

Thursday, 03.06.2010 | 16:50 – 18:20

Conference Closing (THU 6.1):

A - Prepare for Rio 2012 - Towards a Global Risk Convention?

In 2012, the international community will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also called “Rio Earth Summit”, a landmark for global governance and sustainable development that made three important achievements:

- It translated the findings of the Brundtland Report “Our Common Future” into multilateral, regional, national and local policy and law thus embedding the concept of “sustainable development” in existing and new frameworks;
- It resulted in guiding documents and legally binding treaties, i.e. Agenda 21, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the UN Convention on Biodiversity (UNCBD), and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD);
- It triggered a series of world conferences that shaped a new reality of international relations and revived the spirit of the UN Charter.

UNCED was succeeded by the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), also known as “Rio+10”, which fell short of expectations and could not repeat the stunning success of Rio. Since then, international negotiations on risk, sustainability and global change have experienced further crises, the most recent one being the Copenhagen Climate Summit of December 2009 – while the degradation of natural resources and ecosystem services, loss of biodiversity, climate change, poverty, famine and lack of health resources continue to worsen.

2010 again marks an important year. With the review of the Millennium Development Goals, taking place in September as a high-level special session of the UN General Assembly, new momentum could be given to global risk and sustainability governance and the idea of sustainable development. In fact, the MDG Summit this year could and should give direction toward the Rio + 20 Summit scheduled for 2012. It is critical to use the period up to 2012 for a renewed global effort towards integrating the still fragmented agendas of environmental protection, climate change mitigation and adaptation, poverty eradication, social justice and disaster preparedness into one coherent policy and action framework. In some ways, new and innovative approaches ought to be sought, and adaptive governance is key.

It is in this context that IDRC 2010 Davos would like to initiate a dialogue about two important questions: Will a Global Convention on Risks be helpful in providing an overarching legal tool to address a multitude of “civilization-borne” risks in a coherent and efficient manner? What are successful pathways towards integration of still fragmented policy frameworks, and what is the role of science in this context?” The Closing Plenary of the conference will highlight eminent speakers from international organization, government and cutting-edge research, and explore the utility and scope of a possible convention on risk and safety under the auspices of the United Nations.

Chair:

Ammann, Walter



President Global Risk Forum GRF Davos, Davos Switzerland

Walter Ammann is the Founder, and currently CEO of GRF Davos, a foundation focused on risk reduction, disaster management and climate change adaptation, and organizer of the biennial IDRC global conference in Davos. His interest in current R&D is disaster and risk management and the harmonization with climate change. He is author and co-author of over 250 papers, books and scientific reports and is a member of various national and international professional associations and expert consulting groups like the UNISDR Science and Technology Council. He is a Permanent Visiting Professor at the Harbin Institute of Technology in Harbin, China.

Walter Ammann got his MSc and PhD in structural dynamics and earthquake engineering at ETH Zurich. He started his professional career in various consulting companies, was responsible for the R&D in construction technology of a globally acting company, and for 15 years Director of the Federal Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research in Davos and Deputy Director of the Federal Research Institute on Forest, Snow and Landscape.

Panellists:

Liu, Yanhua



Counsellor, Counsellor's Office of the State Council of PRC, Beijing, P.R. China

Prof. Liu has made distinguished contributions to organizing and carrying out researches in many fields, such as global environmental change, land use and land cover change, disaster prevention and reduction, and synthetic control of vulnerable ecological system; Prof. Liu published dozens of papers on the domestic and international journals; and Prof. Liu led, designed, organized and participated in a series of projects to promote domestic/ international scientific and technological cooperation research.

Shah, Haresh



Obayashi Professor of Engineering Stanford University and founder RMS, Newark, USA

Professor Haresh Shah has been a pioneer in the fields of risk analysis, earthquake engineering, and probabilistic methods for over 35 years. He has served Stanford University in many capacities, including Chairman of the Department of Civil Engineering and Founding Director of the John A. Blume Earthquake Engineering Center.

Haresh Shah is the author of one book, has contributed to chapters in many books and has been an author or co-author of more than 350 technical papers and reports. He has been keynote speaker at many national, international conferences and has been a regular keynote invited speaker for many corporations.

Dr. Shah received a B. E. degree (1959) from Poona University, India, and degrees of M. S. (1960) and Ph. D. (1963) from Stanford University. Prof. Shah has received many awards, including the John S. Bickley Gold Medal for Excellence Award from the International Insurance Society for his sustained and outstanding contributions to the insurance industry. Dr. Shah was given a unique award as the “Top Seismic Engineer of the 20th Century” by the Applied Technology Council/Engineering News Record.

B – Impressions of IDRC Davos 2010

C – Poster Award Announcement

D – Chairman’s Summary and Outlook



