons learned from experiences, collaborate on future projects, and integrate best practices into the program management of each partner organization.¹³⁴

The Global Water Partnership is a coalition of government institutions, private sector entities, and NGOs working to combine knowledge of water management with effective programs in order to promote sound water management policies on regional and local levels.¹³⁵ This coalition has created many useful tools for such purposes. Among those is a "Toolkit" containing a compendium of knowledge on programs and policies used to create sustainable water management programmes.¹³⁶

The World Water Council (WWC) identifies itself as the "international water policy think tank" and provides a wealth of information on many topics related to water resource management.¹³⁷ The Council is a network of private and public sector institutions combining resources to "build political commitment and trigger action on critical water issues at all levels, including the highest decision-making levels, to facilitate the efficient conservation, protection, development, planning, management, and use of water in all its dimensions on an environmentally sustainable basis for the benefit of all life on earth."¹³⁸ For example, the WWC's World Water Forum brings together water policy-makers and experts and serves as a precursor to global collaboration on water security problems.¹³⁹

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ *Climate Change Impact on Indigenous Peoples' Water Security, Land Use, Among Issues*. United Nations. Dept. of Public Information. News and Media Division. 6 September, 2007. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ngo626.doc.htm>

¹³¹ "Water in Africa: Management Options to Enhance Survival and Growth." United Nations. Economic and Social Council. Economic Commission for Africa. Sept. 2006. [http://www.uneca.org/awich/Water percent20in percent20Africa.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/awich/Water%20in%20Africa.pdf).

¹³² "Partnerships." World Bank Group. <http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/EESD/ardest.nsf/18ByDocName/>

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ "About Us: Small Planet. Big Job. Our Mission." Global Water Partnership http://www.gwpforum.org/servlet/PSP?chstartupName=_about

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ "About WWC." World Water Council. <http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/index.php?id=92&L=0>

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

In addition, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has targeted appropriate water resource management in its activities. Currently, UNEP maintains a database called the Global Environmental Monitoring Systems (GEMS), which is designed to provide information on the state of global inland water quality needed for sustainable management of the world's freshwater.¹⁴⁰ Since 1978, GEMS has maintained a global database to monitor fresh water resources in over 100 countries around the world.¹⁴¹

Conclusion

Population growth, urbanization and agriculture have always been linked to the availability of freshwater and the sustainability of renewable water resources. The demand for water has grown significantly over the last 50 years not only because of population growth, but also because of an increase in the uses of water for households, agriculture, and industrial production. Appropriate management of the world's water resources is essential for meeting the demands of a growing population and for expanding water uses. At the same time, we must also prevent the further degradation of our water sources and clean up polluted waters. The future of the world's water resources depends on improving management policies and practices globally. Water management institutions must incorporate efficient techniques for using water in industry and agriculture. In addition, most important, management policies must involve the interests of the local community in collaboration with national governments in order to protect water rights and ensure success of programs.

Committee Directive

One of the most important environmental issues facing the international community today is water scarcity. While this may seem like a simple topic, it is very complex. In order to have a fruitful discussion of the issues surrounding water scarcity, delegates should gain a complete understanding of the uses of water in their country. Because agriculture is the dominant source of income for many people in developing countries, some attention should be given to the management of irrigation systems. Further, delegates should become familiar with the concepts and policies of Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM). Finally, delegates should consider the best ways to allocate water resources in an equitable, but efficient manner.

Topic III: Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Land Management Practices

Introduction

The sustainable use of land is essential for achieving the overarching goal of sustainable development and as such sustainable land management is the focus of various UN activities. Agenda 21 along with the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development was adopted following the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 and defines the problem of unsustainable land use practices as follows,

“Expanding human requirements and economic activities are placing ever increasing pressures on land resources, creating competition and conflicts and resulting in suboptimal use of both land and land resources. If, in the future, human requirements are to be met in a sustainable manner, it is now essential to resolve these conflicts and move towards more effective and efficient use of land and its natural resources.”¹⁴²

This excerpt from Agenda 21 clearly shows that the issue of unsustainable land use must be immediately addressed if the requirements of future generations are to be met and if future conflicts over land resources are to be avoided.

¹⁴⁰ “GEMS / Water Programme.” The United Nations Environment Programme.
http://www.gemswater.org/common/pdfs/gems_brochure.pdf

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² “Agenda 21: Chapter 10” UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Sustainable Development
<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21chapter10.htm>

Unsustainable land use can have serious effects on sustainable development which can be seen by the fact that, "...poor land use practices result in declining agricultural yields, higher costs to maintain production levels and higher vulnerability to extreme events such as landslides and wildfires".¹⁴³ As such, "Land degradation in all its forms poses a serious threat to economic development, food security and rural livelihoods, especially in the poorest regions of the world".¹⁴⁴ While there are various reasons for unsustainable land use the Commission on Sustainable Development believes that in order to rectify the problem, "Challenges that need to be addressed...include: providing secure land rights, strengthening capacities of communities, adapting land use planning technologies, and improving the provisioning of data".¹⁴⁵

The extent of the human impact on the environment is alarming considering that, "Worldwide, humans have already converted approximately 29 percent of land area—almost 3.8 billion hectares—to agriculture and urban or built-up areas" and that, "land use change will be the primary driver of change to biodiversity".¹⁴⁶ The problem of unsustainable land use has serious consequences for biodiversity and long term environmental stability. The seriousness of the problem is even worse since environmental degradation is proceeding at an alarming rate and future projections are grim which is evident since,

"A quarter of the forest lost in the last 10,000 years has been destroyed in the last 30 years. Forest loss has a direct link to loss of biodiversity. The current extinction rate of plant and animal species is around 1,000 times faster than it was in pre-human times – and this will increase to 10,000 times faster by 2050."¹⁴⁷

The above projections on environmental degradation are extremely alarming and mean that unless the current trend of unsustainable land use is curtailed, the future will experience a serious loss of biodiversity and widespread extinctions. This loss of biodiversity and environmental resources will not only be an aesthetic loss, but could also result in the extinction of numerous species with yet unknown medical potential. The recent UN focus and the emphasis that the international community has placed on the negative effects of environmental degradation brings hope that sustainable land management may be achievable. One of the most promising developments that has widespread potential to promote sustainable land management is eco-tourism. The potential benefits of ecotourism are significant considering, "The value of international tourism exceeds US\$444 billion; nature-based tourism may comprise 40 to 60 percent of these expenditures and is increasing at 10 to 30 percent annually".¹⁴⁸ Ecotourism is effective in encouraging sustainable land management by providing local communities with a much-needed source of revenue that at the same time encourages environmental conservation and respect for indigenous communities. Although environmental degradation has been proceeding at an alarming rate, the potential of ecotourism combined with secure property rights and international financial incentives can go a long way towards promoting sustainable land management and in turn sustainable development. Thus, with continued UN support and action by the Commission on Sustainable Development substantial, long-term solutions can be developed that effectively respond to the current problem of unsustainable land use.

Financial Incentives for Promoting Sustainable Land Management

¹⁴³ E/CN.17/2008/5. *Review of Implementation on Land- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economic and Social Council. Do we need a Date??

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Jessica Forrest. "Protecting Ecosystems in a Changing World". World Resources Institute. July 2003.
http://earthtrends.wri.org/features/view_feature.php?theme=7&fid=47

¹⁴⁷ "Our Disappearing Forests" Greenpeace International.
<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaigns/forests/our-disappearing-forests>

¹⁴⁸ Wendy Vanasselt. "Ecotourism and Conservation: Are They Compatible?" World Resources Institute. 2000.
http://earthtrends.wri.org/features/view_feature.php?fid=29&theme=7

In order to promote sustainable land management, the proper financial mechanisms must be in place that rewards people for using the land in a sustainable manner. One recent trend that has begun to promote sustainable land management is the new emphasis of consumers on products that are produced in a sustainable manner. As more and more people are obtaining higher standards of living, they are beginning to become environmentally conscious and are incorporating environmental considerations into their purchasing decisions. The growing number of consumers interested in purchasing products that are produced in a sustainable manner has given rise to organizations such as the Rainforest Alliance that certify agricultural products that are produced in a sustainable environment. The Rainforest Alliance states that,

“(certification)...provides an effective method for ensuring that natural resources are managed for the long-term. Certification offers land users and businesses guidance on producing goods and providing services according to practical, efficient practices that will not deplete resources or negatively affect the environment or local communities. And through the purchase of certified products, it gives consumers the choice to vote with their dollars—to influence corporate commitment to sustainability.”¹⁴⁹

By certifying products that are produced without degrading the environment, the producers of those products are rewarded for using sustainable land management practices and have a vested interest in continued sustainable land management. To date the Rainforest Alliance has certified 430,000 farms and these farms have used Rainforest Alliance certification as a source of competitive advantage in differentiating their products and allowing them to charge premium prices.¹⁵⁰

Another method of providing financial incentives to promote sustainable land management practices are programs like the World Bank’s BioCarbon Fund, which provides direct payments to farmers who produce in a sustainable manner or to individuals engaging in reforestation projects.¹⁵¹ Programs like these directly align financial payment with sustainable land management and provide farmers with the initial financial investment required to undertake a sustainable land management project. One example of a BioCarbon Fund project in Costa Rica will increase reforestation projects and provide financial support to local farmers by, “...pay(ing) the farmers for environmental services of biodiversity protection, protection of water resources and scenic beauty generated by the reforestation activities, and these payments will be complemented with the additional incomes coming from the carbon sales.”¹⁵² So far these payment programs have been successful, which can be seen since according to the Secretary-Generals report on the Review of Implementation on Land, “Along with project and programme funding by national governments, international agencies and development banks, an increasing range of financing mechanisms have stimulated integrated land resource management in the last decade.”¹⁵³

Another innovative technique that provides financial incentives to promote sustainable land management is Debt-For-Nature-Swaps. Under these programs, conservation organizations, such as the World Wildlife Federation, purchase foreign debt at discounted prices and form agreements with developing countries where the debt is eliminated in exchange for creating areas of environmental conservation.¹⁵⁴ An example of a recent debt-for-nature-

¹⁴⁹ “Certification: About Certification”. Rainforest Alliance.
<http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/certification.cfm?id=about>

¹⁵⁰ “Sustainable Agriculture”. Rainforest Alliance. <http://www.rainforest-alliance.org/agriculture.cfm?id=main>

¹⁵¹ “BioCarbon Fund”. The World Bank Carbon Finance Unit.
<http://carbonfinance.org/Router.cfm?Page=BioCF&ft>About>

¹⁵² “Costa Rica: Coopeagri Forestry”. The World Bank Carbon Finance Unit.
<http://carbonfinance.org/Router.cfm?Page=BioCF&FID=9708&ItemID=9708&ft=Projects&ProjID=9632>

¹⁵³ E/CN.17/2008/5. *Review of Implementation on Land- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economic and Social Council. 11 February, 2008.

¹⁵⁴ “How We Do It: Conservation Finance”. World Wildlife Fund.
<http://worldwildlife.org/conservationfinance/swaps.cfm>

swap that was funded by the World Wildlife Federation provided \$20 million in funding to protect biodiversity in Madagascar and was part of a plan by the President of Madagascar to triple the size of its protected areas.¹⁵⁵ While the use of debt-for-nature swaps is still limited, they have extensive potential because not only do they promote sustainable land management, but they are also an effective tool in reducing the debt burdens of developing nations.

The ability of farmers in the developing world to engage in free trade provides another essential financial incentive for promoting sustainable land management. As it stands, subsidies, tariffs, and quotas of many developed countries seriously impede the ability of farmers in the developing world to sell their products at fair prices.¹⁵⁶ The extent of the losses to the developing world caused by trade barriers can be seen by the fact that if trade barriers were removed in the sugar industry alone, “the global welfare gains...are estimated to total as much as \$4.7 billion a year.”¹⁵⁷ This increased revenue would mean that local farmers would be able to produce the same level of output on less land and would be in a stronger financial position to incorporate sustainable land management practices into production. According to the president of the World Bank, trade barriers not only inhibit the competitiveness of farmers in the developing world, but also contribute to, “...food price inflation and hurt the poorest people.”¹⁵⁸ This is a major problem considering the fact that, “Crop prices influence the relative profitability of land management options and thus land allocation decisions for alternative production scenarios. If markets are inefficient and prices are distorted, land and other natural resource endowments may be significantly undervalued.”¹⁵⁹ Member States also have an obligation to reduce trade barriers because according to Principle 12 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, “States should cooperate to promote a supportive and open international economic system that would lead to economic growth and sustainable development in all countries, to better address the problems of environmental degradation.”¹⁶⁰

Ensuring secure property rights and access to land is another important way of providing individuals a direct financial stake in undertaking sustainable land management. If people own their own land and feel secure in their property rights, they have a stake in protecting and investing in the land. The importance of property rights can be seen by the fact that, “The lack of clearly defined tenure and access rights to land and other natural resources is particularly problematic for poor rural land users, preventing them from undertaking the necessary investments in sustainable natural resource management.”¹⁶¹ In addition to promoting sustainable land management, secure property rights have also been shown to prevent conflicts and empower local individuals to improve land productivity and reduce poverty.¹⁶²

The Role of Ecotourism

One of the newest and most promising activities aimed at promoting sustainable land management is the widespread increase in ecotourism. Recently an increasing number of consumers from the developed world have become interested in traveling to developing nations to observe areas of biodiversity and indigenous cultures. The increase in national and local revenues generated by ecotourism has provided communities with a strong incentive to protect areas of biodiversity and use the land in a sustainable manner. According to the Secretary-General’s Report on

¹⁵⁵ Erika Viltz. “Monumental Debt-for-Nature Swap Provides \$20 Million to Protect Biodiversity in Madagascar, WWF Announces”. World Wildlife Fund. 11, June 2008. <http://www.worldwildlife.org/who/media/press/2008/WWFPresitem9271.html>

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Donald Mitchell. “Sugar Policies: Opportunity for Change (WPS 3222)”. The World Bank. February 2004

¹⁵⁸ “Food Barriers ‘Hurt Worlds Poorest’: World Bank Chief”. The World Bank. <http://go.worldbank.org/5PZED9EYS0>

¹⁵⁹ E/CN.17/2008/5. *Review of Implementation on Land- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economic and Social Council.

¹⁶⁰ A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I). *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*. United Nations General Assembly.

¹⁶¹ E/CN.17/2008/5. *Review of Implementation on Land- Report of the Secretary-General*. United Nations Economic and Social Council.

¹⁶² Ibid

Tourism and Sustainable Development, the tourism industry is counting to experience rapid growth and, "...has important implications for the achievement of sustainable development, particularly in small island developing States and tourist destinations with fragile ecological environments."¹⁶³

The potential of ecotourism is also very promising because in addition to sustainable land management it helps accelerate the UN goal of poverty alleviation since, "The tourism sector can be a major driving force for economic development in many developing countries because of its large potential multiplier and spillover effects on the rest of the economy."¹⁶⁴ This is because tourism not only encourages environmental protection, but also provides much needed jobs in support industries such as the hospitality and food service sectors. Furthermore, ecotourism is a unique way to recognize and protect indigenous communities by providing revenues that are generated when tourists buy local arts and crafts that are an essential part of indigenous cultures. Recognizing the potential of Ecotourism to promote sustainable land management and poverty alleviation, the United Nations declared 2002 the International Year of Ecotourism.¹⁶⁵

In order to accelerate and facilitate the development of ecotourism, numerous ecotourism certification programs have developed to inform eco-tourists of locations that fully incorporate sustainable activities and environmental protection into their operations. One of the most successful of the certification programs is the Certification of Sustainable Tourism Program in Costa Rica which defines sustainable tourism as an,

"interaction of three basic factors within the tourism industry:
1- Proper stewardship of our natural and cultural resources; 2-
Improvement of the quality of life of the local communities;
and 3- Economic success, that can contribute to other
programs of national development."¹⁶⁶

The incorporation of three different factors into the Certification of Sustainable Tourism Program in Costa Rica is important because it demonstrates how ecotourism programs are not only suppose to promote environmental stewardship, but should also improve the quality of life of local communities and lead to economic success, which brings local support and leads to the adoption of sustainable tourism programs in other areas. The emphasis Costa Rica's Certification of Sustainable Tourism Program places on economic success and improving living standards for local communities clearly shows that proper financial incentives are extremely important to the viability of ecotourism programs. These certification programs are an interesting and useful development because, "The widespread implementation of CST will produce direct individual benefits to businesses (reduced costs, increased occupancy, and better image) while offering substantial environmental and social guarantees to the local population."¹⁶⁷

While there are many potential benefits to ecotourism, it is important to remember that, "uncontrolled tourism growth can also cause environmental degradation, destruction of fragile ecosystems, and social and cultural conflict, undermining the basis of tourism."¹⁶⁸ The exponential growth in the tourism industry is also exposing the developing world to potential risks because, "Economic recession and the impacts of natural disasters such as

¹⁶³ E/CN.17/1999/5. *Tourism and Sustainable Development- Report of the Secretary General*. United Nations Economic and Social Council.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid

¹⁶⁵ A/RES/53/200. *Proclamation of 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism*. United Nations General Assembly.

¹⁶⁶ "Certification for Sustainable Tourism: When and Why it Appears" Sustainability Programs Department of the Costa Rica Tourist Board. 30 January 2008. <http://www.turismo-sostenible.co.cr/EN/sobreCST/when-why.shtml>

¹⁶⁷ "Certification for Sustainable Tourism (CST)". Partnerships for Sustainable Development. 4 January 2004. <http://webapps01.un.org/dsd/partnerships/public/partnerships/242.html>

¹⁶⁸ "Sustainable Tourism". UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs Division for Sustainable Development. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/tourism/tourism.htm>

tropical storms and cyclones can have devastating effects on the tourism sector.”¹⁶⁹ A further potential problem with the growth of ecotourism is the fact that,

“In many instances, much of the impact of tourism activity is localized: host communities suffer the effects of overcrowding, pressure on resources and challenges to established culture, including negative changes in the patterns of religious observance, dress, behavioral norms, and traditions from interactions with non-indigenous cultures.”¹⁷⁰

This quote essentially shows that if ecotourism programs are not developed with adequate planning and an emphasis on overall sustainability, they can lead to the destruction of the indigenous cultures that they were meant to protect.

While there may be some risks associated with the spread of tourism, its potential rewards and ability to facilitate poverty alleviation and sustainable land management are substantial. In many developing countries that are struggling to jump start their economies the fact that earnings from international tourism are expected to rise from \$443 billion in 1997 to more than \$2 trillion in 2020 brings with it promising opportunities for sustainable development.¹⁷¹ In order for countries to take advantage of the increase in tourism a national enabling environment must exist where immigration policies facilitate the inflow of tourists, promote market liberalization and the easing of foreign currency regulations, and create an environment that fosters confidence among foreign investors.¹⁷² The last point is of particular importance because in order to develop the infrastructure and facilities for ecotourism, foreign investment is likely to be required.

Conclusion

The use of financial incentives along with the recent increase in ecotourism are both of particular importance to facilitating and accelerating the UN’s goal of promoting sustainable land management. The issue of sustainable land management is of urgent importance because as the human population continues to grow, there will continue to be increased pressures to use land resources in an unsustainable manner to meet increasing human requirements for such things as food and shelter. While unsustainable land use can be used in the short-term to attempt to meet increasing human requirements, it is important to remember that unsustainable land use jeopardizes the ability of future generations to meet their requirements.

The goal of sustainable land management can only be met if people are given incentives to protect, conserve, and improve land resources. By providing individuals with secure property rights and direct payments, they are given the very incentives necessary to adopt sustainable land management practices. Furthermore, ecotourism also provides local communities with incentives because their prosperity directly correlates with environmental conservation and sustainable land management. The success of such programs as debt-for-nature-swaps, the BioCarbon Fund, and certification of sustainable agricultural products means that their use is likely to continue, but like ecotourism, they also have potential problems that must be addressed to ensure that local communities do not become overly dependent on direct financial payments. Recent trends, such as the increasing interest in ecotourism and other forms of environmental conservation, demonstrate that it is possible to achieve sustainable land management, but an enabling environment must first be in place and the first steps to creating an enabling environment rely on providing financial incentives and promoting ecotourism.

Committee Directive

Recognizing the importance of sustainable land management, the Commission on Sustainable Development has made land one of the issues to be discussed in its current thematic cycle. One of the documents the CSD is charged with implementing is Agenda 21, which claims that,

¹⁶⁹ E/CN.17/1999/5. *Tourism and Sustainable Development- Report of the Secretary General*. United Nations Economic and Social Council.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid

¹⁷¹ Ibid

¹⁷² Ibid

“By examining all uses of land in an integrated manner, it makes it possible to minimize conflicts, to make the most efficient trade-offs and to link social and economic development with environmental protection and enhancement, thus helping to achieve the objectives of sustainable development.”¹⁷³

The CSD is in a unique position to take a major role on the issue of sustainable land management because according to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI), the CSD is a high-level forum for sustainable development within the UN system.¹⁷⁴ By allowing for cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors, the CSD can facilitate meaningful discussion and the exchange of best practices for achieving sustainable land management. While there have been promising trends in promoting sustainable land management, further action is still desperately needed to curtail the plague of environmental degradation.

The issues and theories behind sustainable land management are detailed and diverse, but only a basic understanding of the issue is required for meaningful discussion. There are countless issues that can be discussed under the umbrella of sustainable land management, but the issues of financial incentives and ecotourism have been identified as being some of the most pertinent. Numerous UN documents and reports address the importance and provide a through background to the issue of sustainable land management. Among the most important are Reports of the Secretary-General including the “Review of Implementation on Land” and “Tourism and Sustainable Development”. While the issue of sustainable land management is extensive and diverse, an understanding and discussion of financial incentives and ecotourism will be beneficial in creating an enabling environment for the adoption of sustainable land management practices.

¹⁷³ “Agenda 21: Chapter 10”. UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs Division for Sustainable Development. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21chapter10.htm>

¹⁷⁴ “About CSD”. United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/aboutCsd.htm>

Technical Appendix

Topic I: Technical Appendix- Meeting the Unique Sustainable Development Needs of Africa

Contribution by the NGO major group sector on Africa and sustainable development. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/bp3_2008.pdf

This report addresses the various sustainable development issues affecting Africa from an NGO perspective. The areas of particular importance to this topic are the sections on agriculture and rural development since these sections address such issues as market access, land rights, and infrastructure development. Delegates should also give attention to the sections on land and water as these will be other topics discussed by the CSD.

International Year of Microcredit 2005. “Microfinance and the Millennium Development Goals”. United National Capital Development Fund. http://www.yearofmicrocredit.org/docs/mdgdoc_MN.pdf

The report provides a detailed overview of the potential of microcredit to assist in achieving development and places particular emphasis on the role of microcredit in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It also explains how effective microfinance programs can lead to improvements in other areas such as health services, the empowerment of women, and rural development. All sections of the report are useful in providing delegates with a basic overview and understanding of the benefits of microfinance.

Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. United Nations. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POIToc.htm

The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) was adopted after the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and is one of the most essential documents to the mission of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development. Chapter 8 of the JPOI deserves special attention since it relates to sustainable development in Africa and this chapter is the most useful part of the document in developing an understanding of the topic. The chapter goes over all of the various topics that have caused sustainable development to remain elusive in Africa and contains UN actions and recommendations aimed at promoting sustainable development on the continent.

Land Tenure Supports Sustainable Development. UN Food and Agriculture Organization. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/fao_factsheet/landtenure.pdf

This brief document details the importance of secure property rights in fostering sustainable development. It's useful in developing an understanding of the fact that property rights encourage effective land use, investment and wealth generation which leads to economic growth.

Meinzen-Dick, Ruth & Di Gregorio, Monica. “Collective Action and Property Rights for Sustainable Development.” International Food Policy Research Institute. <http://www.ifpri.org/2020/focus/focus11/focus11.pdf>

This detailed report emphasizes the importance of property rights and collective action in promoting development. The report is important to the topic because it clearly states that secure property rights are essential in determining whether people will invest and effectively use resources to foster development. While it specifically relate to Africa, the report is valuable in helping delegates understand the critical role that secure property rights play in promoting sustainable development.

Migiro, Asha-Rose . “Investment in Africa Needed for Sustainable Development to take root, says Deputy-Secretary General in Remarks to Ministerial Round Table”. UN Department of Public Information. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/dsgsm392.doc.htm>

Switch Author Names (Unless its okay in the technical appendix)

In her remarks to the CSD, the UN Deputy Secretary-General highlighted the need for investment in Africa. She also specifically highlighted the importance of investing in infrastructure for sustainable development and claimed that Africa must create an attractive environment for private investment. These remarks clearly show that financial capital and infrastructure development are some of the most important issues that must be addressed to meet the unique sustainable development needs of Africa.

Sustainable Development Report on Africa: Five-year review of the Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development Outcomes in Africa (WSSD+5). United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. http://www.uneca.org/eca_resources/Publications/books/sdra/index.htm

The Sustainable Development Report on Africa provides a comprehensive report on sustainable development problems, progress, and future actions that are needed in Africa. The report covers an extensive list of sustainable development issues, but delegates should focus on the sections relating to private sector development, agriculture for sustainable development, energy for sustainable development, and transportation for sustainable development as these are most pertinent to the areas that will be discussed. The sections on water resources, sustainable land management, and tourism will also be useful in developing an understanding of other topics to be addressed by the CSD.

The World Bank. “Developing Africa’s Transport: The Shifting Paradigm”.

<http://www.worldbank.org/afr/findings/english/find114.htm>

(GO TO LINK AND CHECK BOTTOM PARAGRAPH REGARDING WHO WROTE THE ARTICLE AND SHOULD BE GIVE PROPER CREDIT TO HIM)

The article addresses the critical importance of infrastructure in achieving sustainable development in Africa. It discusses past problems with attempts to develop transportation infrastructure in Africa and claims that there is a need to reassess the public-private relationship with respect to developing transportation infrastructure. The article also highlights the role of the World Bank in providing technical assistance and financing for infrastructure development.

Trends in Sustainable Development: Africa Report 2008-2009. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/trends_africa2008/fullreport.pdf

This comprehensive report on sustainable development in Africa addresses various issues and summarizes future trends. The section on infrastructure and services clearly demonstrates how there is a large disparity in all forms of infrastructure in Africa and shows how continued development is desperately needed. The sections on structure of the economy, agriculture, and development finance will also be beneficial to discussing the topic of meeting the unique sustainable development needs of Africa. Other sections of the report will also be useful for the other two topics that will be discussed by the CSD.

Topic II: Technical Appendix- The International Water for Life Decade (2005-2015): A Discussion of Water Resources and Management

A/60/158. *Actions take in organizing the activities for the International Decade of Action, “Water for Life, 2005-2015.* United Nations General Assembly. Date

This report of the Secretary-General details all of the actions and objectives of the UN in relation to the Water for Life Decade. It provides extremely useful background information on why the decade was established and what this initiative hopes to accomplish in improving the quality of and access to water resources. The sections on “Intergovernmental Processes” and “Partnership Initiatives” will be useful for the discussion on the necessity of multilateral action to improve access to water resources.

United Nations. "International Decade for Action: Water for Life 2005-2015".

<http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/background.html>

This valuable website is the homepage for the Water for Life Decade. It discusses the serious concerns relating to water resources and management and explains how addressing the issue of access to water resources is essential to achieving sustainable development. It also provides links to numerous articles, publications, and websites with information on water resources and management. Delegates should pay particular attention to the "Issues" sections of the website as it provides an overall outline of the issues surrounding water resources and the problems associated with a lack of access to water. Specifically under the "Issues" section, delegates should focus on the sections relating to conflict and Africa as these will be the areas of focus at the conference.

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. "African Water Development Report 2006". 2006.

http://www.uneca.org/awich/AWDR_percent20full.pdf

This extensive report provides incredibly detailed information on the progress and challenges in addressing the issue of water resources in Africa. The level of detail in the report goes far beyond what is needed for the conference, but delegates can develop a meaningful understanding of water resources in Africa by skimming the report. Delegates should focus on the sections on the Millennium Development Goals as well as the Conclusion and Recommendations section. These sections will provide delegates with useful knowledge of the situation and suggested ways to address the water problem in Africa.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Agenda 21: Chapter 18".

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/english/agenda21chapter18.htm>

The CSD is charged with implementing the agreements made under Agenda 21, so this document is essential to the mission of the CSD. Chapter 18 of Agenda 21 specifically addresses freshwater resources and their importance to living standards and development. This section also discusses the problems that are encountered when attempting to improve access to water resources and highlights solutions that have been agreed to by all signatories. The overall document clearly addresses the essential nature of water resources and breaks the overarching issue down into specific programme areas. A general understanding of all programme areas is useful and the areas of integrated water resources development and management, water and sustainable urban development, and water for sustainable food production and rural development will probably be the issues that are most widely addressed at the conference.

UN Water. "Coping with Water Scarcity". 2007 . <http://www.fao.org/nr/water/docs/escarcity.pdf>

This document is incredibly valuable in developing an overall understanding of the issues and problems associated with water scarcity. The information it provides on future projections, challenges, and trends is especially useful as it highlights the urgent need to address the problem. Overall this document provides a treasure trove of information on the issues relating to access to water and fresh water management.

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Partnerships for Sustainable Development".

<http://webapps01.un.org/dsd/partnerships/public/simpleSearch.do?dispatch=search&searchLogic=searchTypeAnd&keywords=&partnerFretext=&themes=106&search=Search>

This webpage provides links to numerous partnerships the CSD has established to assist in its goal of improving access to fresh water and water resource management. By looking over some of these partnerships, delegates can improve their understanding of why multilateral action is an essential part of water resource management. This website is also important because multilateral action will be one of the main areas of focus for the topic.

United Nations Development Programme. "Summary Human Development Report 2006: Beyond Scarcity- Power, poverty, and the global water crisis".
http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/hdr2006_english_summary.pdf

Even in the summarized version, this detailed annual report by the UNDP provides extensive detail on the global water crisis. The document is very useful in showing the link between access to water resources and human development. One section of particular usefulness to delegates is the section on "Managing transboundary waters. This section shows how managing water resources must inherently involve multilateral action because water resources spread over vast areas. It also addresses the potential for conflicts to arise over water resources in transboundary waters are not properly managed and conserved. The facts and figures provided throughout the document relating to the global water crisis could also prove useful when writing position papers.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. "Hot Issues: Water Scarcity".
<http://www.fao.org/nr/water/issues/scarcity.html>

This homepage clearly shows the importance and implications of water scarcity and management of water resources. It highlights the importance of water resources in agricultural production but also discusses the importance of water resource management and water scarcity throughout the UN system. The link to publications is particularly beneficial for obtaining a ton of detailed information and reports.

Topic III: Technical Appendix- Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Land Management Practices

Africa Recovery. "Ecotourism propels development". United Nations. June 1999.
<http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/subjindx/131envir.htm>

This brief article is useful for understanding the widespread potential benefits of ecotourism in developing countries. The examples provided along with statistics will be useful in developing working papers. Of particular interest is the fact that the article clearly demonstrates how increased revenues from ecotourism can pervade many aspects of a country's economy and lead to development in various sectors. The case studies and analysis of ecotourism programs is also very useful in understanding how the benefits of ecotourism can encourage sustainable land management.

E/CN.17/2008/4. *Rural Development*. United Nations Economic and Social Council. Date

While this document focuses exclusively on rural development, the sections on natural resource management and rural finance are useful in recognizing the importance of sustainable land management in rural areas. Rural communities often face the greatest risk from environmental degradation caused by unsustainable land use and lack the necessary financial institutions to fund sustainable development. While not explicitly mentioned, it is easy to see from the lack of financial institutions in rural areas, that the revenues generated from ecotourism can be extremely beneficial for sustainable rural development.

E/CN.17/2001/PC/13. *Agriculture, Land, and desertification*. United Nations Economic and Social Council. Date

This report of the Secretary-General shows the interrelated nature of land use, agricultural productivity, and rural development. It explains that while agricultural productivity has increased over the last decade, developing countries have not seen many benefits and unsustainable land use remains a major problem for the developing world. The document also highlights various UN agreements and resulting actions relating to land use. The concluding section on "Issues for Further Consideration" demonstrates continued issues affecting sustainable land management and provides recommendations to address the issue of unsustainable land use.

ESCAP Tourism Review NO.23. *Ecotourism Development in the Pacific Islands*. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. 2003. http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/Publications/TPTS_pubs/Toreview_No23_2300/Toreview_No23_2300.pdf

This extensive review on the development of tourism on various Pacific Islands provides numerous useful case studies that demonstrate the extent, potential, and problems relating to the development of the ecotourism industry. The Pacific Islands may not be the largest or most rapidly growing regions for ecotourism development, but these detailed case studies provide a valuable overview of all the issues relating to ecotourism. The entire document provides useful tips and best practices on the development of ecotourism that can be applied in most countries. The section on “General Issues for Ecotourism in Island Developing Countries” is especially useful in showing how ecotourism can sometime lead to unsustainable land use without proper planning and management. A basic understanding of one of the case studies and issues relating to ecotourism in the report will be useful in addressing the topic.

Management Of Land-Based Resources For Sustainable Development: Policy Recommendations. United Nations Committee on Sustainable Development. October 24-28, 2005. http://www.uneca.org/csd/CSD4_Management_of_Land-Based_Res_for_Sustainable_Dev.htm

This document clearly addresses the issues of sustainable land management from the perspective of the UN Committee on Sustainable Development and lists policy recommendations. Of particular importance to this year’s CSD topic are the sections relating to land tenure. These sections show that secure property rights are essential in providing financial incentives for investment and sustainable land management. The section on the assessment of current land reform policies is also interesting in that it demonstrates how national governments attempt to deal with issues relating to sustainable land management. Furthermore, the section on water resources will be beneficial for the discussion of topic II.

Michael Stocking. “Land Degradation in the World’s Most Acutely Affected Areas”. United Nations University. <http://unuony.hypermart.net/seminars/2007/LandManagement/presentations/PaperStocking.pdf>

This paper clearly shows the extent of worldwide land degradation and its implications on other areas of development such as poverty and food insecurity. The paper gives a good overview of the consequences of unsustainable land management and shows that poorer regions are disproportionately affected by land degradation. It is also filled with numerous statistics that will be beneficial when writing working papers.

Sustainable Land Management. UN Food and Agriculture Organization. <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/ai559e/ai559e00.pdf>

This brief document by the FAO addresses the key problems relating to unsustainable land management and discusses various FAO activities aimed at promoting sustainable land management. It specifically discusses the importance of partnerships and information sharing in promoting sustainable land management. The document provides a basic overview of sustainable land management and why it is a major concern throughout the UN system.

“Sustainable Land Management”. The World Bank. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTARD/0,,contentMDK:21432937~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:336682,00.html>

This site gives a detailed overview of challenges, opportunities, and policy recommendations relating to sustainable land management. It is also useful in showing how financial rewards are essential to the overall success of sustainable land management programs and details actions by the World Bank to promote and finance sustainable land management. Also of interest are the links to various other pages relating to sustainable land management and the link to the detailed World Bank report on sustainable land management.