

CONFERENCE DAILY

Final issue

THE FINAL CONFERENCE DAY: QUOTES AND IMAGES



Change happens through people getting together like they have at this conference. Rio is about practice, it's not about theory. It's the **involvement of all of you** that is making sustainable development a reality at the local level. We will make sure that the outcomes will be included in the preparations for Rio.

- **Kenza Robinson** (UNDESA)



Recommendations UN-Water for Rio+20. Zafar Adeel (Chair UN-Water):

- Water is the engine for the green economy; we need to make sure it gets plugged in.
- Water technology and innovation should be a centrepiece.
- Economic instruments are a key element of the green economy platform.
- Increasing efficiency will be a key underlying premise of the green economy.
- Political commitment and enabling policies are critical. We would like to see the leaders at Rio put forward some concrete ideas for legislative changes.

Education and capacity building are the most important aspects. The green economy needs to be built on **green societies**, built on knowledge and ethical principles.

Alexander Otte (UNESCO)

We cannot overestimate the **importance of water for development**, for the maintenance of peace and stability as well as for environmental sustainability. As we all know, peace, stability and the development of many countries sharing water resources entirely depends on good relations and cooperation.

Ambassador Sirodjidin Aslov (Permanent Mission of Tajikistan to the UN)

Water planning brings social peace and creates a shared vision. It serves to bring water out of the short-term political game. **Manuel Omedas Margeli** (CHE)

Benefit sharing is one of the most important outcomes of planning. Different sectors and users should reap benefits from planning. **Oudomsack Philavong** (Lao PDR)

There's been a lot of **rebranding** at this conference, but we should be looking at the green economy in terms of opportunities, refiguring an economy and promoting some things over others in order to promote green jobs. For example, I don't see water loss reduction initiatives as 'green' – it's what you should be doing anyway"
Adrian Cashman (Barbados)

It's important to bear in mind that privatisation does not miraculously make unprofitable operations profitable -
Caridad Canales (ECLAC)

A major challenge in **Guatemala** is intra-ministerial and inter-secretarial cooperation on water. We don't communicate. **Elisa Colom** (Guatemala)

The poor can pay for their drinking water and water companies can be sustainable if they work together with the users. **Diego Ernesto Fernandez** (Colombia)

We have been doing so many studies that show it pays to invest in water, but somehow it is not working. In approaches to Rio we have to be creative.

Bert Diphoom (UN-Habitat)



Thank you!



Dear all,

Rio+20 needs to demonstrate that a green economy is possible; that there are opportunities to create new jobs; that there are opportunities for innovation and the creation of enterprises. It is also an opportunity to show that a green economy is not possible without poverty alleviation. Across the world, ensuring access to basic water and sanitation services has proved to be a critical step for lifting people out of the vicious cycle of poverty and environmental degradation. A **green economy is for everyone** and we have seen how developing countries have been taken a leading role through many examples of initiatives that are generating triple bottom benefits.

This conference has been an opportunity for all of us to **learn from actual implementation experiences**. We have reflected on success stories and also on the challenges of implementing projects that help us move in the direction of a growing economy that is less resource intensive and does not result in degradation of the environment. We have seen real opportunities for instruments such as Payment for Ecosystem Services, having great success throughout LAC, but also in Africa and Asia. We have heard about the challenges of implementing economic instruments such as trading and pricing to create the right incentives for changing behaviour and achieving social goals. However, incentives can influence economic decisions and social and environmental goals, and it is important to learn how to harness their potential, especially if we want to 'do more with less' in the context of a green economy.

We have discussed what opportunities exist for developing countries to 'leapfrog' with information technology. We have seen the importance of government actions and planning, but also the important role of communities in places where government action does not reach. The pro-poor approach adopted by international organisations is paying off, with a greater focus on outcomes, social dialogue, social contracts and community participation. Above all, it is clear that we all have **a joint responsibility to progress to a different economic model**. We must not miss this opportunity.

Bringing together those involved in implementation has been an extraordinary opportunity for **exchanging experiences**. The level of listening and sharing from all participants generated a magical atmosphere and vibrant discussions. At the United Nations Office to Support the International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015, we are committed to making sure your efforts are recognised and that your experiences provide key inputs to Rio+20, showing others the way forward on the road to Rio and beyond.

My gratitude to all,
Josefina Maestu (Coordinator UNW-DPAC)

We would like to thank all the **volunteers** from Zaragoza for their great support during the conference!
Muchas gracias!!



On the conference website, you can find:

- Photos
 - Case papers by tool and overview papers
 - Presentations
 - Conference dailies
 - Video interviews with case presenters
 - Interviews with session conveners
 - Information briefs
 - Articles
 - Statements from UN agencies
 - More information and outputs of the conference
- www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/green_economy_2011/



I think this has been one of the best communicated conferences that I have attended. This is very important, because what we actually try to do is serve the citizens of the UN, so they have to know what we are doing. **Alexander Otte** (UNESCO)

United Nations Office to support the International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015/UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication (UNW-DPAC)

Casa Solans - Avenida Cataluña, 60
50014 Zaragoza, Spain
Tel: +34 976 478 346
Fax: +34 976 478 349
E-mail: water-decade@un.org