



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMPONENT

First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High Level Authorities on Sustainable Development Organization of American States

VIRTUAL CONSULTATION FORUM WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Below is a summary of comments posted in the Forum (updated October 16th, 2006):

1. Need to consider the connection of environmental health with sustainable development, and the links with education and respect for traditional knowledge and technologies.
2. Importance of traditional knowledge as a tool for a sustainable economic growth.
3. Indigenous people have good knowledge of the land and natural resources because their lives have depended on this knowledge. There is a need to include local Aboriginal Peoples when assessing environmental impact.
4. The clean up of abandoned mine sites and rehabilitation in conjunction with indigenous peoples is a major need due to pollution and safety issues.
5. The creation of self-sustaining remote and rural Indigenous communities results in innovation and development for everyone. By establishing the priority of strategically developing and investing in those communities that are usually found “at the end of the road”, everyone along that route will have access to sustainable services and infrastructure.
6. For the design of sustainable development strategies for countries in development, infrastructure projects should be designed and constructed with sustainability criteria founded on processes of community participation.
7. The community in general should participate in sustainable development with its own natural resources, but without the expropriation of them.
8. Funds are needed to invest in the development of indigenous communities. More help is needed from the international community.
9. A larger inclusion of women in the workplace and political systems is needed.
10. For sustainable development, we need to let the local partners to implement the program and build their capacity.
11. There is a need for a strategic and adequate investments in remote and rural communities to ensure local development and local resources that support quality public health, education, infrastructure (including telecommunication, water, roads, electricity) and governance creating independent and healthy communities that are able to contribute to the ongoing health and welfare of the rest of the country where they are located.
12. Create awareness within the population regarding sustainable development, particularly related to economy, ecology, equity, spirituality and empowerment.



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13. One of the pillars of sustainable development will always be education. As there are never enough resources for education, we need to find ways of providing this education in a financially sustainable manner. One solution is that educational programmes find ways to pay for themselves (without charging fees). (See www.teachamantofish.org.uk for more information)
14. Education is a necessary component for sustainable development; it needs to be paired with social measures (such as health, food, services, etc). Education is a main part of a whole set of needs.
15. Education is a key tool in sustainable development. There is a need for foreign governments to fund SMEs of developing countries to provide modern educational programmes to meet specific current educational needs.
16. Improved access to technologies is a key factor of sustainable development.
17. The most efficient way to sustainability in development is the development of the new (knowledge) economy that relies not on scarce (non-renewable) resources but on the network effects of the global digital economy based on knowledge.
18. One of the priorities for sustainable development should be the management of water resources upon which agriculture depends.
19. Sustainable use of resources would lead to biodiversity conservation. The indigenous community of Apa Tanis (India) uses diverse water management practices which contribute tremendously to food security, agricultural biodiversity and the world's natural and cultural heritage. The wet rice cultivation of the Apa Tanis, is one of the most energy efficient agricultural systems, with integrated water management system and sustainability.
20. Traditional methods of water conservation are valuable knowledge which should be implemented even though modern technologies are available. Traditional practices include the collection of storm water from roofs and storage of this water in wells, the care for aquifers and areas of infiltration and recharge. Landscape (rain) drainage patterns must be maintained so that rain continues to collect in appropriate recharge areas rather than run into the sea. Where reverse osmosis is used to obtain drinking water from sea water traditional practices for water conservation should still be used. Where reverse osmosis is used this should be combined with solar power.
21. Mining practices need to be developed to guide the industry to prevent local and regional pollution of water resources.
22. Strategic environment assessment and an integrated approach to urban development for water, waste water and solid waste management are more efficient than a single system method.
23. There is interest in sharing successful experiences related to payment for environmental services in Latin America
24. Risk management from natural hazards in tropical and subtropical coastal areas should consider the conservation of mangroves as protective measures.
25. Establish a Virtual Interactive Think Tank (VITT) on Sustainable Development.
26. If one gives the poor the chance to improve their situation using their own resources, sustainability can be expected. Much more could be reached by



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- investing in professional inputs and the documentation respectively spreading out of such approaches.
27. To make development sustainable, we shall have to implement demand driven project. Beneficiaries should feel the ownership of the project.
 28. Use of sustainable innovation processes as the main driver of competitiveness (and therefore productivity) globally.
 29. There needs to be a legal body where one could report brown sites where toxic waste has been deposited in countries.