

ISSUES AND ACTIONS

May, 2007



The May publication of Issues and Actions will address two Millennium Goals: “Environmental Sustainability” and “Global Partnership”

Environmental Sustainability

Many of the millennium goals closely align with the Earth Charter Principles; for example: Millennium Goal “Ensure Environmental Sustainability” relates well with Earth Charter Principle “Protect and restore the integrity of the earth’s ecological system”, along with the principle “Adapt at all levels sustainable development plans and regulations that make environmental conservation and rehabilitation integral to all development Initiatives.”

A contributor to website gobalissues.org, Anup Shah states - “Sustainability development is often an overused word but goes to the heart of tracking a number of interrelated global issues such as poverty, inequality, hunger, and environmental degradation.”

Currently, Global Warming advocates have awakened us to the many occurrences that are affecting our world—tornados, hurricanes, droughts, climate changes to mention a few, and are making us more aware and moving us to form new attitudes of sustainability. Ninety percent of our glaciers are retreating, our children may not enjoy many of this earth’s beauty or even harvest its natural resources because of global warming.

“Our global economy is outgrowing earth’s capacity, moving civilization closer to decline and possible collapse. The response must involve stabilizing the climate, restoring the earth, ending poverty, feeding people better and building a new eco-economy.”

(Lester R. Brown, author “Plan B 2.0”)

This tells us we must learn to think differently and perhaps in ways not yet known. It may involve as David Korten states, “A circle of people in dialogue, affirming the deeper values most humans share and acting one community at a time, to create a world that works for all.” It has been said, “When you carry a hammer, you will only look for nails.” Steps are being taken to change our ways by working together toward these Millennium Goals and Earth Charter Principles.

- Berkeley, California adapted a zero waste resolution under which the city will reduce solid waste by 2020. (Yes Magazine, 2006)
- 319 American cities have pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and behind it all is a growing acceptance of its human role in global warming. (Yes Magazine, 2006)
- Canadian project leaders said that scientists will spend arctic winters studying global warming, the largest research project ever undertaken on the sensitive region’s ecosystem. (CNN, 3/07)

- Scientists are turning their attention to the world's poles to gauge global warming. More than 50,000 researchers hope to find an answer during a massive study of how global warming and other phenomena are changing the coldest parts of the earth. (Sign On, San Diego 3/07)

Global Partnership

“Develop Global Partnership.” This goal is extensive and coincides with the Earth Charter Principle, “Secure the Earth’s bounty and beauty for present and future generations.” In itself, it can be an overwhelming task, particularly at the slow rate in which we are moving.

Currently, one billion people live in extreme poverty. If we stay on a business growth path, poverty will increase by another 10 million people, and food security will be compromised even further. (Agriculture and achieving the Millennium Development)

Today, water pollution kills 2.2 million annually and who knows how many victims will be claimed in the future, and yet another resource is vanishing. Sadly, over half of the world’s original forest cover is gone due to logging, development, and poor land management. Working forests are all about long sustainability for people, plants and animals. We have forgotten that the poor have a lot of knowledge about their environment and are often sustainable and efficient users of it recognizing their link to it for their survival, as opposed to industrial pressures that exploit and destroy the environment and affect local populations. (Vandan Shiva, Ph.D., Author/Physicist)

George Soros gave \$50 million to help the poor in Africa. His donation will build classrooms, health clinics and provide seeds for crops in 33 villages. (NY Times) Global partnerships are beginning to work! The United States is moving forward and senators are introducing bills that would force the electrical companies to cap greenhouse production by 2011, and reduce emissions by 25% in 2020 and encouraging the use of solar and wind power to generate electricity.

Individuals are making a difference! We know about the generous contributions of the Gates and Buffetts that provide so much to so many. All evidence shows that together we can improve the lives of this earth’s dwellers and as individuals let us continue to implement the principles of;

Reduce - Re-use - Recycle

resource: www.globalissues.org www.worldbank.org

Save the date: Monday, June 18, 2007, Joanna Bramble, CSJ on Millennial Goals

SUBMITTED BY THE SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE