



FIRST REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ECE RIM)

Geneva, Switzerland, 15-16 January 2004

Daily web coverage:



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Available on 18 January

Friday, 16 January

Vice Chair Zaal Lomtadzem chaired a panel discussion on sanitation, recognizing that, together with water and human settlements, it constitutes a basic human requirement. He added that investment in sanitation has lagged behind other sectors and that mobilizing additional domestic and international finances, developing innovative financial mechanisms and strengthening public-private partnerships are crucial.





Olga Kupkova (center), National Institute of Public Health, Czech Republic, advocated taking an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to addressing water and sanitation problems and implementing goals. She added that a strong legal framework, capacity building, and partnerships between government, the private sector and civil society are necessary for meeting implementation goals.



Listen to:

[Olga Kupkova](#)



Dagmara Berbalk, Germany



Tibor Farago, Hungary



Oral Ataniyazova, PERZENT

Dagmara Berbalk, German Environment Ministry, noted her country's strong commitment to sanitation and water issues, both within Germany and within its overseas development programmes. She underlined the interdependencies between resource protection and management, and stressed the importance of involving different sectors within sanitation projects.

Tibor Farago, Director-General, Hungarian Environment Ministry, said his country faced major sanitation obstacles due to limited resources, but that EU accession requirements have led to concrete programmes and support to improve the sector. He added that sanitation policy should be integrated into other sectors, such as health.

Oral Ataniyazova, Chair, Karakalpak Center for Reproductive Health and Environment (PERZENT), noted some positive trends in Central Asia, but underscored the gap between the international policies and the status of people at the local level. She emphasized the lack of evaluation of aid programmes, and monitoring of the use of aid funds, and the need for assistance coordination.



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[Dagmara Berbalk](#)

[Tibor Farago](#)

[Oral Ataniyazova](#)



Gourisankar Ghosh (right), Executive Director, Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, stated that achieving the WSSD targets will only be possible with the help of donors, NGOs and governments in Europe as they will provide support and capacity building to crisis areas within the region, as well as to the developing regions. He called on governments to prioritize hygiene and sanitation, especially in schools, and stressed the importance of integrating sanitation into IWRM and of the participation of the private sector.



Listen to:

[Gourisankar Ghosh](#)

INTER-LINKAGES



Chair Beckett (center) invited delegates to address the inter-linkages among the three substantive issues. She indicated three guidelines for discussion: assessing failures in the region, identifying the obstacles and challenges, and transforming words into concrete actions.



Margaret Beckett, UK



Ingibjorge Davidsdottir, Iceland



Beat Nobs, Switzerland

Switzerland called on the CSD to reach a common understanding on IWRM, and stated that cooperation and private involvement should be enhanced and that CSD-12 should focus on individual experiences and lessons learned. The EC expressed a need for good donor coordination. The US requested governments to formulate their needs in terms of capacity building in order for donor countries and institutions to better respond to them.

Iceland noted several Arctic Council initiatives concerning the living conditions of Arctic residents, including: the Arctic Human Development report, a comprehensive assessment of living conditions in the circumpolar region, and the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, which examines social and economic impacts of climate variability.

Chair Beckett concluded by urging delegates to take an integrated approach in meeting WSSD targets, highlighting the need for improved capacity building, education, partnerships, and technology transfer. She added that it was important for UNECE member States to prepare IWRM plans by 2005 and work to develop national sustainable development strategies. Noting that the UNECE region has the capacity to assist other regions in implementing global targets, Chair Beckett reminded delegates that problems within the UNECE region still remain. She then closed the meeting at 12:53 pm, noting that the meeting's deliberations and outcomes will be included in a report for CSD-12 consideration.



Listen to:

[Beat Nobs](#)



Listen to:


[Margaret Beckett's closing remarks](#)

Participants at the ECE-RIM





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