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The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20, will open in 141 days. This will be one of 2012's major international meetings.

Today, a broad panel of NGOs, companies, trade unions, local elected officials and scientists are meeting to prepare for the summit. This meeting comes at a key moment, as an initial draft declaration for the summit has been published under the promising title "The Future We Want".

The purpose of this meeting is not to hold our own Rio Conference before Rio+20, but rather to concentrate on a specific subject, the reform of global environmental governance, and to provide the Conference with proposals.

Principle 10 of the 1992 Rio Declaration proclaims the essential role of civil society in dealing with environmental issues. Twenty years later, the results have been patchy.

By reflecting on what a Global Environment Organisation might look like, and on the place science could hold within it, we invite you to imagine solutions to create a global environmental democracy.

Thanks to the commitment of French civil society, which met for preparatory workshops yesterday, we now have proposals that will be presented before each of the Conference's roundtables.

Today's discussions and proposals are designed to be shared with the Conference. We hope they will fuel debates for sustainable solutions and solidarity, which the European Union has called for.

We hope you enjoy the Conference and invite you to participate actively in the debates.

Towards new global governance for the environment

AGENDA

MORNING

8.30-9.15am Greeting attendees. Welcome coffee

OPENING

9.30-10.15am Conference inauguration

- Welcome from **Jean-Paul Delevoye**, CESE chairman
- Speech by **Alain Juppé**, French Minister of State, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs
- Speech by **Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet**, French Minister of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing
- Speech by **Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser**, President of the United Nations General Assembly

Special Guest: **Edgar Morin**, President of the International Institute on Political Research on Civilisation

10.30-12.15pm Session 1: WHO, WTO, ILO¹... what model for global environmental governance?

- *How can we streamline the institutional set-up, going from 500 active sustainable development organisations to one World Environment Organisation?*
- *How can we facilitate the implementation of environmental standards?*
- *How can we prevent environmental dumping?*

SESSION 1

Report from rapporteur No.1, **Bettina Laville**, Honorary Chair of Committee 21, on the previous day's workshops

Amina Mohamed, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, **Gérard Mestrallet**, President-Director General of GDF Suez, Chair of the "Pacte Mondial France" steering committee, **Monique Barbut**, CEO and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility, **Staffan Nilsson**, President of the European Economic and Social Committee, **Serge Orru**, Director General of WWF France

Gerard Worms, Chairman of ICC, **Felix Dodds**, Executive Director of Stakeholders Forum for a Sustainable Future, **Ellen MacArthur**, Chair of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, **Julia Marton-Lefevre**, Director General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, **Huang Haomin**, Executive Director of CANGO, network of Chinese NGOs

12.15-12.30 pm Speech by the four rapporteurs of the previous day's workshops to introduce the call from the civil society for a world environment organization : Bettina Laville, Honorary Chair of Committee 21, **Jean Jouzel**, Vice-Chair of IPCC Group 1, Member of the CESE, **Pierre Radanne**, President of 4D, and **Gilles Berhault**, President of Committee 21 and President of the guidance council of the Club France Rio+20

12.30-1.00pm Lunch break – Press briefing

AFTERNOON

SESSION 2

1.45-3pm Session 2: Will science save RIO+20?

- How can we create a common culture between scientific expertise and political action? or How can we reconcile the time required for scientific research and the urgent need for action?
- After the IPCC for climate and the IPBES for biodiversity: how will the WEO work with science?
- To what extent should scientists be involved in international negotiations?
- How would a WEO facilitate the decompartmentalisation of scientific fields and their opening to new knowledge (traditional or lay)?

Report from rapporteur No. 2, **Jean Jouzel**, Vice-Chair of IPCC Group 1, Member of the CESE, on the previous day's workshops

Pavan Sukhdev, author of the report on the economics of ecosystems and biodiversity, **Jean-Pascal van Ypersele**, Vice-Chair of the IPCC, **François Loos**, President-Director General of ADEME, **Marion Guillou**, President-Director General of INRA, **Carol Turley**, oceanographer.

Birima Diarra, Head of the Research and Development Division, Malian National Directorate for Meteorology, **Gilles Bœuf**, President of the National Natural History Museum

SESSION 3

3.00-4.45pm Session 3: WEO: the birth of environmental democracy?

Building governance with social, economic and territorial actors

- Who can channel the planet's voice?
- What lessons can we learn from existing models of associations in civil society (Grenelle, Aarhus Convention, etc.)?
- Can the Grenelle Environment Forum's 5-member governance be transposed to the WEO?
- What connections are there between global environmental governance and the situation in the field: the role of local authorities

Report from rapporteur No. 3, **Pierre Radanne**, President of 4D, and **Gilles Berhault**, President of Committee 21, on the previous day's workshops

Pierre-André de Chalendar, President-Director General of Saint-Gobain, member of the Board of Directors of AFEP, **Jeremy Wates**, Secretary General of the European Environmental Bureau, **Rubens Harry Born**, Chairman of Vitae Civilis, Brazilian NGO, **Bernadette Ségol**, General Secretary of the European Trade Unions Confederation, **Gino Van Begin**, Director of ICLEI Europe

Yves Leterme, Deputy Secretary General of the OECD, **Luciano Ducci**, Mayor of Curitiba, Brazil, **Ronan Dantec** Senator, spokesperson of Cités et Gouvernements Locaux Unis, **Jacques Pélissard**, Chairman of the Association des Maires de France, **Dov Zerah**, General Director AFD

4.45-5-15pm Break

CONCLUSION

5.15-6pm Conclusions and press briefing

- **Brice Lalonde**, Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
- **Cherif Rahmani**, Algerian Minister for Territorial Organisation and the Environment
- **Tiemoko Sangaré**, Malian Minister of the Environment and Sanitation
- **Ida Auken**, Danish Minister of the Environment
- **Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet**, French Minister of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing



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TRANSPORT AND HOUSING



Towards New Global Governance for the Environment

Conference held on 31 January 2012



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1. An international conference to improve global governance for the environment

Climate change, declining biodiversity, soil erosion and desertification, worsening pollution... The international community must endow itself with the resources to respond to these challenges by strengthening global environmental governance, which is overly fragmented today. The Conference to be held in Rio de Janeiro from 20 to 22 June – 20 years after the 1992 Earth Summit – will be a unique opportunity to achieve this.

France hopes that the decision will be taken at “Rio+20” to set up a World Environment Organization (WEO). Increasing awareness of the role of civil society and non-governmental actors is one of the achievements of the 1992 Rio conference. And yet the UN system still has not sufficiently integrated these changes. A negotiation “industry” that is overly dispersed in too many forums limits the system’s effectiveness and participation by those who should be making contributions to it. **Today, too many key actors are being left out of negotiations which do not always lead to concrete results.**

With the WEO project, France, along with the European Union and other partners, defends the idea of a United Nations agency that will be able to:

- ✓ provide a strategic, multilateral vision to prevent tensions surrounding the depletion of natural resources;
- ✓ reinforce the synergy and consistency between the many Multilateral Environmental Agreements;
- ✓ facilitate the implementation of environmental standards;
- ✓ get civil society involved.

This project could be a key to modernising the United Nations system, allowing wide-ranging, innovative involvement by non-governmental actors. On all levels – local, national and international – all “stakeholders” have a role to play in defining and achieving environmental objectives.

Rio+20 will be a unique opportunity to propose a well-suited, innovative method of organization on the international level that goes beyond the limits of 20th century models. The conference held on 31 January should contribute to this.

The goal of the “Towards New Global Governance for the Environment” conference is to provide food for thought, in the most open and concrete way possible, for this reform of international environmental governance and the place granted to non-governmental actors (NGOs, trade unions, businesses and local authorities). Civil society will work closely in preparing this conference, notably through the organization of workshops¹ the day before, the summaries of which will fuel the debates.

¹ Workshop 1: Stakeholders’ expectations; Workshop 2: Record and outlook for a real transition toward sustainable development; Workshop 3: Bringing the environmental pillar and the rest of the international system together; Workshop 4: The principal founders of renewed environmental governance; Workshop 5: An effective, democratic interface between science and policy; Workshop 6: Ensuring transverse, systemic scientific analysis; Workshop 7: How should scientific analysis be diffused and to what audience; Workshop 8: Information technologies in modernised governance; Workshop 9: Rio+20, for global governance based on the principles of democracy, responsibility and solidarity; Workshop 10: What lessons can we learn from existing models of associations; Workshop 11: From local to global, the role of institutions in environmental governance.

Discussions will focus on three main questions:

- ✓ World Health Organization, World Trade Organization, International Labour Organization... which model is best suited to global governance for the environment?
- ✓ Will science save Rio+20?
- ✓ WEO: the birth of environmental democracy? How can we develop governance with social, economic and territorial actors?

2. Why would a World Environment Organization be the solution?

A. Why set up a World Environment Organization (WEO)?

Rio+20 should lead to a favourable decision on a WEO for four reasons:

1. **An environmental pillar needs to be created as it is lacking in the global governance of sustainable development.** Sustainable development is based on three pillars – economic, social and environmental – but today, the environmental pillar is splintered into over 500 fragmented, partitioned multilateral agreements.
2. Climate change, declining biodiversity, soil erosion and desertification, and various forms of pollution are quickly getting worse. **But with the lack of a strong multilateral authority, tensions surrounding resources risk being resolved between individual countries, to the detriment of the weakest.**
3. On some subjects, such as forests or the oceans, environmental questions require a more coherent approach. **The WEO should signal the start of these issues' being taking into account in an integrated manner, in collaboration with other concerned organizations.**
4. It has become a necessity, both from the point of view of global democracy and in terms of effectiveness, to bring all countries together in international environmental governance. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was founded 40 years ago, when the environment was a new international subject that a limited group of countries could be entrusted to handle. UNEP's Board of Directors only includes 58 countries. This is no longer acceptably today.

Over the past 40 years, many attempts at marginal improvements to the system have failed. But the cost of inaction has never been higher. It is therefore time to develop a credible multilateral response. To be pragmatic, the proposed reform builds on what exists, i.e. UNEP, whose headquarters are in Nairobi.

B. Is it possible to found a WEO at the Rio+20 summit ?

Over 100 countries have already officially announced that they are in favour of a WEO-type Organization, notably the European Union Member States (27), African Union Member States (54), some fifteen countries in the United Nations' "Europe" region (from Iceland to Central Asia), as well as countries in Asia (Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia) and Latin America (Chile and Uruguay). Never has support been so strong on the different continents and in countries with such different levels of development. This support is not only proof that there is a consensus that the system is fragmented, but also that many countries are ready to take a decision on ambitious reform.

C. How does this project strengthen governance for sustainable development ?

There is no opposition between the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development. This debate was settled 20 years ago with the Rio Declaration, which states that "environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process" (principle 4).

In its 2011 Human Development Report, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) stresses that environmental sustainability and social fairness are intimately linked. It demonstrates that half of all cases of malnutrition around the world are due environmental factors. It also indicates that in the coming years, environmental factors will push food prices up by 30 to 50%. Lastly, it emphasises that, worldwide, arrangements concerning governance often weaken the voice of developing countries and exclude marginalised groups.

If Rio+20 does not lead to the founding of a WEO, the summit will have missed an opportunity to strengthen sustainable development.

D. How would a WEO meet the needs of developing countries?

The answer lies in the well-argued position taken by the African Union on Rio+20 and adopted by the Heads of State at the Malabo Summit in June 2011, then rounded out by the Environment Ministers at a meeting in Addis Ababa in October 2011. The main demands expressed by the developing countries concerning the effective implementation of the principals laid down in the Rio Declaration include joint but differentiated responsibilities and effective consideration of the special needs of developing countries to deal with environmental challenges. These needs require:

- ✓ **truly universal participation:** currently, Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)² have proliferated to such a degree that many countries, notably the poorest, are *de facto* excluded from the negotiation and implementation processes; an organization within the United Nations framework that is able to define priorities and streamline the system would meet a demand for global democracy.
- ✓ **a coordinated response in terms of reinforcing environmental capacities:** dispersed responses have led to considerable decline today. The WEO will have the twofold responsibility of coordinating the offer from a multitude of actors in this field and, on the demand side, facilitating access to information, notably for the poorest countries, on such subjects as international financing available for environmental projects.
- ✓ **favourable conditions for speeding up relevant technology transfers:** many actors, including international financial institutions, are committed to this question, but they need an actor capable of backing up their actions so as to encourage the development of an accessible offer, notably meeting the needs of the poorest.

If UNEP has been unable to implement the Bali Strategic Plan for technological support and capacity building, it is not only for financial reasons; actually, neither UNEP nor any other actor so far has enough authority and legitimacy to push for a concrete, pragmatic approach to these challenges.

² Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) aim to protect and restore the global environment and to contribute to sustainable development. Examples include the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, (Washington 1973), the Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) and the Kyoto Protocol (1997), amongst others.

E. Would the WEO have the mission to finance environmental development projects?

The **WEO will not replace existing funds in their role of allocation and financial management.** However,

- ✓ it **would make it easier to establish clear international priorities**, introducing a common reference system whereas today each convention and institution tends to define its own priorities, and being able to draw up a transverse assessment of the resources mobilised each year, notably to help the poorest.
- ✓ by producing a synthesised global vision, it **would provide a clearer view of unmet needs and solutions that produce stronger synergies** between the fight against global warming, biodiversity, protecting forests and access to water and sanitation.

These are two essential functions, but environmental challenges will require an unprecedented mobilisation of new resources in the coming years.

Coordination of financing dedicated to the fight against deforestation: possible contributions from the WEO

Conservation and sustainable management of forests are a crucial challenge for the fight against climate change as well as for biodiversity. In the future, we should promote all the services provided by forest ecosystems (CO₂ sequestration, preservation of water resource, fight against erosion, etc.) and new types of financing could concern payment for these different services provided by forest ecosystems. The WEO, with its comprehensive overview, could draw attention to any possible deficiencies, whether thematic or geographical. Furthermore, given that a certain number of new financial instruments have recently been set up³ in addition to those instruments that already exist – the World Bank's PROFOR programme, a mechanism for national forest programmes hosted at FAO... the **WEO's work could help to provide synergy between such financing programmes and work with other organizations concerned improving allocation of this financing.**

F. Why is it urgent to act to create an environmental pillar for global governance?

This is urgent due to the global economic crisis and the development of two threats:

- ✓ what some call environmental dumping: the globalisation of trade must not lead to competition toward the bottom in terms of environmental standards, with standards that are less demanding or less strictly applied;
- ✓ a "green gap": some developing countries risk finding themselves in a situation where it will be extremely expensive, or even impossible, for them to catch up with current environmental technologies and standards.

³ Sustainable Forest Management Programme/"REDD+" of the Global Environment Facility, the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and the Forest Investment Programme of the World Bank, the UN REDD Programme (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation), the World Bank Carbon Fund and the Green Climate Fund.

The risk of some countries' "environmentally dropping out" of the current system

All too often, the international environmental governance system adds to the difficulties confronting developing countries by imposing a real "bureaucratic burden" on them. Observations made in the field are in line with the available figures. Operatives cannot keep up with the production of standards and the MEA secretariats themselves therefore try to play an implementation role, in a dispersed fashion. The result is a multitude of cross-sector strategies that are insufficiently applied by these countries. Administrative reporting uses up capacities to the detriment of achieving objectives in the field. This observation had already been made by the UN Joint Inspection Unit in 2008.

Rio+20 is an opportunity to act in time, in good faith and with full consultation to keep these dangers from becoming reality. The solution is a WEO.

G. How would a WEO meet the needs of civil society?

Rio+20 is the opportunity to ensure exemplary implementation of principle 10 of the Rio declaration, according to which the best way to deal with environmental questions is to ensure participation by all concerned citizens at the appropriate level. Much has been done on the national and local levels, but citizens still have expectations for global governance, especially in a context where new media facilitate the rapid circulation of information on the global environment.

Changing UNEP's status into that of a WEO will be decisive for this:

- ✓ **to set principles of modern governance for sustainable development on the worldwide level**, recognising the role of such actors as NGOs, businesses, trade unions and local authorities in responding to environmental challenges. Participation by non-governmental actors worldwide could be introduced in practical terms through a specialised agency derived from UNEP, taking advantage of the lessons learnt in the twenty years of experiments since Agenda 21. Recent experience has shown that it is possible to open up international forums to civil society, but the institutionalisation of a role for these actors in international negotiations requires strong legitimacy and therefore governance that does not exclude any country is needed first.
- ✓ **to institute dialogue between scientists and politicians on the international level**, and thus to explain the necessary environmental commitments to those who, *in fine*, will implement them, whether policy deciders or economic deciders. The WEO will contribute **to anchor the expectations** of economic actors and **therefore to shed more light on the environmental sustainability parameters behind economic decisions**. It will also ensure smooth operation at the MEAs' scientific bodies. In this respect, its role will not be to absorb all the groups of international experts (IPCC for climate, IPBES for biodiversity⁴), but rather to provide them with guidelines that UNEP is not in a position to enforce.

⁴ The creation of IPBES, the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, gave rise to a decision by the UN General Assembly in 2011 requesting that it become quickly operational.

The WEO's added value in the science-policy interface

Observation: In the current system, IPBES provides a guarantee of independence for the experts. On the other hand, certain scientific and technical bodies under MEAs did not provide all the necessary guarantees of independence and impartiality, according to the 2008 report by the UN Joint Inspection Unit.

Purpose of the reform: to provide the system with a body that has sufficient policy power to:

- ✓ change the practices for selecting experts.
- ✓ decompartmentalise environmental subjects and approaches.

H. Will the WEO lead to additional costs?

The desired reform is for a modern organization operating in a network, with a strong policy voice that diffuses consistency into the system and has a **controlled budget**, unlike a system that creates new secretariats, new funds or new committees every year. A WEO would ensure financial **predictability** for core missions. This is a decisive factor:

- ✓ in support of long-term UNEP action: this cannot be viable if its budget is threatened with reduction while the MEA budget continues on an inflationary path.
- ✓ in reducing structural instability for MEA financing: in a context of competition for financing, it is in the interest of the Conferences of the Parties (CPs) to adopt highly flexible – and therefore less stable – financing mechanisms to attract financial backers. This is one of the detrimental effects of fragmentation.
- ✓ in encouraging the mobilisation of new sources of financing through greater visibility for citizens and through greater transparency and efficacy.

Operating budgets: orders of magnitude

Currently, UNEP's operating budget amounts to USD 191 million over 2 years, or USD 95.5 million a year.

To this we should add those of the 12 main MEAs and their protocols, which amount to USD 86 million a year according to the UN Joint Inspection Unit's report published in 2008. Moreover, according to UNEP estimates, all the MEAs account for a budget of USD 445 million a year.

The cost of the current system as a whole (MEAs included) is therefore, in any case, much higher than the annual consolidated budget of the WTO (USD 222 million in 2010) or the ILO (USD 365 million). So an organization in its own right is not necessarily more expensive than a fragmented system. There is no reason to claim that a WEO would necessarily be the source of additional costs, *a fortiori* in the medium term.

I. What interest is there in creating a WEO compared with simply strengthening UNEP?

An organization without legal personality cannot:

- ✓ **contain inflation in the system:** in the United Nations system, only an organization in its own right can adopt new conventions without systematically having to go through the UNGA. UNEP's inability to adopt MEAs itself leads to the creation of autonomous conventions and new secretariats.
- ✓ **avoid inconsistencies in the future:** there are cases, and risks for the future, of redundancies and conflicts between standards given the challenges concerning conventions.

Example of a new challenge for the environmental standards system: geoengineering⁵

Geoengineering designates the techniques used for large-scale interventions on components in the land-ocean-atmosphere system, aimed at combating global warming. It is clear that qualifying such techniques, the desirability of implementing them or even experimenting with them must give rise to collaborative decisions by governments. The different geoengineering techniques could potentially affect several existing conventions and new legal instruments may be needed. Ocean nourishment, for example, which is one of the techniques imagined to stimulate the growth of CO₂ sequestering phytoplankton, concerns both the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), given the risks of impact on marine species. There a risk of proposing the creation of a special instrument that is neither part of the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) nor the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), thus increasing the inconsistency and inflation of the whole.

J. What relations will the WEO have with the WTO and the ILO?

The WEO will not be a “WTO for the environment”, but rather a partner for the WTO. Two former directors general of the WTO have recognised the need for an organization that is able to speak in the name of the different environmental conventions, and came out in favour of a WEO. In fact, the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) today is the only body to interpret article XX of GATT⁶ calling for environmental exceptions to free trade. This is not satisfactory for the DSB itself. If it decides that an environmental measure is not valid, public opinion would suspect it of serving anti-ecological interests; if it comes out in favour of an environmental measure, it will be accused of overstepping its authority and acting like a world government. A WEO with recognised legal expertise and to which questions could be referred for an opinion would have a real role to play.

Ties would also be very close with the ILO, which is a United Nations agency unlike the WTO. UNEP and the ILO already work together and the ILO's Director General, Juan Somavia, has pointed out the problem of segmentation in the international government system in recent years, calling for a new balance in favour of social and environmental standards which, in his opinion, are “objectives for society” and not just legal instruments. He has also insisted on the interest of opening global governance up to civil society (“Globalisation cannot be discussed behind closed doors”). The WEO project, based on a threefold demand of making the environmental pillar consistent, having dialogue with the other pillars and opening up to society, is in keeping with these reflections.

⁵ The Royal Society, *Geoengineering the climate: science, governance and uncertainty*, London, September 2009.

⁶ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

3. Overview of 30 years of international negotiations

✓ Principal United Nations conferences dedicated to sustainable development

The Rio+20 Conference was preceded by 3 other major conferences, each of which was an important step in increasing awareness of the challenges of sustainable development:

- ✓ Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972;
- ✓ Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992;
- ✓ Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002.

The Stockholm Conference, 1972

This first conference, under the auspices of the United Nations and dedicated to environmental questions, was called the “United Nations Conference on the Human Environment” (UNCHE). It was held in Stockholm from 5 to 16 June, 1972, and was chaired by the Canadian Maurice Strong. It brought together delegations from 113 countries and many NGOs.

It was an historic turning point in international consideration of environmental questions and notably led to the founding of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), whose headquarters are located in Nairobi, Kenya.

The missions entrusted to UNEP included the objective of “supplying resources for promoting the active participation of citizens and highlighting the interest and contribution of non-governmental organizations in the conservation and development of the environment”.

The Rio Earth Summit, 1992

This United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June, 1992. It brought together 178 delegations, 110 Heads of State and Government and 2,400 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

In 1987, the Brundtland Report had launched the dynamic for the concept of sustainable development. The Earth Summit was a major step forward with the adoption of the Rio Declaration on the environment and development which included 27 principles laying down the content of sustainable development. Principle 1 states that “Human beings are at the centre of concern for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.”

The question of the place of civil society is dealt with in principle 10: “Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level (...)”.

The Earth Summit also adopted a programme of action for the 21st century, called Agenda 21, which gave recommendations for the concrete implementation of the declaration’s principles in various fields (health, housing, air pollution, managing the seas, forests and mountains, desertification, water resource management and sanitation, agriculture management and waste management). Agenda 21 constitutes the reference for implementing sustainable development at the local level.

This summit launched work that led to the adoption of three “Rio Conventions”: the Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification.

The Johannesburg Summit, 2002

The “World Summit on Sustainable Development” (WSSD) was held in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September, 2002. Ten years after the Earth Summit in Rio, it was the opportunity to make a first assessment and to renew the commitment in favour of sustainable development.

It led to the adoption of an action plan laying out concrete measures for implementing the principles of sustainable development in the areas of water, health, biodiversity, energy, agriculture, etc.

✓ Preparation for the Rio+20 summit

The Rio+20 Conference will take place at the end of a preparatory process carried out under the United Nations and which has included five main steps:

- 1) **24 December 2009:** Adoption of Resolution R64/236 by the United Nations General Assembly calling for a United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development to be held in 2012.
- 2) **May 2010 – December 2011:** several preparatory meetings held in New York (United Nations Headquarters) and regionally made progress through discussions on the two topics of the conference:
 - “green economy in the context of sustainable development and the eradication of poverty”;
 - the “institutional framework of sustainable development”.

On 1 November 2011, 677 official contributions to the preparatory process, notably from governments (100 contributions) and non-governmental actors (493 contributions), were presented to the United Nations.

3) 25-27 January 2012: start of negotiations in New York:

- First discussions on the draft of the final document (*zero draft*), made public on 10 January 2012; these negotiations will continue until the Rio de Janeiro Conference convenes.

4) 16-19 June 2012: Civil Society Days or “Sandwich Days” in Rio de Janeiro:

Civil society will have a space for expression to encourage dialogue on topics related to sustainable development for 4 days.

5) 20-22 June 2012: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development – “Rio+20” – in Rio de Janeiro.