

Dialogue 3

Development: Resilient ecosystem and sustainable development

Moderator: Bill Jackson (Independent Environmental Consultant)

Panellists:

- Won Heeryong (Governor, Jeju Special Self-Governing Province)
- Inger Andersen (Director General, IUCN)
- Yvo de Boer (Director General, GGGI)
- Masahiko Horie (Ambassador for Global Env'tal Affairs, Min. of Foreign Affairs, Japan)
- Patricia Zurita (Chief Executive, BirdLife International)

Following a brief introduction by Dr. Jackson, the **Governor of Jeju** spoke of his pleasure that the World Leaders' Conservation Forum was taking place in Jeju. He felt a great sense of responsibility. He went on to state that UNESCO has designated many areas in Jeju and that in Jeju, they are making a lot of efforts to make this island a carbon free island and to try and transform all their energy resources into renewable resources. They have ambitious plans for transformation and there with the strong commitment and will by the people of Jeju province to make the plans work, he was confident that they would succeed.

He then stated that he was looking forward to learning more about how Jeju could make improvements on their conservation plan.

Inger Andersen (Director General, IUCN) resilient ecosystems and sustainable management

Ms Andersen began by outlining the trends that we are seeing today: populations pressing upwards, carbon emissions increasing, species dropping off faster than we have seen in the past; and she said that in we really have to think out of the box when we speak of resilient ecosystems and sustainable management. At some point we will reach the tipping point and we will not be able to get back. She asked what we need to do differently to succeed. It is necessary to implement fundamental shifts as conservation efforts over the last 50 years have not worked. We need to focus on economic growth that does not affect the environment.

One of the elements that should be considered is nature's infrastructure and natural capital. We have to understand how we can use nature and how nature serves us. Nature has a value and if we can find a way of optimising it so that it serves for agriculture and also for our protection and resilience we will be on the right track. The question is, "how do we pay for this?" Mangroves, birds, bees offer protection and pollination services. They are free services today but we are not investing in this. We are taxing the good things and not the bad things. Ms Andersen then urged delegates to consider whole story around natural capital and redefining the value that nature brings to us going forward.

Ms Andersen concluded by reminding those present that coming up later this year there are a number of important decisions that will be made. In September SDGs will be confirmed and these will apply worldwide. She asked the audience not just to nod and agree with her but to take the messages that came out of these meetings out of the conference hall and to spread the message. We must think about re-jigging the economy so that we can see a desire to invest to see the value of those free services.

Yvo de Boer (Director General, GGGI)

Mr de Boer began by stating he thought the WLCF had been a great conference and reminded the audience that there were other important meetings taking place later this year, particularly the option of new SDGs – whose goals and their indicators will define what we do going forward. He was keen to highlight was the fact that **now** is an important moment to begin to think about the concept of value and how we define it differently.

This can be done in two ways: Firstly the Top down example: We live in a world where the economy revolves around companies. How we judge them today is solely in terms of the financial value they return to their shareholders. But they are drawing on financial capital, intellectual capital, social capital and on natural capital. So one of the points is can we look at financial value but also at all the other capital that they put back into society at the end of the day. They should present their contribution to society more holistically.

The second way is the Bottom up example. GGGI works with fishermen in Philippines who fished with dynamite and cyanide. Today they protect mangroves. In Indonesia – farmers on degraded farmers land generate income by rehabilitating nature. Payment performance schemes where wood products lead to more income than simply cutting down trees.

Mr de Boer concluded by asking what the definition of value is. To date we have failed to value ecosystems and ecosystem services.

Masahiko Horie (Ambassador for Global Env. Affairs, Min. of Foreign Affairs, Japan)

The Ambassador began by stating that the keynote speech was very moving. However, some of the main points mentioned were already tabled 40 years ago. He reminded delegates that Mother Nature has been patient and has been persevering over these 40 years. We have not been wise enough to lessen the burden. Development and environment date back to 1972, over 40 years ago, at the first UN environment conference in Stockholm. It is time to act.

There are two camps – developed countries concentrating on the environment and the poorer countries whose concentration is on development and poverty eradication. At the Rio summit we started to consider reconciling the two environments. Another 20 years later, we have come to an agreement that development should take place without underlining the benefits we get from ecosystems services. The Ambassador stated that he was pleased that the SDGs would be discussed in September. It took over 40 years to change this view and reconcile the two areas. Mother Nature cannot wait another 40 years and he was looking forward to the serious and vigorous discussion to achieve this.

The Ambassador concluded his speech by urging participants to come up with a bold and ambitious global framework to move forward.

Patricia Zurita (Chief Executive, BirdLife International)

Ms Zurita began by giving a brief description of Birdlife international which consists of 120 organisations around the world, using birds as ambassadors of the planet.

She went on to say that biodiversity is central to the provision of goods and services. It is critical for our livelihoods and our survival. The importance of biodiversity for the prosperity of humankind is key, as biological resources provide a lot for our planet today. She stated that harmful effects would create social conflicts and that the loss of biodiversity is decreasing productivity and increasing the risk of droughts, spread of disease, migration and social conflict. She urged the audience to move away from short term and focus on the

long-term. We need to empower local people, not only governments, scientists and the. Civil society plays a key role to allow innovation to happen. We are running out of time.

Ms Zurita concluded by stating that we have to move beyond the SDGs. We have to ensure that the Goals are mainstreamed through the framework of the 2015 Agenda, something that would be difficult to do, but we cannot wait any longer to do it. She stated that:

1. We need healthy ecosystems to ensure safe and equitable development
2. Biodiversity enables ecosystems to adapt to changing climates
3. Mainstream conservation and biodiversity is the way forward

Question session

The first question concerned Ecosystem resilience. What is it, especially in the concept of sustainable development?

Ms Andersen replied by stating that a healthy ecosystem is productive ecosystem with its inherent wealth making it productive for itself but also the system it relies on. As far as resilience is concerned – as we lose species, we don't fully understand how that connects with the overall operation of the system. We have 1.3bn people who live in poverty. They have expectations but how to fulfil those? We need to reach a different type of productive cycle. Who cleans up after us? The issue is the manner in which we align incentives (taxes, subsidies) and how we perceive that. We have to account for and tax our wealth and look at how we pay for our services.

Q: How do you prioritise human infrastructure?

Mr de Boer explained that the key is that we need to look at the short term cost AND the long term benefit of investing in infrastructure. Part of the problem is that everyone is getting rich. There is not one example of strong and successful environmental protection in the absence of strong economic growth.

The Governor of Jeju Island then explained that Jeju had experienced most of the problems that underdeveloped countries are facing today. Back then, everyone wanted economic growth and development. No matter how much natural capital we had, we wanted economic abundance. We still felt we were poor. We made a lot of efforts to achieve economic development.

Jeju and South Korea, in achieving this, experienced a loss of natural resources and values that needed protecting. In that process, the beautiful ecosystem was recognised and designated as natural heritage and South Korea started to take more interest in green growth issues and the people took an interest. We have been working with people to understand the importance of natural capital. The realisation came at a later stage and then we wanted to take action as soon as possible.

China and Asian countries, now the western civilisation provided us with various convenient infrastructures and for our neighbouring countries they might feel that they want more convenience through economic development, but our experience here in Jeju is that this can lead to more economic gains for the local community. The Korean government wants to come up with policies of taxation and subsidies and legal frameworks to encourage people to join in nature conservation and building a stronger ecosystem, and now with technological innovation, these market mechanisms are being evaluated and compensate.

In conclusion, we are not just thinking, we are taking action. Not always easy but we think about alternatives to economic growth. Overcoming poverty does not just become possible though the destruction of nature – it should go hand in hand with the development of nature. And all of this has to be accepted by the people to become feasible and effective.

The Ambassador then explained that ambition is a solution, but through cooperation with international organisations they have induced the people to take part in green growth. We have done a lot but can do more. Now we are asking ourselves, “How do we speed up the process?” He stated that he would have liked to bring the governors of Japan to listen and learn at the Conference.

If we take the post 2015 development agenda, we cannot pre-judge on what will be agreed on but we need to be ambitious, optimistic and realistic. What will countries accept as legally binding? What people will want to endeavour? Leaders will have to translate and implement them. Success will depend on how. If governments act as the government of Jeju has, that is fine but elsewhere, the priority of natural capital and biodiversity don't have the same priorities. However, if governments are ambitious and proactive, they might succeed.

He stressed that we need to double our efforts so that nature, ecosystems and natural capital will become the main screen for policy making. We need to reach out to as many people as possible that nature cannot persevere any longer and encourage politicians to change their policies. Principles and management policies must include clauses for biodiversity and natural capital.

Dr Jackson then asked the panel, if they had one message for the next CoP – what would it be?

The Business arena is key. How can it work practically? How can we accelerate, private business participation? With proper pricing.

Ms Andersen explained that we have no desire to say how much you can have, how many children you can have, holidays, hot water. But what we cannot do is pass the cost of our behaviour onto society. We can't pass environmental cost onto consumer at the moment. We need to price carbon properly so we can financially recognise the cost of our behaviour.

She reminded us that at the outset, the idea of price on carbon many felt was outrageous. We could not imagine an economy without it or invest in alternative energies. Yet, 21 years later, this is within our grasp. It's defined it just needs bold decisions to get there. We know what the problems are, what will make the difference is why the role biodiversity plays in business and societies is what we **must** understand. We need to invest in the right places. People need to understand that it is more worthwhile to do so. The early movers who invest in green economy will be those who reap it. We need to set the fiscal policy, deal with subsidies and incentives and enforce them by fining.

Ms Zurita said we should consider what the benefits for the private sector are for investing in natural capital. Partnerships with the private sector have been signed and have worked well. Rio Tinto, for example is committed – preserve key wetland areas and forests in Madagascar. Companies from different industries work together and they are seeing the benefits. These values are reflected in the stock markets and this will encourage others to do. Similarly, innovation – what are the new ways of doing business. Local solutions at the local level that can have a global impact.

One problem at the moment is that carbon pricing has declined since it was introduced. It's too low to create incentives. Carbon price has collapsed in Europe. Too much supply and

not enough demand. The solution is to create more demand. We should adopt ambitious targets in Paris at the end of the year. We have the infrastructure – US, California, various initiatives also in Europe and China. But there is a lack of demand in the market – so we need to adopt ambitious targets.

The Ambassador felt that one problem was that it took too long for applications to be processed. At the same time, there was a precise way of checking – propose new crediting system which will be new way. There is technological innovation for CO2 emissions. We need to encourage people to take part in achieving the target of reducing or containing the temp – but how to do so? We need new innovations based on clean energy and that will help reduce CO2 emissions.

Ms Zurita disagreed, saying that biodiversity is not a species or habitats – it's everything. Nature is here for the planet – for a healthy planet you need to look at nature holistically.

Mr de Boer asked whether being green is too expensive. Many people are not aware of the cost of air quality is. Price of fuel calculation does not take into account the health costs. We should look at costs more holistically.

The Ambassador stated that Nature is the GDP of the poor. Nature has to be preserved and we have to make the poor better. This is the key to happy coexistence. The WCC 2012, will take place in Hawaii. President Obama has backed the WCC. USA not a party of Kyoto and he hoped the Americans would change their minds to make biodiversity count. He complimented the leadership of Korean government in their attitude to the conservation of biodiversity. Japan is also making an effort and has been trying to achieve targets and recommendations of the 2012 WCC and suggested a tripartite partnership between the Korean, Japanese and Chinese IUCN offices would be beneficial.

Ms Zurita spoke next. As an economist, she was keen to understand the value of nature. We are still in the process of trying to find out numbers. How to we translate numbers into the right pricing? Part of the solution is governance and legislation. While we look for the numbers, we have the backing of nature – which enables civil society to participate and innovate. We need to mainstream biodiversity to find a solution.

Ms Andersen stated that it takes all of the above. We need to get at value, we need an agreement, it doesn't work if we are only talking to each other – we need to work outside our community much more than inside. No agreements are legally binding so how can we ensure that people demand. Flows we need to bring together and this WLCF should help.

The concept of GDP, evaluates the value of production but it does not look at what is harms in the process. Efforts made by local communities do not receive economic valuation, nor are they incentivised. Int'l orgs are engaging in discussions and CoP 21 is a challenge for the leaders. Goals must be feasible but they must also be worth pursuing. It is challenging for us to bring about change and we need to induce people to participate and motivate them.

We must also be realistic. You can see various places in Jeju and natural protection sites, where people actually are faced with a number of challenges in terms of preserving the sites despite their desire to do so.

The Panel discussion then came to a close. Dr. Jackson would present his closing comments after a short break.