

Global People's Forum

Programme of Action A Sustainable World is Possible!

Preamble

We, the delegates to the Global People's Forum, meeting at Nasrec, Johannesburg, from 27 August to 3 September 2002, representing the people of the world, hereby adopt the following Programme of Action to build a sustainable world, based on principles of human rights, economic justice and environmental protection.

We believe that civil society will continue to play a crucial role in implementing this programme and must be strengthened and become more united so that it can more effectively influence governments and international institutions and ensure that they become more democratic, transparent and accountable to the world's people.

If a sustainable world is to be achieved, all Governments will have to increase spending to meet basic needs, provide social protection and reduce inequality within countries. Spending on arms will have to be redirected towards sustainable development. There must also be a drive to reduce the inequality between nations by making trade fair and reversing the damage caused by imperialism, colonial and racism.

Countries must however be free to pursue different economic approaches based on their particular problems, culture and people's needs and not be forced to adopt a 'one solution fits all approach'.

Civil Society at all levels (local, national, regional and globally) should form a strong united front, remain mobilised to ensure that the spirit of Rio lives on.

Land

1. Governments, relevant United Nations (UN) agencies and international bodies (including the World Court) must commit themselves to ensure access to land for all landless peoples, by prioritising and promoting access to land as the cornerstone of sustainable development.
2. There should be a review of all national and international instruments intended to ensure access to, and retention of, land by the indigenous people.
3. Governments should return land to dispossessed communities through new laws that are accessible to communities and do not hinder land restitution. Specific policies, programmes and projects with clear timeframes and budgets must be developed to address landlessness.
4. Customary and national land laws should be subjected to international human rights principles of equality, including gender equity. Government should accept land tenure rights and land-use decisions made by democratically elected village committees.
5. Governments and civil society should prioritise women's indigenous and disabled people's needs in relation to land ownership, usage and distribution.
6. Land should remain the property of citizens and only be used by foreign investors through equal partnership agreements with those citizens.

7. Civil Society should educate, mobilise and campaign for land redistribution
 - a. To ensure that all who want and need land have access to it by 2015,
 - b. To prevent governments from unscrupulously selling our natural resources, and
 - c. To build solidarity in defence of our natural heritage.

Agriculture

1. Governments must consult and ensure participation of small producers when formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating agricultural policy and legislation. Farmers should be informed about implications of national policy and international agreements, and have input into their making.
2. Governments must promote a plough-to-plate approach to food security
3. Organic farming should be promoted and Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) should be banned.
4. Governments should fund sustainable agriculture and fisheries research and should train workers in sustainable techniques. Governments should cut overly expensive imports and give preference to local products and services.
5. The TRIPS agreement must be revised to exempt food, medicines, agriculture and pharmaceutical from patenting. We should resist the patenting of local knowledge and biological forms.
6. Northern governments should stop subsidising their farmers in ways that undermine Southern producers.
7. International institutions, including WTO, must adhere to sustainable land use principles.

Biodiversity

1. Governments must adhere to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The Industrialised countries must repay the ecological debt;
2. All peoples and institutions must adhere to sustainable production and consumption patterns, especially in industrialized countries.
3. Governments should ensure democratic participation of local communities, women and indigenous people in decision-making over ecosystem management. This should ensure community control over biological resources.
4. Communities should not be forced to become 'partners' of corporations but should implement a legally binding framework to regulate corporations;
5. Governments should ensure that 'Access and Benefit Sharing' laws protect the customary rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities over biological resources, as well as their rights to direct all development, including in agriculture and aquaculture, towards models that are ecologically and socio-culturally sensitive, and which conserve or enhance biodiversity and biodiversity-based livelihoods;
6. Government and civil society should recognise and protect indigenous knowledge as an integral part of sustainable biodiversity management.

7. The UN must establish a binding convention against the patenting of life. All governments, and international bodies must adhere to and implement the global ban on the patenting of life;

8. In accordance with the Precautionary Principle, governments must ensure an environment free from genetically engineered organisms (GEOs) and must support our efforts to raise awareness among producers and consumers about the real and potential impact of GEOs on the environment and human health;

9. Governments must implement an immediate ban on the release into the market of GM crops, taking into account the proven risks of genetic contamination;

10. We call on all governments, relevant UN agencies and international bodies (including the World Court) to implement the Convention on Biodiversity, and other multilateral agreements effectively, including through setting targets and timelines

11. Governments must orientate all development towards models that are ecologically and socio-culturally sensitive, and which conserve or enhance biodiversity and biodiversity-based livelihoods, taking into account the special role, rights and interests of women.

Conflict and peace

1. All governments, relevant UN agencies and international bodies must guarantee the right to self-determination and respect for human rights. Human rights, environmental security and justice should be the root of all political, economic and environmental agreements and interventions.

2. Economic justice (i.e. justice in the distribution of land and the exploitation of natural and human resources) should be integrated into peace processes and conflict interventions.

3. All nations must radically reduce military spending and use non-violent methods to resolve conflicts. Violent acts and terrorism should be addressed using non-violent rather than military means. Women should be more involved in peace-building processes. The role of indigenous knowledge and the existence of local capacities for effecting conflict resolution and peace should be taken into account.

4. The UN, governments and civil society should institute a transparent monitoring system for the arms trade to control the capacity of government and non-government protagonists to engage in military action.

5. The UN and other intergovernmental agencies should be transformed into accountable and transparent bodies. The Security Council should be restructured and the veto-power abolished.

6. The UN and governments should enforce the protection of refugees' human rights, set in place a human-centred policy on internally displaced persons and assure that they are participatory partners in the resolution of their respective conflicts and the implementation of sustainable development.

7. Current peace processes should be stimulated and provided with effective financial and human resources in order to sustain their efforts.

Corporate accountability

1) Citizens and communities should have the following rights, in relation to corporations, which will guarantee:

a) Effective participation in decision-making, including a veto right over anti-social development.

b) Access to information on corporate activities,

c) Compensation, reparation and remedial action from organisations guilty of corporate abuse,

d) Community rights to land and other resources, including those rights which are often subordinated to 'investor rights'.

2) Governments should establish laws and regulations for corporations which establish:

a) Adherence to the highest social, labour and environmental standards,

b) Liability and compensation for the impact of their activities on people and environments, and mechanisms to identify and eliminate perverse subsidies to corporations

Debt eradication and reparations

1. International campaigns should continue, building broad multi-issue coalitions and implementing popular education on sustainable development;

2. Civil society should research and exchange information for a successful debt advocacy and reparations campaign. Alternative mechanisms for mediating debt crises should be investigated.

3. Developing countries' debt should be cancelled with immediate effect. A debt cancellation policy must be integrated into development planning.

4. International bankruptcy law and legal institutions should be established by 2010 to monitor the implementation of debt cancellation processes. Interest rates on development loans should be eradicated.

5. The UN should set up an international structure to deal with reparations and regional institutions must be encouraged to have a significant role on reparations policies.

Climate change and energy

1. Governments and industry must adhere to just transition principles in the fossil fuel industries - including the participation of workers - that allow sustainable production without destroying workers' livelihoods.

2. Civil society should campaign against the fossil fuel industry's damaging effects on the environment, taking into account just transition principles.

3. Governments should involve vulnerable groups in decision-making on energy issues, including proposals for energy development, environmental impacts, and land use.

4. Governments should not subsidise fossil fuel industries.

5. Relevant multilateral institutions, governments and social partners should promote the use of renewable energy, such as solar and wind energy, and implement programmes for energy efficiency and reductions in energy consumption in households and businesses.

6. Governments should implement anti-monopoly regulations on the research and development of renewable energy, embark on research and training on renewable energy development and provide resources to the vulnerable groups affected by fossil fuel development.

7. Governments and civil society should focus on the international global climate change, debate the issue of justice for vulnerable people threatened by energy production and greenhouse gas emissions.

8. All nations and multilateral institutions must be committed to greenhouse gas reduction, assist in funding programme to develop, promote, and implement sustainable, renewable energy. A comprehensive programme with timeframes, outputs and resource allocations, should be adopted to effect greenhouse reduction and renewable energy.

Financing development

1. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) must take into account developing countries' concerns and change imbalances in trade and markets.

2. Governments must ensure that natural resources and basic services remain under public ownership and control, including water and sanitation, electricity, education, health, and housing.

3. International development aid agreements should be based on the mutual respect of sovereignty and public transparency and eliminate all conditions on development aid. Developed countries must contribute at least 0.7% of GNP to development aid.

4. Civil Society rejects NEPAD in its present format and calls for civil society participation and consultation.

5. Capital must be localised. Local governments should finance sustainable development and make it more relevant to local communities.

6. Agricultural subsidies and other direct and indirect trade barriers in developed countries must be eliminated.

Forests

1. Communities and indigenous peoples should have access and control over the forest resources they depend upon. Government and civil society should implement capacity building programmes to allow skills transfer to the communities and indigenous communities in forest management.

Global governance and corruption

1. The UN, IMF and World Bank should be reformed to allow effective and democratic participation of the developing countries in the decision-making processes.

2. The UN, governments and civil society should implement effective campaigns against countries engaging in corruption. International and national monitoring of corruption, including corporate corruption, should be undertaken by civil society and the UN.

3. Governments and the United Nations should integrate participatory democratic ethos in the decision-making process, including a substantive consultation of civil society on governance.

Jobs, living wages and employment

1. We call for the formation of an international social movement to combat globalisation and promote international solidarity. An international minimum programme that includes respect for human rights and a call for the decommodification of basic services should be formulated and endorsed.
2. All workers worldwide should insist that multinationals are kept accountable and promote sustainable working conditions.
3. We call for the creation of secure, quality jobs, for example job sharing, that does not discriminate between core and non-core functions.
4. We call for ILO core labour rights and other conventions to be implemented by all governments and be respected by the private sector, including multinational companies.
5. We call for environmental and human impact assessment studies, that include consultation with the community and workers, to take place prior to ratification of foreign direct investment.
6. Trade unions should:
 - a. When negotiating retrenchments, ensure that workers' rights and benefits are protected.
 - b. Keep a list of retrenched workers should to guard against casual labour.
 - c. Educate all workers, especially the vulnerable, on their rights and opportunities, such as further skills development.
 - d. Protect the rights of the working class as a group as opposed to only protecting their membership.
 - e. Ensure that both retired and retrenched workers continue to be under the protection of the unions.
 - f. Protect the rights of HIV/Aids infected/affected employees at all costs.
7. Tripartite structures should be established to monitor the implementation of labour rights.
8. The workplace should be promoted as the centre of sustainable development through the implementation of just transition principles.
9. Government should promulgate and enforce laws that:
 - a. Facilitate ownership of industries by workers.
 - b. Protect vulnerable workers against discrimination, e.g. HIV+ workers.
 - c. Encourage an environment of sustainable production that does not lead to job displacement, in consultation with trade unions and communities.

Mining, human security and environmental justice

1. The UN environmental governance body should be strengthened to ensure the implementation and monitoring of the environmental regime.
2. The MMSD recommendations must be made into Type-One outcomes so as to ensure enforceability.

3. The licensing for exploration and mining must be conditional on a publicly reviewed social, environmental and labour plan which includes a fund for compensation and rehabilitation.
4. Small-scale and artisan mining must be capacitated to comply with environmental regulations and sustainability by governments.
5. Governments should ensure that appropriate policies and mechanisms for equitable and just compensation are implemented, taking into account the economic and health needs of the victims.
6. Governments, particular of countries in the South, must play an active and strong regulatory role in mining
7. Terms of trade must be improved to remove the imbalance in commodity prices between developed and developing countries, and encourage beneficiation in developing countries.
8. There should be a recognition of the role and participation of civil society in general and labour in particular in ensuring monitoring and enforcement of adherence to appropriate health, safety and environmental standards
9. There must be an immediate moratorium and phasing out of asbestos mining, the rehabilitation of asbestos mines and waste mines and a moratorium on the use of asbestos products. This should be within a just transition framework.
10. In areas where minerals are found, the local community should be given control over extraction decisions and a meaningful percentage of the benefits.

Marine, inland fisheries and coasts

1. Governments and civil society should transform existing systems of unequal ownership, access to and use of marine and coastal resources into systems based on sustainable and equitable use and access rights, and poverty eradication.
2. Governments should guarantee the rights of traditional subsistence and artisan fishers to access to marine and inland fisheries resources, and provide local fisheries-dependent communities priority rights to the resources on which they depend for their livelihoods;
3. Governments and civil society should recognize the value of indigenous and local knowledge, culture and experience in resource management and facilitate the empowered participation of local communities in the use, management and protection of aquatic resources. There should be mandatory Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) on any activities likely to have a significant negative impact on coastal, oceanic and inland water ecosystems.
4. The UN should facilitate negotiations on a legally binding High Seas Convention under the auspices of the UN Law of the Sea Convention to govern fishing vessel conduct on the High Seas;
5. Governments should effectively implement the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related agreements;

6. There should be a transparency on government subsidization of the fishing industry;
7. Governments should refrain from using aquaculture as a cure-all for the problem of dwindling fish stocks. A polluter-pays principle in the planning and implementation of all aquaculture practices should be implemented so as to eliminate harmful industrial practices such as the use of antibiotics, hormones and genetic modification;
8. Governments and civil society should ensure that partnership agreements are based on contracts that secure social and economic rights and adhere to strict minimum international environmental and social law standards, policies, goals and targets; and ensure access and use rights for woman fisher workers to coastal and marine resources.
9. Governments should combat global climate change through ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and the implementation of aggressive programs to develop renewable sources of energy and phase out the use of fossil fuels;
10. Civil society should build and strengthen networks to actively campaign against the policies and program of globalisation implemented by multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank, ADB and the WTO, that are against the interest of fisherfolk and other marginalized groups and their cultural context. We oppose the Flag of Convenience system in shipping (including fishing) which poses a specific threat to the sustainability of the world's oceans. There is direct link between FOCs and pollution, illegal fishing as well as the ill treatment and exploitation of crews;

Participation and enforcement

1. The public and private sectors as well as civil society organisations should develop transparent systems of information on environmental, social, economic and policy issues.
2. Governments and international agencies must implement and enforce measures to promote public participation in planning and decision-making at national and international levels.
3. Clear and fair procedures for participation must be put in place that ensure the involvement of the representatives of local communities and major groups in all stages of the development process.
4. The public, private and civil society sectors must collaborate in the design and introduction of education and capacity-building programmes that enhance effective participation in development decision-making.
5. Local communities must be the primary beneficiaries of these programmes of capacity-building for effective participation.

Poverty, racism and sustainable development

1. We call upon the UN to recognise Africans and African descendants as a Major Group in any UN process.
2. Racism and tribalism must be acknowledged as an impediment to sustainable development in the drafting of the WSSD governmental and civil society documents. There must be an explicit link between WCAR and WSSD.

3. We call for reparations to finance sustainable development for developing countries and peoples suffering from the legacy of colonialism, slavery, environmental assaults and other forms of oppression.
4. The WSSD must impose mandatory corporate responsibility and accountability mechanisms. We support the policy of "polluters must pay" and call for environmental reparations from corporations.
5. Vulnerable populations such as Africans, Afro-Latinos, Dalits and ethnic minority groups must be included in environmental and development planning processes and decision-making. In the United States, institutional forms of racism and discrimination - such as the disproportionate incarceration of peoples of colour and the inadequate funding of education for those populations - are prominent among the factors that must be reversed. These vulnerable populations in the United States must also enjoy inclusion in environmental and development planning processes and decision-making.
6. Policies must take the special circumstances of the physically challenged into account.
7. We support the call for the consolidation and strengthening of the Afro-Latino movement, the provision of resources to make this a reality, and capacity building and training of its members.
8. We call for the cancellation of the illegitimate foreign debt owed by developing countries and the redistribution of these funds to local communities.
9. We demand the eradication of environmental racism and the development of a global environmental justice movement.
10. We call for gender mainstreaming - involving women in decision-making for and about them is important - women are custodians of the home, they are closer to the environment and culture and are repositories of indigenous knowledge.
11. We call for the development and maintenance of databases on environmental health related diseases and use of these databases to determine environmental risk factors for impacted areas and communities.

Sustainable consumption and production

1. Organic agriculture should be promoted and encouraged, as it is more productive than chemical agriculture.
2. We must promote access to farmers' markets and strengthen local farmers and companies to trade locally first before selling internationally.
3. We must build a relationship between consumers and farmers for locally based trade and provide people with basic needs through educational campaigns on farming.
4. Recycling should be promoted and used by all countries, productive methodologies and patterns must be used and we must share the best practices amongst ourselves, to adopt quality practices.

Water

1. All nation states should recognize water and sanitation as basic human rights
2. Water should not be privatised, as it is a basic natural resource.

3. Local production of water is very key to sustainability.
4. There should be equitable access to water.
5. All must respect the integrity of ecosystems as the basis for all life - both human and natural - and adequate clean water must be ensured to maintain healthy ecosystems
6. All governments must commit to public sector delivery of water services
7. Governments should ensure that adequate local capacity is built.
8. Governments must ensure adequate financial resources are made available. This would include cross-subsidisation, free lifeline services and the rising block tariff.
9. Governments should prioritise water for domestic consumption, rural and sustainable livelihoods
10. International law must be enacted and implemented to ensure that water is not used as a vehicle for oppression and should promote regional co-operation
11. Governments, bilateral donors and international financial institutions should implement and incorporate the World Commission of Dams recommendation into all activities
12. Governments must ensure that water and water services are kept out of GATS and the WTO
13. Governments must ensure public participation in all aspects of water management and decision-making, particularly the participation of women, indigenous peoples and youth.

Sustainable development and the millennium development goals (MDGs)

1. There is a need to create partnerships between NGOs (and NGO groupings) with respect for each other, including each other's agenda, to help to create a global network of NGOs.
2. We need to learn and talk about the MDGs in relation to organisations, use MDGs to make organisations sustainable and use sustainable business profit to benefit designated groups.
3. We must ensure youth groups become essential partners in the realization of MDGs.
4. We must create access to resources of unused funds and review time frames periodically.

Restoring self-governance in the age of globalisation

1. We must create people's declarations in which the key issues endangering our resources and thereby world's social and environmental health are addressed.
2. We have to build a strong resistance network that is interconnected and shows solidarity between all countries in the North and South, East and West that exposes and unmasks unsustainable practices of corporations
3. We need to create awareness about consumption patterns, especially in the North that will allow informed consumer decision taking into account social and

environmental costs of products, that are paid somewhere else in the world and by our future generations.

Social protection and household food security

Government action:

1. Give priority to vulnerable, poor communities in rural areas
2. Implement effective and equitable land redistribution
3. Enact legislation to label GM products
4. Place a moratorium on the distribution of GM seeds by governments

Action for all:

5. Educate the people about the UN declaration on human rights
6. Oppose privatisation as one of the main causes of poverty
7. Encourage local food gardening
8. Utilise communal lands in rural areas productively and sustainably
9. Fight against child slavery in food production

Developing countries:

10. Governments must provide subsidies to their farmers and protect farm workers.
11. In South Africa, we should use Section 27 in the Constitution to claim the right to social and food security.

Basic Income Grant:

12. The proposal for a guaranteed universal basic income (BIG) should be taken forward globally as an important measure to urgently address the worst forms of poverty and destitution. This should be a basic right and is not a substitute for, nor dependant on, the rights of citizens to enter into productive activity and earn a decent income.

We recommend that it should not be means-tested. Specific time frames are needed for the implementation of the basic income grant, and transparency and accountability of government officials in its implementation. A process to review and monitor implementation of this system needs to be instituted to ensure that the grant reaches the intended beneficiaries and that corruption is minimised.

Trade and sustainable development

1. Civil society demands that:

- a. No new issues, such as investment, competition, government procurement are deliberated in the WTO unless it is reformed.
- b. Existing agreements that are creating problems, such as Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) are reviewed
- c. Principles such as benefit sharing, as agreed in the Convention on Biological Diversity and environmental justice are respected

2. Governments should give precedence to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), labour and human rights agreements over WTO agreements

3. Governments should conduct impact assessments of effects of existing and proposed trade rules and agreements on environment, health

Health

1. Governments should approach health as a human right and it should never be privatised.

2. Governments should develop and maintain databases on environmental health related diseases and use of these databases to determine environmental risk factors for impacted areas and communities.

3. Governments must have a mandatory recurring budgetary item that adequately funds and supports improvements in environmental and health conditions, including resources and staffing to provide health care to the vulnerable groups.

4. The UN and governments should develop and implement a comprehensive health plan to ensure universal access by 2015.

5. Governments should ensure that doctors and medical professionals are trained in environmental health medicine and the impacts of pollution on communities to enhance the delivery of effective health care.

6. The World Health Organisation should be mandated to conduct fact-finding missions to vulnerable communities around the world suffering from environmental and health problems. These missions should document investigations, findings and recommendations.

7. Governments should adhere to and implement the ILO convention on HIVAIDS and other related international conventions on HIVAIDS.

Science and education & capacity building

1. Governments should implement the Agenda 21 provisions on science and education.

2. Governments and civil society should adopt and implement comprehensive programmes on lifelong learning and adult education.

3. Governments and civil society should:

a. Implement educational methods enhancing ethos and methods of sustainable development, including the mainstreaming of indigenous knowledge systems.

b. Ensure that financial and technical support is provided for the development of dynamic national systems of innovation in developing countries, with technology policies geared towards poverty reduction and environmentally sustainable development, integrated with poverty reduction strategies.

c. Provide support for technological R&D relevant to the poor, focused upon creating R&D capacity in developing countries, and support for investment in R&D and innovation by low-income producers themselves to develop their own technologies that are most suitable to local needs.

d. Ensure international and national regulatory frameworks that support the development of technological capabilities in developing countries, including the regulation of trade and investment by national governments, and intellectual

property rights regimes that enable access to new and existing technology knowledge.

e. Establish a Commission within the UN system to evaluate new technologies, especially in the rapidly evolving field of biotechnology.