

Environmental Movements, Politics and Agenda 21 in Latin America

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Acronyms

AmiGranSa	Sociedad de Amigos en Defensa de La Gran Sabana
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FUDENA	Fundación para la Defensa de la Naturaliza
GEMA	Grupo de Estudio sobre Mujer y Ambiente
G7	Group of Seven
G77	Group of 77 developing countries and China
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
LACCDE	Latin American and Caribbean Commission on Development and Environment
NGO	non-governmental organization
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
OPIAC	Organization of the Indigenous People of the Colombian Orinoquia and Amazonia
PrepCom	preparatory committee
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WWF	World Wide Fund For Nature
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Summary/Résumé/Resumen

Summary

The scarce interest in, and the lack of support given to, Agenda 21 – the official, mainstream agenda adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit, Rio de Janeiro, 1992) – by Latin American governments, non-governmental organization (NGOs) and social movements may be explained in part by the region's economic, political and social crises that have defined priorities other than those stipulated in Agenda 21. The main concerns of the region over the last decade have been poverty and political stability, not sustainable development. Another obstacle for the advancement of Agenda 21 is the fact that sustainable development and participatory democracy are such broad concepts that there is no agreement on their meaning among Latin American governments, NGOs and social movements – and not even within NGOs and social movements.

This paper analyses the values, expectations and proposals of Latin American governments, and environmental and social organizations and movements, within this context, in an attempt to identify the sets of principles, and the economic and political models they propose for achieving sustainable development. The paper shows the divergence of perspective and the difficulties of reaching a consensual agenda. This analysis shows that the values, expectations and demands of NGOs and social movements are very heterogeneous: some of them denounce economic globalization, free trading, privatization and the accentuation of poverty and social inequalities as the causes of environmental problems, while others focus on ecological issues and disregard sociopolitical causes; some accept Agenda 21 as the basis for a dialogue with governments and international multilateral institutions and as a platform from which to solve such problems, while others reject it on the basis of a substantive critique, not only of the prevalent economic model but of the “civilization model” as well, and propose an alternative agenda. Information and data for this comparison come primarily from a content analysis of the official and alternative agendas adopted in Rio de Janeiro, as well as multiple official and alternative documents coming out of meetings between 1992–2002, such as the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, Special Session of the General Assembly to Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21 (Earth Summit+5), the World Social Forum (Porto Alegre) and preparatory meetings for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (the Johannesburg summit), among others.

In the 10 years since the Earth Summit, Agenda 21 guided the aims, praxes and policy proposals of international institutions and governments, but the spaces, mechanisms, values and agendas that could garner the favour of Latin American governments and social movements toward sustainable development were lacking. Thus, the author argues, the main challenges of the Johannesburg summit were the creation of new spaces for the participation of civil society in the decision-making process, and the promotion of a dialogue regarding the type of development required for the next decade. The instrumentalist, “techno-scientific” rationality on which Agenda 21 relies, she claims, excludes the visions, aims and proposals of an important group of social organizations and movements. Alone, it does not provide the basis for a democratic agreement. A meaningful dialogue centered on sustainable development has to focus on a humanistic approach, and not be based on technology or economic growth per se. It has also to be grounded in one of the characteristics of democracy – that is, in its pluralism – which implies the recognition and the acceptance of the great diversity of beliefs and values held by human beings. For this to be possible, all parties must have similar bargaining power. Since this is not the case of social movements, there is the need for these organizations to empower themselves through the reinforcement of their already existing networks, thereby creating a space from which to participate in the collective and democratic construction of a viable and equitable framework for sustainable development.

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Political Economy of Sustainable Development: Environmental Conflict, Participation and Movements, which took place in 2002 in parallel with the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, South Africa).

Résumé

Le désintérêt des gouvernements, des organisations non gouvernementales (ONG) et des mouvements sociaux d'Amérique latine pour Action 21—le programme officiel adopté à la Conférence des Nations Unies sur l'environnement et le développement (Sommet Planète Terre, Rio de Janeiro, 1992)—et le peu de soutien qu'ils lui ont apporté peuvent s'expliquer en partie par les crises économiques, politiques et sociales qu'a traversées la région et qui ont dicté des priorités différentes de celles d'Action 21. Les principales préoccupations de la région au cours de la décennie passée ont été la pauvreté et la stabilité politique, et non pas le développement durable. Les notions mêmes de développement durable et de démocratie participative, trop larges pour que leur signification puisse faire l'objet d'un accord entre gouvernements, ONG et mouvements sociaux d'Amérique latine—même les ONG et les mouvements sociaux ne peuvent pas s'entendre sur une définition à leur donner, ont fait obstacle à la mise en oeuvre d'Action 21.

L'auteur analyse dans ce contexte les valeurs, attentes et propositions des gouvernements et des organisations et mouvements sociaux et écologiques d'Amérique latine, en essayant de dégager les principes et les modèles économiques et politiques qu'ils proposent pour accéder au développement durable. Elle montre les différences de perspective et la difficulté de parvenir à un programme consensuel. Son analyse illustre la grande hétérogénéité des valeurs, attentes et revendications des ONG et des mouvements sociaux: certains d'entre eux dénoncent la mondialisation économique, le libre-échange, la privatisation et l'aggravation de la pauvreté et des inégalités sociales comme les causes des problèmes d'environnement, tandis que d'autres se concentrent sur l'écologie et négligent les causes sociopolitiques; d'aucuns acceptent Action 21 comme base de dialogue avec les gouvernements et les institutions internationales multilatérales et comme plate-forme de règlement des problèmes, tandis que d'autres rejettent ce programme pour des raisons de fond, critiquant non seulement le modèle économique mais aussi le "modèle de civilisation" qu'il reflète, et proposent un programme de substitution. Les informations et données qui ont permis cette comparaison viennent essentiellement de l'analyse du contenu des programmes officiel et parallèle adoptés à Rio de Janeiro, ainsi que des multiples documents, officiels et autres, émanant des réunions tenues entre 1992 et 2002, telles que le Sommet mondial pour le développement social, la Quatrième Conférence internationale sur les femmes, la Session extraordinaire de l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies consacrée à un examen et évaluation de la mise en oeuvre d'Action 21 (Sommet Planète Terre⁵), le Forum social mondial (Porto Alegre) et les réunions préparatoires du Sommet mondial sur le développement durable (Sommet de Johannesburg) notamment.

Au cours des dix années qui se sont écoulées depuis le Sommet Planète Terre, institutions internationales et gouvernements se sont inspirés d'Action 21 pour définir leurs buts et leur pratique et proposer des politiques, mais les espaces, mécanismes, valeurs et programmes qui pouvaient gagner les gouvernements et les mouvements sociaux d'Amérique latine au développement durable faisaient défaut. Aussi le grand pari du Sommet de Johannesburg a-t-il été, de l'avis de l'auteur, de créer de nouveaux lieux où la société civile puisse participer au processus décisionnel et d'encourager un dialogue sur le type de développement souhaité pour la prochaine décennie. Avec son raisonnement instrumentaliste et "technico-scientifique", le programme Action 21 laisse de côté, selon elle, la vision, les buts et propositions d'un groupe important d'organisations et de mouvements sociaux. Il ne jette pas à lui seul les bases d'un accord démocratique. Un vaste dialogue centré sur le développement durable doit être inspiré par une démarche humaniste et non pas compter sur la technologie ou la croissance économique en soi. Il doit aussi être fondé sur l'une des caractéristiques de la démocratie, c'est-à-dire le pluralisme, qui suppose que soit reconnue et acceptée la grande diversité des

croyances et des valeurs humaines. Pour que cela soit possible, il faut que toutes les parties aient le même pouvoir de négociation. Comme ce n'est pas le cas des mouvements sociaux, ceux-ci doivent l'acquiescer en renforçant leurs réseaux et en créant ainsi un espace à partir duquel il soit possible de participer à la construction collective et démocratique d'un cadre viable et équitable pour le développement durable.

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Resumen

El escaso interés y la falta de apoyo prestado por los gobiernos latinoamericanos, las organizaciones no gubernamentales (ONG) y los movimientos sociales a la Programa 21 —el programa oficial y principal adoptado en la Conferencia de las Naciones Unidas sobre el Medio Ambiente y el Desarrollo (Cumbre para la Tierra, Río de Janeiro, 1992)— obedecen en parte a las crisis económicas, sociales y políticas de la región, que han establecido prioridades distintas de las estipuladas en la Programa 21. Las cuestiones de principal interés en la región en el último decenio han sido la pobreza y la estabilidad política; no el desarrollo sostenible. Otro obstáculo para el fomento de la Programa 21 es el hecho de que el desarrollo sostenible y la democracia participativa son conceptos tan amplios que impiden que exista un acuerdo sobre su significado entre los gobiernos latinoamericanos, las ONG y los movimientos sociales —ni siquiera dentro de las ONG y los movimientos sociales.

En este documento se analizan los valores, expectativas y propuestas de los gobiernos latinoamericanos, y de las organizaciones y movimientos medioambientales y sociales en este contexto; en un esfuerzo por identificar los principios y los modelos políticos y económicos que éstos proponen para lograr el desarrollo sostenible. Se muestran la divergencia de perspectivas y las dificultades que conlleva alcanzar una agenda de común acuerdo. Este análisis ilustra que los valores, expectativas y exigencias de las ONG y los movimientos sociales son muy heterogéneos: algunos denuncian la mundialización económica, el libre comercio, la privatización, y la acentuación de la pobreza y las desigualdades sociales como causas de los problemas medioambientales, mientras que otros se centran en las cuestiones ecológicas sin tener en cuenta las causas sociopolíticas; algunos aceptan la Programa 21 como base para el diálogo con los gobiernos y las instituciones multilaterales internacionales y como punto de partida para solucionar dichos problemas, mientras que otros la rechazan sobre la base de una crítica de fondo, y no sólo del modelo económico predominante, sino también del "modelo de civilización", y proponen una agenda alternativa. Los datos y la información para establecer esta comparación se derivan fundamentalmente de un análisis del contenido de las agendas oficiales y alternativas adoptadas en Río de Janeiro, así como de múltiples documentos oficiales y alternativos procedentes de reuniones celebradas entre 1992 y 2002, como la Cumbre Mundial sobre Desarrollo Social, la Cuarta Conferencia Mundial sobre la Mujer, Período extraordinario de sesiones de la Asamblea General para el Examen y la Evaluación de la Aplicación del Programa 21 (Cumbre para la Tierra+5), el Foro Mundial Social (Porto Alegre) y reuniones preparatorias para la Cumbre Mundial sobre el Desarrollo Sostenible (Cumbre de Johannesburgo).

Diez años después de la Cumbre para la Tierra, la Programa a 21 orientó los objetivos, la práctica y las propuestas de política de instituciones y gobiernos internacionales, pero faltaron los espacios, mecanismos, valores y agendas que podrían haber ganado el apoyo de los gobiernos latinoamericanos y movimientos sociales hacia el desarrollo sostenible. Así pues, la autora afirma que los principales desafíos de la Cumbre de Johannesburgo fueron la creación de nuevos espacios para que la sociedad civil participara en el proceso de toma de decisiones, y la

promoción de un diálogo sobre el tipo de desarrollo deseado para el decenio siguiente. Según la autora, la lógica instrumentalista “tecno-científica” sobre la que se asienta la Programa 21, excluye los principios, objetivos y propuestas de un importante grupo de organizaciones y movimientos sociales. Por sí sola, no proporciona las bases para un acuerdo democrático. Un diálogo amplio centrado en el desarrollo sostenible debe tener un enfoque humanístico, en lugar de basarse en la tecnología o en el crecimiento económico propiamente dicho. También debe asentarse en una de las características de la democracia—es decir, en su pluralismo—que supone el reconocimiento y la aceptación de la gran diversidad de creencias y valores que tienen los seres humanos. Para que esto sea posible, todas las partes deben tener un poder de negociación similar. Dado que éste no es el caso de los movimientos sociales, es preciso que estas organizaciones se empoderen a sí mismas a través del refuerzo de sus redes establecidas, creando de este modo un espacio que les permita participar en la construcción colectiva y democrática de un marco viable y equitativo para el desarrollo sostenible.

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Challenging Priorities of Sustainable Development: New Problems and Discourses

The discourses, praxes and proposals of environmental social movements in Latin America do not differ from those of other developing countries.¹ As such, they involve a critique of the “civilization model” and the hegemonic instrumental rationale of postmodernity that is supported by international multilateral agencies such as the United Nations and by governments all over the world. This paper analyses the discourses and proposals that underline the environmental values and rationale of developing country social movements and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from their participation at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, or the Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. It will also contrast these discourses and proposals with those advanced by governments attending such summits including governments of countries in the developing world, particularly Latin American and Caribbean governments.

The above comparison will be primarily based on the main policy documents produced at UNCED by social movements and governments, since they were the principal guides for the Johannesburg summit. These documents include:

- i. *Construyendo el Futuro: Tratados Alternativos de Rio '92* (1993),² which was drafted by the Foro Internacional de ONGs y Movimientos Sociales (International Forum of NGOs and Social Movements). This document is known as the alternative agenda because it was the result of participatory and democratic discussions among NGOs and social movements attending the Earth Summit. This alternative agenda contained declarations and general principles such as the Declaración de la Tierra de los Pueblos (Declaration of the People’s Land); the Declaración de Rio (Rio Declaration)³ and Carta de la Tierra (Earth Charter), which were published and widely distributed in the original language of each participating country for signature.
- ii. Agenda 21 (United Nations 1992b) and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (United Nations 1997). This agenda is referred to as the “official agenda of governments” and refers to the model of sustainable development adopted in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (United Nations 1992a) subscribed to by governments. The official agenda also includes documents discussed and approved at preparatory meetings.

The comparison for the period between the Earth Summit and the Johannesburg summit (1992 through 2002) is based on documents that emerged from networking and various alliances among social movements and their participation in forums, meetings, seminars and joint mobilizations at international gatherings such as the World Social Forums in Porto Alegre, Brazil, as well the agreements reached at the preparatory committees (PrepComs) for the Johannesburg summit. In the case of governments, evaluations—such as the Ten-Year Review of Progress Achieved in the Implementation of the Outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (United Nations 2000)—are included, as well as the agreements reached at preparatory meetings.

¹ Environmental social movements from developing countries—despite common strategies such as mobilization against large international corporations and globalization, and the protection of biodiversity and the environment—differ from similar movements in industrialized countries in the importance given to economic, ecological and social dimensions of sustainable development. Environmental social movements in developing countries prioritize social dimensions such as poverty, while the environmental social movements in industrialized countries tend to emphasize the unsustainable consumption pattern and ecological issues.

² The Spanish version of the documents, *Construyendo el Futuro: Tratados Alternativos de Rio '92* (1993) was used here. Therefore, quotations from that document are based on a free translation by the author from Spanish to English. In addition, the Spanish versions of many of the documents and declarations analysed have been used. For this reason, most of the quotations included in English are also free translations of the Spanish versions. Consequently, they may differ slightly from the original versions.

³ To distinguish between the two Rio declarations, the official one will be referred to as the Rio Declaration, and that of the NGOs and social movements will be referred to as the alternative Rio Declaration.

The alternative Rio Declaration (Foro Internacional de ONGs y Movimientos Sociales 1993) adopted by NGOs and social movements⁴ highlighted the conflict existing between their model and “the hegemonic civilization model, unfair and unsustainable, built upon the myth of unlimited development, which ignored the finite limits of earth” (1993:15). In the last decade, the developing world, and particularly Latin American environmental social movements, have promoted alternative developmental models based upon the creation of a new civilization model grounded on an ethic of environmental values and respect for cultural diversity, human solidarity, justice and liberty, and which collectively emerge as a critique to the instrumental rationale of the economic developmental model. According to Enrique Leff (1994), this environmental rationale is democratic per se because it is grounded in cultural, social, economic and political diversity.

This paper attempts to define the set of principles, values and proposals subscribed to in world and regional summits by governments and international institutions.⁵ A content analysis of declarations, documents and reports generated from 1992 to 2002 by international institutions, governments, NGOs and social movements⁶ helped to identify some of the obstacles that have impeded the advancement of the official Agenda 21 in Latin America, as well as the role played by social movements in advancing this agenda. The materials also allowed for evaluation of the alternative agenda proposed by NGOs and social movements, and analysis of some of the strategies used for empowerment as a means to agree on such an agenda. The paper concludes with remarks about the possibility of building an agenda based on a pluralistic and common set of values shared by social movements, governments and international institutions.

The Latin American region, the backdrop for this paper, is characterized by an interrelated and acute economic, political and social crisis, as exemplified by the situations in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela. Increasing rates of poverty, unemployment, political violence and instability during the 1990s negatively affected the implementation of Agenda 21 and, in general, the viability of achieving sustainable development in the region.

At the Regional Meeting of Latin American and Caribbean Civil Society Networks in Rio de Janeiro in October 2001, NGOs and social movements emphasized that

poverty and inequity in the distribution of incomes is an indicator of growing social unsustainability. The increase of unemployment from 5.8 per cent to 8.5 per cent in the formal sector during the last decade, in addition to labour

⁴ Unlike governments and international organizations such as the United Nations, environmental NGOs, activists and social movements are all part of the complex and heterogeneous universe of civil society. The term “NGO” is used to refer to the most institutionalized organizations that tended to accept the official Agenda 21, despite the fact that they differ in diagnosing the origin of environmental problems and sometimes align with social movements in the critique of the economic model of development. In contrast, environmental activists and social movements have an alternative approach and reject not only the economic model of development, but also the civilizational model behind its rationale and values. This study focuses mainly on social movements, which have alternative explanations and proposals for challenging Agenda 21 and the position of Latin American governments, the United Nations and international institutions. In those cases where NGOs and social movements have the same view, both terms are used. NGOs and proponents of entrepreneurial environmentalism whose interests are closer to those of international institutions or governments than to those of the environmental social movements are excluded.

⁵ It is important to note that this set of principles, values and proposals, subscribed to in world or regional summits by governments and international institutions, is not homogeneous; in fact, it can be quite wide-ranging, as the confrontations between industrialized countries (the Group of Seven or G7) and developing countries (the Group of 77 and China or G77) demonstrate. The written documents reflect unequal power relations, which tend to incline to the position of the industrialized countries.

⁶ Information and data come from:

- i. content analysis of Agenda 21, the alternative agenda and several other “official and alternative” documents elaborated during the period 1992–2002 by governments, or by NGOs and social movements, such as the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, from the 1995 World Summit for Social Development; the Cairo Declaration on World Population and the World Population Plan of Action, from the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development; the Beijing Declaration, from the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women; the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements, from the 1996 Conference on Human Settlements; the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21; documents of the Special Session of the General Assembly to Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21 (Earth Summit+5); the World Social Forums in Porto Alegre; the Rio de Janeiro Platform for Action on the Road to Johannesburg, from the Regional Preparatory Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean for the World Summit on Sustainable Development; and the meetings of Latin American and Caribbean Civil Society Networks, among others;
- ii. the results of interviews given by organizations registered at the Johannesburg summit; and
- iii. electronic publications, documents and interviews analysed in order to detect recent trends of environmental organizations and social movements.

informality of 50 per cent of the active population and the increase of underemployment, obstruct an improvement of the situation (Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y El Caribe 2001, author's translation).

During this last decade, a variety of economic and social problems were priorities for both the governments and social movements of the region, including addressing poverty, reducing political and social violence, providing basic services and increasing employment. In the face of these challenges, it was impossible to adequately infuse economic policies with adequate environmental content in Latin America. Policy formulation with regard to environmental matters was considered of secondary importance and the main concerns of the region were economic development, peace, and political and democratic stability, rather than sustainable development.

One reason for the dearth of interest and the lack of support for Agenda 21 from Latin American governments, NGOs and social movements involves the economic, political and social crises that have helped to define priorities other than the ones stipulated in Agenda 21. The Latin American and Caribbean Action Platform for Johannesburg (United Nations 2001), which was the official forum of government ministers and representatives in the Regional Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean, remarked that despite the almost 10 years that had passed since the Earth Summit, the conditions for sustainable development are no better than those prevailing in 1992. Emphasizing the increasing number of people in poverty and the deterioration of the environment, they concluded that the process of globalization has introduced new challenges for sustainability and, above all, for social equity.

In contradiction to the recognition by governments all over the world regarding the need to address the negative consequences of globalization on the environment, little attention has been given to the rationality and values implicit in Agenda 21.⁷ In this sense, the model proposed for sustainable development in the official Rio Declaration tends to neglect the structural origins of the socioeconomic problems of developing countries, confusing the consequences with the causes, blaming the poor for poverty, and poverty for the prevailing environmental problems.⁸

Social organizations and movements in the Latin American region have also emphasized poverty and deterioration of the environment as problems, but have consistently disagreed with their governments and with international institutions regarding the causes. A survey conducted by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) in 1997 and provided to 1,812 local authorities in 64 countries, indicated that one of the main obstacles to Agenda 21 was "the lack of consensus among the community to set priorities",⁹ a difficulty which is probably accentuated in developing countries such as those in Latin America, where poverty and sharp class differences are acute. In the municipality of Cajamarca, Peru, where the community identified their primary problems as rural poverty and lack of basic services, the Regional Development Sustainable Plan had to be grounded in the development and improvement of basic services. Moreover, planners and the community found that the main priorities for achieving the plan had to be redefined, resulting in the decentralization of local administration, a democratization of the planning process and the expansion and decentralization of local leadership. Thus, in order to face the political, social and economic problems, the solution was not sustainable development, as the official discourse proposed, but democratization and social equity as defined by the community, NGOs and social movements.

In accordance with the mandate of Agenda 21, 70 delegates, representatives from universities, NGOs, indigenous Mayan groups, juvenile organizations, the private sector and government institutions

⁷ The rationale and many of these values were inherited from industrialized countries.

⁸ The official discourse on sustainable development does not make clear who or what is at the centre of sustainable development: whether it is the market, nature or human beings. However, subsequent documents, such as the report of the World Summit for Social Development, have delegated this role to human beings.

⁹ See www.ecouncil.ac.cr/rio/focus/report/english/la21_rep.htm, accessed in May 2005.

attended a conference in Guatemala in January 1997 to discuss the National Sustainability Plan. The conference concluded that the long process of negotiation on peace agreements

caused economic, politic and social erosion, delaying the definition and implementation of Agenda 21. ... Currently, the peace process captures the attention of authorities, communities and donors, leaving sustainable development behind.¹⁰

Most social organizations and movements in Latin America have denounced and rejected Plan Colombia, Plan Bolivia and Plan Panama, all of which involve the compulsory eradication of illicit crops through fumigation and manual eradication, because, among other reasons, these plans could have a negative impact by sterilizing extended areas rich in biodiversity. The Organization of the Indigenous People of the Colombian Orinoquia and Amazonía (OPIAC) and other delegates met at a national workshop to discuss the Colombian Amazonian Agenda 21, which rejected the fumigation plan proposed by the Colombian and US governments. Instead, as an alternative, they proposed consensual and gradual processes within the framework of a peaceful resolution of conflicts and compensation for damages to peasants.¹¹ The international meeting of social movements gathered at the Second World Social Forum of Porto Alegre defended collective indigenous rights and knowledge, and condemned "military actions for the resolution of conflict, war proliferation and the military operation implied in the Plan Colombia" (author's translation) and in the plans of other Latin American countries such as Panama (Convocatoria de los Movimientos Sociales).

From the multiple documents and declarations analysed in regard to the implementation of Agenda 21 in the region, and from the experiences of many Latin American countries, it is clear that one of the main concerns for the region between 1992 and 2002 was the acute economic crisis and its effect on political instability. Thus, their aims were, and still are, addressing problems such as economic growth, peace and democratic stability in the short term. It should be noted that these priorities are shared by other developing countries. These countries, headed by South Africa, host of the summit, tended to suggest in the preparatory meetings that the Johannesburg summit should be about development, not about environment.

Sustainable Development and Democracy: One Aim, Multiple Rationales

Another obstacle for the advancement of Agenda 21 is the fact that sustainable development and participatory democracy are such broad concepts that there is no agreement on their meaning among governments and social organizations and movements; they can, in effect, be used to promote contrasting value systems and rationales. Generally, NGOs and social movements tend to denounce capitalism and its controversial "techno-scientific" globalization corollary while national governments and international organizations are prone to defend these models, arguing that the negative consequences are distortions resulting from their misguided implementation. While social movements and Latin American governments see democracy as a prerequisite for sustainable development, international institutions and governments of industrialized countries do not give it the same degree of importance.

Moreover, Latin American governments, NGOs and social movements have adopted the terms "sustainable development" and "participatory democracy" to frame their discourses and plans of actions, but their use of the two terms differs greatly in the meaning and value content. Between 1992 and 2002, the discourse of sustainable development was adopted without paying

¹⁰ See www.ecouncil.ac.cr/rio/national/reports/america/guatemala.htm, accessed in May 2005.

¹¹ NGOs and social movements believe that the "war against drugs" undertaken by the Colombian and US governments has demonstrated that their priorities do not include the environment or sustainable development, since the policies against drug trafficking failed to take into account the negative impacts of their policies on biodiversity. In fact, local communities showed more environmental concern than the governments and made sustainable proposals for resolving the problems.

enough attention to the controversy surrounding its praxis or implementation. Given that value systems condition the rationality behind political actions or the praxes of governments and social movements, different value systems could sow seeds of conflict and impede the agreements and dialogue necessary for a viable solution. Thus, divergent proposals for addressing and analysing environmental problems could play a crucial role in the origin and development of socioenvironmental conflicts.¹²

Rationalities and value systems can be studied by analysing the discourse of social and political actors involved in specific environmental conflicts. Documents, reports, declarations or written expressions of such discourses made by governments and social movements, when arguing in favour or against issues in environmental conflicts, usually rely upon their underlying value systems. Consequently, the analysis of those declarations could help to interpret the rationale and value system underlying actions taken by governments and social movements to resolve environmental conflicts related to sustainable development (Inglehart 1990; Habermas 2001).

Within the context of the severe economic, political and social crises, social organizations and movements of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s also contributed to rewriting the discourses about development and democracy, introducing new social and political values and rationalities. In Latin America, these organizations and movements tended to stress the ecological and social dimensions of sustainable development and incorporated a horizontal mobilization approach to participation in order to overcome the limitations of representative democracy and the negative environmental and social consequences of liberal capitalist economic development.¹³ A content analysis of 15 alternative documents and declarations (see annex), most of them drawn up by NGOs and social movements in the region, demonstrates that two-thirds of the documents analysed were against globalization, free trade and capitalism, and around half of them explicitly proposed participatory democracy as a way to overcome the deficiencies of "representative democracy". Two-thirds were in favour of protecting the environment and its rich biodiversity. The *Pronunciamiento contra la Globalización y por la Soberanía Alimentaria y los Derechos de los Pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe* (Pronouncement Against Globalization and in Favour of Food Sovereignty and the Rights of Latin American and Caribbean People) was signed by a variety of social organizations and movements at the International Seminar on Globalization, World Trade Organization [WTO], Food Sovereignty and Organic Products, organized from 9 to 12 July 2001 in Lima, Peru. The pronouncement considered globalization to be a model and a process that tends to concentrate more power and financial capital in transnational corporations and institutions such as the WTO, and in the free trade of the United States instead of supporting international rights and the sovereignty of the people (*Pronunciamiento contra la Globalización y por la Soberanía Alimentaria y los Derechos de los Pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe*).

In response to the mobilization of social movements, Latin American governments also incorporated the discourses of sustainable development and participatory democracy into regional agendas such as *Our Own Agenda* (LACCDE 1992) and in national constitutions that resulted from constituent processes, such as in the cases of Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela (García-Guadilla and Hurtado 2000).¹⁴ As will be analysed later, regional governments concurred with the official Rio Declaration in the discourse on sustainable development, but differed in the relevant role they assigned to democracy, particularly "participatory

¹² The position adopted by each actor in a conflict situation is generally that of win-lose, which requires the exclusion of the adversary. For a win-win position, the system of underlying values must necessarily be made explicit to facilitate negotiations. Differences in rationale and values are usually not made explicit at the negotiating table.

¹³ García-Guadilla 1992; García-Guadilla and Blauert 1992; García Guadilla et al. 1996.

¹⁴ The momentum created by the demands for participatory democracy led to the ratification of the principle in the new constitutions that resulted from constituent processes with the sole purpose of achieving democratic stability.

democracy". For both Latin American and Caribbean governments, democracy and sustainable development should be mutually reinforcing.¹⁵

Sustainable Development: A New Economic Model or More of the Same?

Governments and international institutions, as well as NGOs and social movements, have criticized the prospective environmental impacts of the current economic model. Political actors question its negative impacts but abstain from questioning the model as such, or the causes of the resulting environmental problems. As a consequence, they attempt to perfect the current economic model, limiting their attacks to some of its consequences. On the other hand, social movements consider the causes of environmental degradation to be inherent in the prevalent economic model. They therefore articulate alternative proposals centred on human beings and based on new rationales and value systems, not on the market.

At the regional level, both Latin American governments and social movements have emphasized extensive poverty and underdevelopment as environmental problems per se. Accordingly, they have emphasized that to achieve sustainable development, it is first necessary to decrease poverty and to increase international and national social equity. They also share the critique by many governments and social movements of developing countries (the G77 in particular) of the current process of globalization. They argue that economic globalization and its corollaries, free trade and privatization, among others, exacerbate socioenvironmental problems instead of diminishing them, as industrialized countries and international institutions argue. Despite their criticism of the current economic model, Latin American governments do not propose an alternative model. They accept the existing one and opt to improve it through political measures such as complementing representative democracy with more "participation". In sum, by not challenging the current economic model, they in effect acquiesce to it.

This ongoing exchange of rationales and values was reflected in the debate of the official Latin American and Caribbean Platform for Johannesburg, 2002 (United Nations 2001), which was part of the regional forum of governments. In this regional forum, NGOs and social movements held steadfast to their discourse, strongly rejecting the economic model behind sustainable development because they considered it a new attempt to save the old, "unsustainable neoliberal and capitalistic model of economic development"¹⁶ (Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe 2001, author's translation). On the other hand, governments criticized some aspects of the model and ended up urging the international community to reiterate its spirit of compromise and its political will by means of renewed solidarity and cooperation. According to the *Pronunciamiento contra la Globalización y por la Soberanía Alimentaria y los Derechos de los Pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe* (2001), this compromise should be based upon a responsible and ethical relationship between human beings and nature and on effective actions at the local, national, regional and global levels that guarantee the complete implementation of compromises on sustainable development as the best guarantees for a fair world. With these considerations in mind, the Latin American and Caribbean platform proposed that the topic for the next summit be: *Towards a New Globalization that Guarantees an Equitable and Inclusive Sustainable Development* (United Nations 2001:11).¹⁷

¹⁵ The insertion of democracy into the discourse on sustainable development was encouraged in Latin America by international and regional organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

¹⁶ Despite this declaration, Latin American social movements do not have an homogeneous position regarding the critique of the economic model: the most institutionalized social organizations—the NGOs—accept the current economic model as a framework to be improved, while the non-institutionalized social organizations (social movements) reject it and propose an alternative model.

¹⁷ It should be said, nonetheless, that regional governments condition the acceptance of globalization on the results of "sustainable, equitable and inclusive development". On the other hand, this action platform contributed to enriching the discussion with topics and

A similar debate first arose at the Earth Summit in 1992. Evident in the documents resulting from this summit was a divergence of views about how best to achieve sustainable development as expressed in the official and alternative Rio Declarations, Agenda 21 and the alternative agenda. A content analysis of the above documents showed that there does not seem to be a common set of values, principles and rationales concerning the concept of sustainable development, since there is a great variety of interpretations and perceptions. While the official Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 indicate the need for economic growth to achieve sustainable development and do not question the capitalist model of development, the alternative Rio Declaration and alternative agenda emphasize the social and ecological causes for the deterioration of the environment, holding the capitalist model of development responsible for increasing those inequalities, as articulated in the following paragraph:

The Earth Summit has frustrated the expectations for humanity that it had created. It has been conditioned by economic interests and made the logic of power prevail. The Earth Summit showed that despite the official rhetoric, the majority of governments were incapable of listening to NGOs, and what is more important, of hearing the clamour of the international civil society (Foro Internacional de ONGs y Movimientos Sociales 1993, author's translation).

Therefore, in the alternative discourse, the problem is not economic growth but a more equitable distribution of resources.

The rationality that emerges from the analysis of declarations and reports of world summits concerning the concept of sustainable development can be defined as "instrumental or techno-scientific" (Habermas 2001). This rationale is shared by entrepreneurial "environmentalists"¹⁸ belonging to large international corporations whose ideology revolves around:

- i. the need for a global market and free trade as a means to achieve growth and an economic base for development;
- ii. self-imposed corporate control over environmental protection measures;
- iii. in case of violations which jeopardize the environment, monetary compensation for the damage incurred; and
- iv. the development and promotion of environmentally friendly technologies.

This position is sustained by the belief that only corporations have enough economic resources to finance the reconstruction of the environment. Using this assumption, they have permeated environmental NGOs and social organizations in their attempt to create a "green" public image and have tried to co-opt them. Moreover, they have begun to displace NGOs and social movements as the primary "environmental" lobby at international venues for discussion. In marked contrast to the Earth Summit, where the main interlocutors for sustainable development were NGOs and social movements, the Johannesburg summit has stimulated negotiations with green businessmen, environmental entrepreneurs and large multinational corporations that have appropriated the space previously occupied by environmental NGOs and social movements.

On the other hand, social movements in Latin America have argued that environmental problems and the aggravation of ecological crises are rooted in the capitalist model of development. Consequently, instead of following the lead of the region's governments and trying to

alternative proposals about equity, solidarity, cooperation, and responsible and ethical relations among human beings, all of which are extremely relevant to achieving sustainable development. Moreover, these proposals are grounded in a rationale that departs from the instrumental-techno-scientific one held by international corporations and institutions, and coincide more with the rationale proposed by social organizations and movements.

¹⁸ In comparison with the Earth Summit, where the two principal actors were official governments and NGOs and social movements, at the Johannesburg summit, an important new actor emerged—the so-called "entrepreneurial environmentalists". They represent the intrusion of the market, or the economic rationale, into the environmental debate.

perfect the economic model, they propose a new alternative model, one that is more ecologically than economically centred (Foro Internacional de ONGs y Movimientos Sociales 1993).

NGOs and social movements are not only against globalization, but also against the market, the capitalist model of production and, in general, the model of civilization that supports those values. They propose a new civilizational model. In many of the declarations resulting from international and regional forums, Latin American and Caribbean NGOs and social movements identified socioeconomic problems such as the external debt, poverty and social inequality, unemployment, informal employment and social marginality as the first priorities for achieving sustainable development, and environmental problems such as the degradation of the quality of life and the difficulties for the reproduction of natural ecosystems as a secondary priority. In this regard, social movements and NGOs emphasize the social and political dimensions of sustainable development, closely linking social and environmental problems.

While most of the above problems were also singled out as obstacles to development by Latin American governments, NGOs and governments nonetheless differed about the roots of such problems. NGOs and social movements once again attributed the problems to an unsustainable model of development that leads to poverty, social inequalities and to an exclusive neoliberal economic globalization that threatens social sustainability. Governments highlighted social and economic inequities as the underlying factors for the worldwide ecological crisis, but most of them did not lay the blame on the economic model (WCED 1987). While developing countries tend to blame social and economic inequalities on some aspects of the economic model, such as unfair economic trade or globalization, many industrialized countries attribute the lack of progress on sustainable development to poverty itself, confusing the consequences with the causes.¹⁹

Another point to stress is the strong rejection among many Latin American NGOs and social movements of globalization, free trade and transgenic foods, to mention only a few topics that are on the "official" agenda of international institutions and industrialized countries. Most Latin American governments, particularly the members of the G77, together with NGOs and social movements, also reject these developments. The Draft Plan of Implementation agreed in Bali, Indonesia (United Nations 2002a) for discussion in Johannesburg demonstrated that issues of importance for industrialized countries such as globalization and trade were bracketed (that is, the text was not agreed on) in 93 per cent and 85 per cent of its paragraphs. Issues of importance for developing countries, such as "finance", had 89 per cent of its paragraphs in brackets. Moreover, the draft plan omits numerous topics of importance for developing countries, such as "shared common responsibilities".

While globalization and its corollary, free trade, are seen as opportunities for sustainable development in the international agendas of industrialized countries, a majority of NGOs and social movements in Latin America consider them as the main sources of socioenvironmental problems. A content analysis of the discussions at the two World Social Forums held in Porto Alegre in 2001 and 2002 identified globalization, neoliberalism and insufficient democracy as the most critical problems for the environment. A content analysis of more than 15 documents and declarations in which Latin American NGOs and social movements participated between 1992 and 2002 showed that, in 10 out of 15 documents, the rejection of globalization and free trade agreements was a common value shared by the environmental social network, and around half or more out of the 15 documents revealed a rejection of economic neoliberalism and capitalism (see annex). To make decisions concerning sustainable development, social movements propose grassroots participation or "participatory democracy", which implies the need to go beyond representative democracy.

¹⁹ Criticisms of the model of industrialization, based on its negative environmental consequences, were raised at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, but it was only toward the end of the 1980s that international multilateral institutions introduced the model of sustainable development.

The objections of NGOs and social movements against the prevalent economic model were not necessarily shared by governments or international institutions; the analysis of seven official documents selected for this study, most of them obtained from world summits, revealed five out of seven documents in favour of globalization, free trade and capitalism (see annex). Moreover, results from the official documents revealed the limited influence Latin American governments and, in general, governments of the G77 countries, have in world declarations and summits, as shown by the fact that their position against globalization and free trade was not reflected in the written documents.

Another difference found is that the official documents do not mention the topics of neoliberalism, privatization, external debt, transgenic products or patenting, many of which are considered as key issues by Latin American NGOs and social movements (see annex). In fact, some of the additional problems for sustainable development that were mentioned by social organizations and movements were poverty and hunger, preservation of biodiversity, transgenic foods, sustainable agriculture and the external debt.²⁰

It is not only the Latin American and Caribbean NGOs and social movements that have strongly rejected globalization and the "dominant civilization model"; this rejection was one of the main principles articulated by NGOs and social movements worldwide between 1992 and 2002. A content analysis of the alternative Rio Declaration (Foro Internacional de ONGs y Movimientos Sociales 1993) clearly reflects their rejection, first of all, of the dominant civilization model, considered unjust and unsustainable because it is built upon the myth of unlimited growth that ignores the earth's finite limits. Second, it also reflects their rejection of the proposed model of sustainable development. The alternative Rio Declaration also highlighted the fact that the concept of sustainable development has been transformed into a mere economic category, restricted to the use of new technologies and subordinated to each new market product. Since 1992 NGOs and social movements have criticized the summit on these grounds because it has frustrated expectations by giving priority to dominant economic interests and power relations instead of advancements for humanity.

Ten years after the alternative Rio Declaration, NGOs and social movements all over the world continue to criticize globalization as "an evil" that impedes the advancement of sustainable development. The document, *We, the People Believe that Another World is Possible*, adopted in Bali, Indonesia, in June 2002 by developing world environmental networks and organizations including the Third World Network, Oilwatch, Latin American Network, the World Federalist Movement, Sociedad de Amigos en Defensa de La Gran Sabana (AmiGranSa), Acción Ecológica and the Institute for Global Justice, issued a robust critique of globalization and the increasing power of big corporations that are acquiring "more rights, obligations, privileges and access". They called on the United Nations, which is considered to be largely debilitated by these socioeconomic trends, to listen and redirect its attention to the communities and the peoples. They also stressed the need to curtail the control that business, industries and large corporate enterprises have on the United Nations, and proposed collecting a million signatures to be delivered to Johannesburg. The purpose was to urge the UN to revisit the original principles of the UN Charter of 1945, which puts its faith in fundamental human rights, the dignity and value of human beings, and equitable rights for men and women and for big and small nations.

Despite these efforts, official international institutions such as the United Nations have continued to propose the capitalist development model as part of the solution for sustainability. A report regarding the implementation of Agenda 21 during the last decade, made public by the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in preparation for the Johannesburg summit (United Nations 2002b), stated that measures taken to protect the environment have not been

²⁰ The meeting of the Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y El Caribe cited globalization as one of the more pressing problems, specifying that at the socioeconomic level, the main problems were poverty, unemployment and the external debt; and at the environmental level, the problems were biodiversity, community rights, collective intellectual rights, use of transgenic foods and climate change. Other issues, such as violent conflict and the current processes of militarization for resolving conflicts, were also mentioned by NGOs and social movements as obstacles to achieving sustainable development (see annex).

adequate, and that progress in reducing poverty in developing countries has been very limited; consequently, globalization per se has not benefited the majority of the world's population. The report also stressed that despite these unsatisfactory results, Agenda 21 still offers a valid long-term vision for sustainable development and "sustainable development continues to be a valid alternative in tune with the current concept of development" [author's translation]. Paradoxically, in order to optimize their efforts for satisfactory results, the report offers a 10-point action plan in which the first goal highlighted is "to make globalization work for sustainable development", and among the actions suggested to achieve this end, recommends the elimination of subsidies that "distort international trade". The remaining nine points outline a number of unrelated actions oriented to change current socioeconomic, political and ecological conditions, such as the eradication of poverty, increasing standards of living, changing unsustainable production and consumer patterns, improving health and strengthening international governance and governability, among others. It is important to emphasize the fact that the plan makes no reference to the causes of such problems—it maintains the view that by implementing the 10 unrelated actions, sustainable development will follow.

Social organizations and movements believe that the problem of lack of control and regulation of private enterprise has been further aggravated since the Earth Summit. In the opinion of activists, NGOs and social movements attending the second preparatory committee (PrepCom) for the Johannesburg summit, sustainable development is not possible without judicial enforcement that obliges multinational enterprises to assume their responsibilities. As Michael Dorsey, director of the Sierra Club, a US environmental organization, stated: "Multinational companies are out of control" and "governments are as indecisive as always".²¹ Contrary to this view, Nitin Desai, Secretary-General of the Johannesburg summit, declared that substantial progress had been made toward globalization and that the summit would try to promote sustainable development. Nonetheless, he remarked that this did not imply that the structure and the frame of the institutions should be redesigned. However, Daniel Mittler²² from Friends of the Earth said of this meeting: "It is very deceptive because governments do not allow the inclusion of conflicting questions in the agenda".²³ His opinion was that "the Summit should establish clearly the ecological and social limits of the process of economic globalization". Not all governments agreed with the exclusion or omission of conflicting issues from Agenda 21; while many industrialized countries wanted to exclude the question of entrepreneurial responsibility from the discussions, the G77 supported its inclusion. At this preparatory meeting, organized civil society asked for a regulatory framework that includes the rights and obligations of enterprises, community rights, support of public initiatives that are socially and environmentally responsible, and responsibility and instrumentation mechanisms.

The Ten-Year Review of Progress Achieved in the Implementation of the Outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (United Nations 2000) stated that "the Summit, including its preparatory process, should ensure a balance between economic development, social development and environmental protection as these are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development" (United Nations 2000:20). But the content analysis of the resulting documents revealed differences in the importance given to each dimension and in the interpretation of the social equity dimension. When governments use the discourse of sustainable development, they stress economic development, while social organizations and movements tend to focus on social equity and ecological criteria.

Despite the variation in the discourse on sustainable development, the official model of sustainable development did not violate the essential principles of the neoliberal discourse, where ecological problems are framed as consequences of imperfect forms of economic growth, rather than of the industrial model of development. To ensure the continuity of the capitalist

²¹ See www.johannesburgsummit.org.

²² Latin American NGOs and social movements endorsed statements by Michael Dorsey and Daniel Mittler.

²³ See www.foe.org.au, accessed in January 2005.

mode of development, industrialized countries simply incorporated the environmental dimension and declared it “sustainable” (García-Guadilla et al. 1996). Thus, the model of sustainable development falls into the same developmental and economic productivity model that has prevailed since the Second World War. It continues to emphasize the economic dimension and proposes the “capitalization of nature” and the incorporation of natural resources into the economy as an additional economic resource (Leff 1986).

With the existence of various and contrasting discourses, plans of action, rationalities and civilization models with regard to sustainable development, it must be asked whether there are real possibilities for a dialogue among international agencies, Latin American governments, and NGOs and social movements of Latin America and the Caribbean. Moreover, the sharp differences in the prioritization of issues with regard to sustainable development make clear that neither the neglected issues, nor the divergent attitudes, can be the basis for common agreements. A common agenda needs to be agreed upon, but not necessarily the 1992 “official” Agenda 21 of Rio.

Environmental Democracy: Multiple Meanings, Multiple Praxes

The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED 1987) considered environmental problems as political issues that could and should be resolved democratically. For the WCED, sustainable development did not depend on democracy. Although it was recommended, particularly at the local level, its relevance at the national or international levels is rarely mentioned. In many documents adopted by Latin American governments, democracy is linked exclusively to local participation. The Mexican Ministry for Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAP 1999) defined this agenda as “a participatory and inter-sector process through which the preparation, implementation and evaluation of a long-term strategic plan of action tries to reach the objectives of sustainable development taking into account local priorities”.

Even though the WCED regarded environmental problems as political issues that could and should be resolved democratically, sustainable development was not considered dependent on democracy. The WCED separates global and local levels, and calls for local democracy and full participation but does not stress a commitment to democratic values. Moreover, there is the danger that democracy could be conditioned by the market, since the economic model is not questioned and market mechanisms are not considered incompatible with protection of the environment.

In 1992, in order to obtain consensus among governments attending the Earth Summit, some of which were governed by authoritarian regimes, the ensuing agreements did not emphasize democracy. In fact, the word “democracy” did not appear in the Rio Declaration, which did not explicitly highlight democracy as an interdependent principle for sustainable development. Moreover, Agenda 21 made only a brief and indirect reference to the need for democratic government to meet the orientations and objectives described in the Agenda (Agenda 21 1992:paragraph 2.6).²⁴

But the situation changed: five years later, the Special Session of the General Assembly to Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21 (Earth Summit+5), held in New York in 1997, adopted a resolution on the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. The resolution stated

²⁴ In contrast, peace, development and environmental protection were considered interdependent and indivisible principles. Also in these documents, women, young people and indigenous communities play a crucial role in achieving sustainable development, though other organizations defined by their socioeconomic status, such as workers, scientists, businessmen and agricultural workers, are also mentioned.

Democracy, respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, transparent and accountable governance in all sectors of society, as well as effective participation by civil society, are also an essential part of the necessary foundations for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development (United Nations 1997:paragraph 23).

Surprisingly, in 2002 the declarations about democracy included in the document to be discussed at the fourth PrepCom in Bali, Indonesia—the last meeting before Johannesburg—were more akin to the Rio Declaration than to the New York resolution, and any advancement previously achieved appears to have been ignored or “silenced”.

When talking about democracy, the governments of industrialized countries, as well as international institutions, usually refer to liberal representative democracy, which could be complemented with more participation, that is, a centralized vertical democracy, rather than a participative horizontal democracy. In accordance with the techno-scientific and instrumental rationale permeating the official position on sustainable development, this conception of democracy assumes that each actor (whether multilateral agencies, NGOs, governments, local authorities or individuals) has a specific function or role for action (WCED 1987). In the view of Fabio Giovannini (1993), the result of this technocracy, or democracy of specialists, where everyone has certain technical abilities to resolve environmental problems, is a distorted idea that leads to the degradation of democracy.

Even though Latin American governments accept the existence of the market, at the political level they recommend complementing representative democracy with further citizen participation, in what they describe as “participatory democracy”. Latin American and Caribbean governments made an explicit appeal for democracy before the Earth Summit. In the document, *Our Own Agenda*,²⁵ endorsed by the Latin American and Caribbean Commission on Development and Environment (LACCDE), the commission stated that “democracy is a necessary condition but not sufficient to achieve sustainable development at the world level” (Gabaldón 1992:30). Thus, sustainable development for Latin American and Caribbean governments will not be possible without a “true” democracy; however, their definition of “true democracy”, like the term “sustainable development”, differs from that of social organizations and movements, since governments tend to view participation as a means to complement representative democracy.

In contrast to the “official” position, social organizations and movements advocate a type of democracy based on horizontal, decentralized participation in decision making, concerning the distribution of scarce resources, including power, and they consider it a prerequisite for sustainable development (Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe 2001). In 2001, the Latin American and Caribbean Civil Society Networks drafted a declaration in Rio de Janeiro with the purpose of elaborating proposals to be discussed in the Preparatory Conference of Latin American Governments for the Johannesburg Summit. This declaration represents the view of social movements with regard to the role of democracy in sustainable development. It proposes, at the economic level, “to create new spaces of participation for civil society, to participate in the decision making process regarding development”; at the political level, “to consolidate a participatory democracy that allows the integration of civil society in the design, planning, implementation and social control of projects, programmes and policies”; and at the environmental level, “to reinforce the mechanisms of consensual decision making among governments and civil society in order to uphold environmental sustainability” (Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y El Caribe 2001, author’s translation).

As is the case with their developing world counterparts, Latin American social movements believe that there is an indissoluble relationship between economic and political models—they

²⁵ Latin American and Caribbean countries departed substantially from the Rio Declaration with respect to the importance of democracy for achieving sustainable development.

criticize the economic model for not being democratic since it does not guarantee the participation of all sectors of society nor the equitable distribution of environmental costs and benefits.²⁶ They blame the neoliberal model of democracy (capitalism)²⁷ for not being able to control economic policy, and its social and environmental impacts on Latin American countries, where it is ostensibly being applied to “contribute to development”.²⁸ Latin American NGOs and social movements have mobilized for the inclusion of their demands, values and visions of society and tend to blame representative democracy for their prior exclusion, arguing that this type of democracy maximizes benefits for a small group of people, affording them exclusive access to resources and opportunities (Parkin 1989; Scott 1990). One of the objectives of social movements, then, is to constitute a democratic system with greater participation to face the limitations of representative democracy and to open the decision-making process to previously ostracized social groups. In their documents, they make proposals to encourage democracy at the grassroots. The fact is that, regardless of the type of democracy (representative or from the base), environmental problems will continue to emerge. The rationale behind this assertion is based on the fact that these problems are not solely a consequence of the application of neoliberal models of development. As the situation in various Eastern European countries have shown, social ownership of the means of production does not prevent environmental degradation. For this reason, social movements and NGOs direct their critique to the civilizatory model, which provides the foundation for the rationale for both liberal-capitalist and socialist-economic models.

Sharp class divisions, aggravated by increasing levels of poverty and by the segregation and marginalization caused by macroeconomic adjustment policies, are obstacles to achieving a unified democratic environmental ideology in Latin America. Environmentalism—understood as an ideology consisting of a common meaning and shared values—is not identifiable within social organizations and movements in Latin America: poor people’s environmentalism, centred on survival and basic needs, coexists with rich people’s eco-capitalism, which focuses on post-materialistic values. To this extent, environmentalism in Latin America resembles that which exists in the most industrialized countries (Buroz 2001).

Leff states that in Latin America it is not possible to talk of environmentalism as a cohesive ideology that transcends social class divisions, due to obstacles in articulating environmental struggles with popular demands. He recognizes in environmentalism an intrinsic democratic rationale grounded in nature’s biological diversity and in people’s cultural, political and social diversity, which is able to regulate the social, cultural, political and economic relations that exist between the state and society. This rationale presupposes a plurality of forms of development, which goes beyond representative democracy and makes implicit the need for a “participatory democracy” (Leff 1986:362) in the sense that forms of direct democracy may only regulate such plurality, diversity and heterogeneity so that communities may partake “in the management of productive resources” (Leff 1986:389).

²⁶ Latin American social movements blame the macroeconomic adjustment programmes applied to many Latin American countries during the last two decades for “difficult democratic trends” in the region, due to the exacerbation of social inequities and poverty, as the social protests carried out in countries in the region such as Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela have shown.

²⁷ Even in Western Europe, local forums for participation appear to be shrinking as a result of increasing individualization and a consumer culture that is encouraged by the current neoliberal economic model. According to Giovanni (1993), the separation between local, national and international democracy, the emphasis on the local level and the stress on the economic sphere, lead to a sort of environmental liberal democracy that consists of representation of NGOs linked to capitalist enterprises.

²⁸ If one compares the Chilean experiences under the military regime with those under democratic rule, there is no apparent structural difference in government environmental policy. The very same neoliberal economic model is in place, with heavy socioenvironmental costs.

Institutionalization, Networking and Pluralism: Empowering Environmental Social Movements

Gabaldón has argued that “living under democracy may help” to resolve environmental conflicts, but concludes that since “an economically sustainable society does not necessarily imply a socially equitable society, the struggle for participatory democracy in Latin America has to be simultaneous on two fronts: satisfaction of basic needs and respect for basic rights as well as greater democracy” (1992:8). Along these lines, during the last decade Colombia (Government of Colombia 1991), Ecuador (Government of Ecuador 1997) and Venezuela (Government of Venezuela 1999) sanctioned constituent processes leading to new “democratic and participatory” constitutional texts in which sustainable development and environmental rights were included. Other countries, including Bolivia, Mexico and Nicaragua, have demanded constituent processes to change their constitutions via participatory mechanisms.

The result of this institutionalization of sustainable development and environmental rights was the inclusion of participatory designs for achieving consensus and making decisions about resources and wealth distribution, new notions of citizenship based upon environmental and indigenous rights, and the recognition of social organizations and movements as strategic sociopolitical actors.²⁹ The inclusion of environmental rights created a vehicle for new and more democratic relations to resolve conflicts between the state and civil society, given the increased legitimacy of new visions of society, but it could also have potential negative consequences, particularly on social movements (García-Guadilla and Hurtado 2000; García-Guadilla 2001, 2002). Once the social visions and values promoted by social movements and organizations are institutionalized, differences may emerge among the various types of organizations in the interpretation of problems or in the proposed solutions. These differences could erode the previous unified front and could reduce the effective power to defend general values such as participatory democracy and sustainable development. Moreover, democratization trends that do not transcend the legal sphere do not sufficiently impact upon the social and economic conditions that have been defined as the first environmental priorities of the region.

In sum, participatory democratic processes are not enough, in and of themselves, to ensure sustainable development and environmental constitutional rights. From an analysis of new constitutions in the region that have institutionalized environmental rights and participatory democratic aims, there is evidence that, in the absence of a democratic environmental culture, the inclusion of those rights do not assure that environmental conflicts will be resolved by the newly legislated guidelines. To ensure success, it is also necessary to create organic laws that are able to provide instruments of negotiation and participation to democratically resolve the environmental conflicts that tend to emerge between governments and NGOs and social movements (García-Guadilla 2002). Moreover, in a typical catch-22 situation, once environmental rights have been “institutionalized” or included in the constitution, social organizations and movements face new challenges for their autonomy and survival because these organizations, their demands and their discourses, may be co-opted or institutionalized, resulting in the loss of alternative discourses and proposals. On the other hand, the sanction of these constitutions represents an opportunity for legal empowerment to further sustainable development.

An evaluation of some socioenvironmental conflicts that emerged after the new constitutions were drafted in Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela demonstrated that constitutions resulting from constituent processes could contribute to more pluralistic democracies by including new values and new social and political actors. However, in some cases, they also made dispute resolution more difficult.

²⁹ A strategic sociopolitical actor is a collective actor with economic, political, institutional or social power. As governments increasingly recognize social movements as strategic sociopolitical actors, there is a greater possibility of their inclusion in the negotiation process in order to resolve conflicts.

For instance, in a conflict with regard to electrical wiring of portions of the Canaima National Park in Venezuela in order to provide electricity to northern Brazil, all of the parties to the dispute, including the indigenous population, environmental groups and government, claimed to be defending constitutional values.³⁰ The government asserted its right to install the electric wiring to Brazil based on international agreements and the constitutional right to economic development of the area, while the indigenous population believed that its newly defined constitutional rights to ethnic and cultural identity were threatened by the proposed project. Environmentalists were concerned with the environmental impacts of the project in this ecologically sensitive area, citing the environmental rights clauses included in the constitution of 1999 (García-Guadilla 2001).

Despite the institutionalization or “constitutionalization” of environmental and indigenous rights, that is, the enrichment of actors and values in these new constitutions, and despite the fact that the resolution of conflicts should go through what has been called “participatory democracy”, conflicts that involve a plurality of constitutional values are not resolved easily or automatically. This is because in constitutional democracies, all constitutional values have the same weight, and in the face of conflicting value systems, it is difficult for parties to agree upon which values should prevail.

The institutionalization of environmental rights could have two consequences. On one hand, the previous socioenvironmental actors can enter the political arena and transform themselves into political actors, leading to the dilemma of party versus social movement and possibly abandoning defence of the more limited environmental objectives. On the other hand, some social movements and organizations, particularly formal organizations and some NGOs, could demobilize, considering they have already achieved their main objectives.

Another worldwide trend that is observable in Latin American and developing countries is the proliferation of visible or invisible, and formal or informal, networks (Melucci 1988, 1989, 1994) of NGOs and social movements; in fact, collective mobilization constitutes the “root” of the definition of social movements (García-Guadilla and Blauert 1992). The composition of the environmental networks that mobilize at international and regional forums and meetings is extremely heterogeneous, including human rights, gender, indigenous and peasant movements, among others. In recent years, there has also been a tendency toward networking, defined in the literature as the creation of larger networks from pre-existing ones, resulting in a network of networks.³¹ While the explicit aims of these networks are multiple and have to do with their need for empowerment, some of the unperceived consequences of these actions are the incorporation of a broader range of interests and values that could help build common conceptions of sustainable development among institutionalized NGOs and non-institutionalized social movements—in sum, to build a common ethic—if we accept Larissa Adler’s understanding of social movements as networks that share a community of values (Adler 2001). Perhaps the most important consequences of building networks are that their participants focus on their similarities instead of on their differences. This recognition establishes the potential for building a broad-based consensus for collective mobilization that could contribute to empowering the alternative proposed civilizatory model.

A preliminary typology of NGOs and social movements in Latin America is needed to highlight the potential for the democratization and empowerment of the environmental social movement, which might well be achieved if individual organizations decided to converge around a unified

³⁰ Canaima Park has been declared a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site.

³¹ Orinoco Oil Watch has networks in several countries: Argentina, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela. These networks are, in turn, part of the broader network called Oilwatch. Thus, one can speak of a network of networks, as in the case of the Amazonian Network Against Deforestation (which is different from the Rainforest Network).

agenda for sustainable development.³² Accordingly, the following six criteria were used to identify different types of environmental NGOs and social movements:

- i. emphasis on the ecological, economic or social dimension of sustainable development;
- ii. social or ecological focus;
- iii. level of institutionalization;
- iv. acceptance or rejection of Agenda 21, as approved in Rio de Janeiro in 1992;
- v. degree of influence or power to set an agenda for sustainable development; and
- vi. challenges faced in imposing their own agendas.

When those criteria were applied, the following four groups of environmental NGOs and social movements were identified:

- i. *Global ecologists*. This first group of ecological policies. Finally, their relatively high level of institutionalization distances them from social movements and from the possibility of building large alliances and networks.³³
- ii. *Southern ecologists*. This group of Latin American environmental social organizations and movements gives importance to both nature and human beings. Such organizations also focus on global issues and on the environmental organizations and social movements focuses their demands on “nature” rather than on human beings and prioritizes the ecological dimension of sustainable development over the economic and the social. This group focuses on global environmental issues, such as natural resource degradation, air, soil and water pollution, biodiversity conservation and climate change. Among this group are subsidiaries of large international organizations located in the South, and NGOs from the Southern countries, for example, the Latin American branches of Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Some of these NGOs have different names in different countries; for example, IUCN and WWF in Venezuela are known as Fundación para la Defensa de la Naturaleza (FUDENA). The branches tend to have a high level of institutionalization, since they are formally registered as non-profit civil associations or NGOs with consultant status with the United Nations; they were named as major organizations in the Johannesburg summit and were located at the Sandton Convention Centre, which was where the summit took place. Their preferential relationship with governments and international multilateral institutions, and the fact that they accept Agenda 21 as the instrument or means for achieving sustainable development, legitimize them as interlocutors for dialogue and as the main recipients of international funding. They participated actively in preparatory meetings for the summits in Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg. Thus, they have some power to influence official agendas, and they advance the types of ecological discourse and issues that the mass media are likely to cover. Among the challenges they face are how to resolve global problems, given their limited power at the global level; possible co-optation by governments and international multilateral institutions through financing; co-optation by large corporations through consultancies for “green corporate responsibility”; and limited knowledge and lack of control over the social consequences ecological dimensions of sustainable development, but they emphasize those global issues of greater concern for developing, tropical and Latin American countries, taking into account not only the regional and local environmental impacts of economic activities such as oil exploration and exploitation, deforestation and agricultural policies, but also

³² Given the heterogeneity of identities, values and strategies of the Latin American NGOs and social movements, the present typology could also show the potential for competition and the difficulties affecting policy when they work exclusively as individual organizations.

³³ In the 2002 summit in Johannesburg, global ecologists lobbied primarily at the official Sandton Convention Centre, where they were found under the rubric of “Major Organizations”. They were seldom seen at the Nasrec Centre, where the alternative forum of environmental social organizations and movements was taking place. This preference for “official” locations as the platform for their lobbying efforts differs from the Earth Summit, where they were seen in both the alternative and the official forums.

the social consequences of such practices, such as commensurate violations of workers', women's and indigenous human rights as well as indigenous territorial rights. Such organizations have emerged primarily in the Southern countries and tend to constitute South-South networks. In their defence of ecological global issues such as protection of the Amazonian rainforest, Southern ecologists may ally themselves strategically with global ecologists in order to influence the official agenda of forums and summits. Examples of this type of organization include OilWatch, movements against transgenic seeds and food, and the Amazonian Network Against Deforestation. This type of organization may have a high, medium or low level of institutionalization. When these NGOs participate in world summits and preparatory meetings, they are accorded a formal status by international institutions. In such cases, they may contribute to official agendas through recommendations to governments of the developing world.³⁴ When acting institutionally, this group works within the establishment and engages in dialogue with regard to Agenda 21, although it rejects issues such as economic globalization. In contrast, Southern ecologists have a medium or low level of institutionalization when they mobilize as part of the broader environmental social movement. In these instances, they engage in creative strategies designed for mass mobilization and for gaining media attention. The challenges they face include determining the best way to link global and local issues (including regional ones); resolve environmental social conflicts; obtain financing without being co-opted; gain mass media attention in case of opposition to the official agenda; empower themselves and have their proposals inserted into the official agendas; solve conflicts between ecological and social issues; and decide how and when to relate with global environmental organizations. They are unlikely to be co-opted by international multilateral organizations and corporations because they usually receive financing through membership or other autonomous sources.³⁵

- iii. *Political environmentalists*. This group, which might also be referred to as "anti-systems", is composed of anti-globalization and pro-democratization movements, such as environmental organizations and NGOs against economic globalization, free trade and extended privatization of resources or services. Its membership focuses on the political and social dimensions of sustainable development more than on the ecological dimensions, and it tends to mobilize against capitalism, that is, against the political and social consequences of the neoliberal economic model of development. The group's principal areas of concern include democratic-popular or grassroots participation for all, social equity, the need for autonomous national markets and development, the right to autonomous development, and the negative impacts of capitalism and economic globalization. In contrast with the two previous groups, these types of environmental organizations and social movements openly reject Agenda 21 as the basis for achieving sustainable development and propose an alternative agenda. Their power derives from "informal" networking (Melucci 1988, 1989)³⁶ and mass mobilization against the official agendas and summits on economic development. Their visibility is achieved through informal or developing world regional networks that mobilize against economic globalization during international summits such as the Third WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle and the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico, as well as the World Social Forums in Porto Alegre, which provided an alternative to the World Economic Forums in Davos, Switzerland. Because of this, they attract media attention. Once the informal networks demobilize, however, they break down into social environmentalist type of organizations. They have difficulty in obtaining funding, given their low level of institutionalization. Their main challenges include: how to empower themselves in order to implement their alternative agendas; how and with whom to dialogue; how to move from the local and political to the global and

³⁴ For instance, they act as interlocutors of the G77 countries, and as such, they could be consulted by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and by international organizations such as the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other UN bodies.

³⁵ At the 2002 summit in Johannesburg, they were located at the official Sandton Convention Centre, close to the G77, which sometimes required their advice. In 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, they were at both the official and alternative forums.

³⁶ Through these informal networks, social environmentalists can be transformed into political environmentalists.

ecological; what their relationship should be with other NGOs and social movements, and how they can survive in the absence of funding.³⁷

- iv. *Social Environmentalists.* For these organizations, ecological issues are important as long as they have something to contribute to the well-being of human beings, who are at the centre of their demands. Social environmentalists emphasize social equity and participatory democracy as prerequisites for sustainable development. Their aims are social justice, greater equality, poverty elimination and democratic access to water, housing, food, land, health, sanitation, employment and education, which are considered human rights and usually sanctioned in national constitutions. Many human rights, indigenous and women's organizations include some of the above issues within their definition of socioenvironmental concerns, and it is common in Latin America to find environmental branches or sections within these organizations. Other principal concerns of social environmentalists include the social, cultural and health-related effects of pesticides and transgenic food, and the impacts of land desertification and biodiversity loss on the food supply. Their concerns are more oriented to the local and regional levels than the global; nonetheless, they also act at the global level through informal networks that mobilize at world and regional economic summits. In this group there are individual organizations such as En Defensa del Maiz from Mexico, and networks of national, regional or international organizations such as Los Sin Tierra and Por la Agricultura Orgánica in Latin America and Vía Campesina in the developing world. Also found in this group are the human rights sections of environmental groups, or organizations such as the Grupo de Estudios Sobre Mujer y Ambiente (GEMA).

The social environmentalists tend to question Agenda 21 because it represents the interests of industrialized countries, but they do not reject it completely; instead, they often suggest alternative proposals. Their level of institutionalization is medium: some act as formal NGOs; others are more in the nature of social movements. Their power derives from various sources: first of all, institutionalization or inclusion in national constitutions of those whose rights they defend; secondly, interaction and alliances with other organizations that have a high level of legitimacy, such as human rights organizations; third, the use of electronic means to build alliances and the formation of large networks at the national and international levels; and finally, visibility from protest actions that are covered by the media. Some of the organizations that receive government and international funding risk being co-opted. Another challenge they face is the risk of being displaced by large, international and global environmental NGOs, and large corporations. Therefore, instead of receiving funding from international multilateral institutions such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), they become more politically oriented and ally with the grassroots political environmentalists. Since one of their strengths is the capability to build large networks, institutionalization of their demands or rights could jeopardize mobilization. In addition, the great heterogeneity of this group poses a challenge to the creation of unified political strategies to achieve their aims.

Final Thoughts

Ten years after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the official Agenda 21 continues to guide the aims, praxes and policy proposals of international institutions and governments with regard to sustainable development, despite the great diversity of alternatives proposed by the environmental movement. There were no new proposals or advances at the Earth Summit+5 beyond the agreement between governments and international institutions prior to

³⁷ In contrast with the other two types of organizations, during the Johannesburg conference they mobilized around the alternative forum at the Nasrec Centre.

Johannesburg that the Declaration of Rio and Agenda 21 were still the principles and programme for Johannesburg.

It should be added that social movements have maintained that the fundamental principles contained in the alternative agenda should continue to be the frame for sustainable development. Thus, as this paper has demonstrated, the global community arrived in Johannesburg more divided than ever, and with divergent agendas. The decision not to reopen Agenda 21 generated sharp disagreements on issues such as globalization and central topics including biodiversity and climate change, which were on the agenda 10 years ago. All of this threatened the Johannesburg summit, where no major advances on either the official or the alternative Agenda 21 documents from the Earth Summit were made. In fact, the principal topic in Johannesburg was not the environment in a narrow sense, for instance, biodiversity or climate change, but the unequal social distribution of natural resources such as fresh water, and its impact on the fulfilment of basic needs and on development. In a sense, it was a return to the dilemma posed at the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972.

At stake is a growing environmental crisis, and the diminishing possibility of achieving sustainable development. The national commissions on sustainable development that were due to be established in each of the countries that signed the official Rio Declaration were not even created in many countries, and where they were established, they failed in their work. As a consequence, the expectations of civil society to democratically participate in the definition of aims and proposals for sustainable development have not been met. At the moment, there are no vehicles, mechanisms, sets of values or agendas capable of persuading Latin American governments and social movements to pursue a sustainable development agenda. The years 1992–2002 could be considered a “lost decade for sustainable development”, given the fact that no drastic measures were taken to establish a more open dialogue. Thus, the main challenge of the summit in Johannesburg was the creation of new channels for the participation of civil society in the decision-making process and the promotion of a dialogue regarding the type of development needed for the 2002–2012 decade. Nonetheless, channels between governments and civil society for discussing models of development in a participatory way were not opened at the summit.

Thus, the crucial questions are: How can such a dialogue be promoted? How can industrialized and developing countries reconcile their visions of sustainable development? Must they first agree on a set of values and a common rationale to define the principal environmental problems and the type of development required? Do they have to agree with respect to the role of democracy in achieving sustainable development? How can governments, international institutions, NGOs and social movements reconcile their perceptions of sustainable development? Finally, what are the values and premises that international NGOs that support Agenda 21 can agree upon in order to endorse the alternative agenda and contribute to empowering civil society?

The instrumental techno-scientific rationale on which the official documents and agendas of sustainable development rely seems to exclude the visions, aims and proposals of social movements. Alone, they do not provide a basis for democratic agreement. An extensive dialogue centred on sustainable development has to be democratic and focus on a humanistic approach based upon the human being, not on technology or economic growth per se. Latin American social movements regard democracy as a prerequisite for sustainable development, while the official Rio Declaration, based on Agenda 21, did not place enough emphasis on democracy as a way to achieve sustainable development. But what type of democracy is needed? Latin American social movements demand greater democracy and have mobilized for a direct and social democracy and for the institutionalization of “participatory” democracy in constitutional texts as a prerequisite for the respect of environmental and social rights included in those constitutions. Thus, a broad dialogue between social movements, governments and international institutions has to be guided by democratic participation at all levels—

international, national and local—and has to focus on horizontal participation that emerges from the base to affect decision-making processes.

Moreover, as noted above, a meaningful dialogue around sustainable development will only be possible if it is centred on the human being, not on technology or economic growth. Given the acute differences in values and rationales that exist, this dialogue can only be grounded in one of the principal characteristics of democracy, that is, in the pluralism that implies recognition and acceptance of the great diversity of beliefs valued by human beings; it means the abandonment of polarized positions and the building of common values based on universal principles. For this to be possible, all sectors must have similar bargaining power. Since this is not the case with regard to social movements, there is a need for these organizations to empower themselves through the reinforcement of their already existing networks, thereby creating a forum from which to participate in the democratic collective construction of a viable and equitable framework for sustainable development. As the Mexican Local Agenda 21 highlighted (SEMARNAP 1999), “local authorities...are responsible for the knowledge and promotion of the needs and aspirations of their constituencies” (author’s translation). It also considers indispensable “the co-participation of the community in public policy” and “the collective construction of a long-range vision that integrates all actors” (author’s translation) (SEMARNAP 1999).

The gap between the official and the alternative agendas concerning the relationship between the environment and development seems to be widening because the language, values and rationales of governments and social movements are divergent. There was also an emerging gap within NGOs and social movements at the Johannesburg summit because of geographic differences and major demands. The international, larger NGOs were accepted as interlocutors and in some cases were treated almost as partners; while the smaller NGOs were at the Nasrec Centre, several kilometres away, with limited opportunities to lobby governments and major multinational organizations. For the future, the principal challenge for discourse around a common agenda will be to explore the empowerment of all NGOs and social movements in the process and the development of common rationales and values.

Annex: Position on key issues in regard to sustainable development, as reflected in official and alternative documents

Declarations, documents and agendas ^a	Human rights	Social justice	Equity	World alliance
<i>Alternative position: NGOs and social movements</i>				
Carta de la Tierra				
Consulta de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	+	+		
Convocatoria de los Movimientos Sociales ^b				
Declaración de Atitlán ^b	+			
Declaración Final del Taller sobre Transgénicos ^b				
Declaración Pública de las Organizaciones Ciudadanas de los Países que Integran el Grupo Cairns ^b	+			
Declaración de Río				
Declaración de la Tierra de los Pueblos				
El Grito de las Américas ^b				
Foro por la Defensa por la Vida, la Tierra y Recursos ^b				
Hacia una Alianza Social Mundial ^b		+		+
Llamado de Porto Alegre a la Movilización ^b	+	+	+	
Pronunciamiento contra la Globalización y por la Soberanía Alimentaria y los Derechos de los Pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	+	+		+
Reunión de Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	+	+		
Un Mundo Sostenible es Posible ^b	+	+		
<i>Official summits: Government and UN documents</i>				
Agenda 21				
World Conference on Women/Beijing Declaration	+	+		+
Rio Declaration	+	+		+
Chairman's Text for Negotiation	+	+		+
World Summit for Human Settlements/Istanbul Declaration	+	+		+
World Summit for Social Development/Copenhagen Declaration	+	+		+
World Summit on Population/Cairo Declaration	+	+		+

Note: + = position in favour; – = position against. ^a Official and alternative documents in this annex are listed in the bibliography. ^b Documents from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Declarations, documents and agendas ^a	Indigenous	Cultural identity	Biodiversity	Transgenics	Patenting	Climate change	Discrimination
<i>Alternative position: NGOs and social movements</i>							
Carta de la Tierra	+	+	+				-
Consulta de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b		+					
Convocatoria de los Movimientos Sociales ^b	+		+	-	-		-
Declaración de Atitlán ^b			+	-	-		-
Declaración Final del Taller sobre Transgénicos ^b	+		+	-	-		
Declaración Pública de las Organizaciones Ciudadanas de los Países que Integran el Grupo Cairns ^b		+					
Declaración de Río							
Declaración de la Tierra de los Pueblos		+					
El Grito de las Américas ^b	+	+	+	-	-		
Foro por la Defensa por la Vida, la Tierra y Recursos ^b	+						-
Hacia una Alianza Social Mundial ^b				-	-		
Llamado de Porto Alegre a la Movilización ^b	+		+	-			
Pronunciamiento contra la Globalización y por la Soberanía Alimentaria y los Derechos de los Pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe ^b			+	-		-	
Reunión de Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b			+		-	-	
Un Mundo Sostenible es Posible ^b							
<i>Official summits: Government and UN documents</i>							
Agenda 21	+	+	+			-	-
World Conference on Women/Beijing Declaration	+	+					-
Rio Declaration	+	+	+			-	-
Chairman's Text for Negotiation	+	+	+			-	-
World Summit for Human Settlements/Istanbul Declaration	+	+	+			-	-
World Summit for Social Development/Copenhagen Declaration	+	+	+			-	-
World Summit on Population/Cairo Declaration	+	+	+			-	-

Note: + = position in favour; - = position against. ^a Official and alternative documents in this annex are listed in the bibliography. ^b Documents from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Declarations, documents and agendas ^a	Environmental protection	Environmental sustainability	Sustainable development	Environmental politics	Agriculture	Women	Youth
<i>Alternative position: NGOs and social movements</i>							
Carta de la Tierra							
Consulta de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	+					+	
Convocatoria de los Movimientos Sociales ^b	+				+	+	
Declaración de Atitlán ^b					+		
Declaración Final del Taller sobre Transgénicos ^b	+		+		+		
Declaración Pública de las Organizaciones Ciudadanas de los Países que Integran el Grupo Cairns ^b					+		
Declaración de Río	+		+		+		
Declaración de la Tierra de los Pueblos	+		+				
El Grito de las Américas ^b							
Foro por la Defensa por la Vida, la Tierra y Recursos ^b					+		
Hacia una Alianza Social Mundial ^b	+						
Llamado de Porto Alegre a la Movilización ^b							
Pronunciamento contra la Globalización y por la Soberanía Alimentaria y los Derechos de los Pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	+				+		
Reunión de Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	+		+		+		
Un Mundo Sostenible es Posible ^b	+	+		+	+		
<i>Official summits: Government and UN documents</i>							
Agenda 21	+		+	+	+	+	+
World Conference on Women/Beijing Declaration	+		+	+		+	+
Rio Declaration	+		+	+	+	+	+
Chairman's Text for Negotiation	+		+	+	+	+	+
World Summit for Human Settlements/Istanbul Declaration	+		+	+	+	+	+
World Summit for Social Development/Copenhagen Declaration	+		+	+	+	+	+
World Summit on Population/Cairo Declaration	+		+	+	+	+	+

Note: + = position in favour; – = position against. ^a Official and alternative documents in this annex are listed in the bibliography. ^b Documents from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Declarations, documents and agendas ^a	Participation	Poverty	Hunger	Health	War	Peace	Militarization
<i>Alternative position: NGOs and social movements</i>							
Carta de la Tierra		-			-	+	
Consulta de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	+	-	-				
Convocatoria de los Movimientos Sociales ^b		-	-	-	-	+	-
Declaración de Atitlán ^b	+	-	-	-			
Declaración Final del Taller sobre Transgénicos ^b							
Declaración Pública de las Organizaciones Ciudadanas de los Países que Integran el Grupo Cairns ^b		-	-				
Declaración de Río							
Declaración de la Tierra de los Pueblos	+	-					
El Grito de las Américas ^b							
Foro por la Defensa por la Vida, la Tierra y Recursos ^b		-	-			+	-
Hacia una Alianza Social Mundial ^b			-		-	+	-
Llamado de Porto Alegre a la Movilización ^b	+				-	+	-
Pronunciamiento contra la Globalización y por la Soberanía Alimentaria y los Derechos de los Pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe ^b							-
Reunión de Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	+	-					
Un Mundo Sostenible es Posible ^b	+						
<i>Official summits: Government and UN documents</i>							
Agenda 21	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
World Conference on Women/Beijing Declaration	+	-	-	-		+	+
Rio Declaration	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
Chairman's Text for Negotiation	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
World Summit for Human Settlements/Istanbul Declaration	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
World Summit for Social Development/Copenhagen Declaration	+	-	-	-	-	+	+
World Summit on Population/Cairo Declaration	+	-	-	-	-	+	+

Note: + = position in favour; - = position against. ^a Official and alternative documents in this annex are listed in the bibliography. ^b Documents from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Declarations, documents and agendas ^a	Globalization	Free trade	Neoliberalism	Privatization	External debt	Capitalism	Participative democracy	Representative democracy
Alternative position: NGOs and social movements								
Carta de la Tierra						-		
Consulta de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	-	-	-	-		-		
Convocatoria de los Movimientos Sociales ^b	-	-	-	-		-		
Declaración de Atitlán ^b	-	-		-		-	+	
Declaración Final del Taller sobre Transgénicos ^b								
Declaración Pública de las Organizaciones Ciudadanas de los Países que Integran el Grupo Cairns ^b		-	-				+	
Declaración de Río		-				-		
Declaración de la Tierra de los Pueblos	-							
El Grito de las Américas ^b	-	-	-		-			
Foro por la Defensa por la Vida, la Tierra y Recursos ^b							+	
Hacia una Alianza Social Mundial ^b	-	-	-	-		-		
Llamado de Porto Alegre a la Movilización ^b	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
Pronunciamiento contra la Globalización y por la Soberanía Alimentaria y los Derechos de los Pueblos de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	-	-					+	
Reunión de Redes de la Sociedad Civil de América Latina y el Caribe ^b	-	-			-	-	+	
Un Mundo Sostenible es Posible ^b	-		-			-	+	
Official summits: Government and UN documents								
Agenda 21								
World Conference on Women/Beijing Declaration	+	+				+		+
Rio Declaration								+
Chairman's Text for Negotiation	+	+				+		+
World Summit for Human Settlements/Istanbul Declaration	+	+				+		+
World Summit for Social Development/Copenhagen Declaration	+	+				+		+
World Summit on Population/Cairo Declaration	+	+				+		+

Note: + = position in favour; - = position against. ^a Official and alternative documents in this annex are listed in the bibliography. ^b Documents from Latin America and the Caribbean.

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