

Window on the World

Natural Resource Management

This issue of Window on the World presents just a few of the networks and institutions focusing on resource and conflict management around the world.

CorpWatch

www.corpwatch.org

CorpWatch investigates and exposes corporate violations of human rights, environmental crimes, fraud and corruption in order to foster global justice, independent media activism and democratic control over corporations.

The foundation evolved from the book *The Corporate Planet: Ecology and Politics in the Age of Globalization*, which was written by CorpWatch's founder Joshua Karliner, and published by Sierra Club Books in 1997. The San Francisco Bay Area-based CorpWatch has been educating and mobilizing people through the CorpWatch.org website and various campaigns.

In 1997, CorpWatch blew the whistle on working conditions in Nike's operations in Vietnam, ultimately leading to greater oversight of their factories and changes in their corporate practices. In 1998, CorpWatch started investigating the Enron Corporation, three years before the company's collapse. The Climate Justice Initiative, organized from 1999 to 2002 around the CorpWatch report, *Greenhouse Gangsters vs. Climate Justice*, successfully redefined climate change as an environmental justice and human rights issue, and helped mobilize communities already adversely impacted by the fossil fuel industry.

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund: – investing in a future for life

www.cepf.net

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) provides strategic financial and technical assistance to non-governmental organizations (NGO), community groups, and other civil society partners to help safeguard Earth's biodiversity hotspots, Earth's biologically richest, and most threatened regions.

CEPF is a joint initiative of Conservation International, the Global Environment Facility, the government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank.

CEPF focuses on the hotspots in developing countries because the convergence of critical areas for conservation with millions of people who are impoverished and highly dependent on healthy ecosystems for their survival is more evident here than anywhere

else. The poor within the hotspots are the people most reliant on natural resources for food, shelter, medicine, income, and employment.

The partnership was founded on the common understanding that the root causes of biodiversity loss and poverty are inextricably linked, and where both are present, there is an acute need to help preserve the diversity of life and healthy ecosystems as essential components of stable and thriving societies.

A fundamental goal of the partnership is therefore to ensure that civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation. Since its inception, CEPF has committed more than \$81 million in grants. These grants have supported more than 590 non-governmental and community groups in 34 countries within hotspots in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Each dollar invested leverages \$4 from the other partners generating more than \$100 million in co-financing and additional funding for hotspot conservation.

The Centre For Rural Legal Studies(CRLS)

www.crls.org.za

CRLS was established in 1991 as a NGO committed to the redistribution of power and resources in rural areas of the western, northern and eastern Cape provinces of South Africa. The CRLS undertakes training, research, and advocacy in the land and labour sectors with a specific gender emphasis.

In partnership with the rural poor and rural support organizations, the CRLS

- advocates for pro-poor policies and procedures,
- builds the capacity of rural people to undertake participatory action research, and
- uses legal processes to bring about change.
 - CRLS seeks to achieve a sustainable rural livelihood where the poor:
 - understand their socio-economic rights, have access to their rights and
 - articulate their needs and agitate to bring about social transformation.

CRLS uses the experience of the rural environment to advocate policy interventions that are designed to support sustainable livelihoods for the rural poor, promote labour rights in a context of decreasing employment, changing role of agriculture and the challenges of globalization. It also promotes pro-poor land reform in the context of national legislative and policy framework in collaboration with local government, as well as to develop partnerships with national, provincial and local government departments, civil society organizations, and key donor agencies that relate to its core areas of work.

The Council For Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

www.csir.co.za

CSIR is South Africa's premier scientific research and development organization. It was established by an act of parliament in 1945 and is situated on its own campus in the city of Pretoria.

Presently, it is the largest research and development (R&D) organization in Africa and accounts for about 10 per cent of the entire African R&D budget. It has a staff of approximately 3,000 technical and scientific researchers, often working in multi-disciplinary teams.

The CSIR's main areas of research are:

- Food, biological and chemical technologies.
- Building and construction technology.
- Defence technology.
- Water, environment, and forestry technology.
- Manufacturing, materials, and textile technology.
- Mining technology.
- Roads and transport technology.
- Information and communication technologies.

The Earth Charter

www.earthcharter.org

The Earth Charter is an authoritative synthesis of values, principles, and aspirations that are widely shared by growing numbers of people, in all regions of the world.

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The Earth Charter ... is a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society for the 21st century. Created by the largest global consultation process ever associated with an international declaration, endorsed by thousands of organizations representing millions of individuals, the Earth Charter seeks to inspire in all peoples a sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the human family and the larger living world. The Earth Charter is an expression of hope and a call to help create a global partnership at a critical juncture in history.

The principles of the Earth Charter reflect extensive international consultations conducted over a period of many years. These principles are also based upon contemporary science, international law, and the insights of philosophy and religion. Successive drafts of the Earth Charter were circulated around the world for comments and debate by non-governmental organizations, community groups, professional societies, and international experts in many fields. The Earth Charter movement is now in transition and the Earth Charter International (ECI) has become the organizational hub of the Earth Charter Initiative. ECI is currently based in two centres, one in Stockholm, Sweden, and the other at the campus of the University for Peace, Costa Rica.

Friends of the Earth International (FOEI)

www.foei.org

FOEI is the world's largest grassroots environmental network, uniting 71 diverse national member groups and some 5,000 local activist groups on every continent. With approximately 1.5 million members and supporters around the world, we campaign on today's most urgent environmental and social issues. FOEI challenge the current model of economic and corporate globalization, and promote solutions that will help to create environmentally sustainable and socially just societies.

Core themes running through FOEI work are:

- protecting the planet's disappearing biodiversity, and
- the repayment of ecological debt owed by rich countries to those they have exploited for their own economic benefit.

FOEI groups campaign on many other issues including desertification, Antarctica, and maritime. FOEI is actively involved with the World Social Forum.

The International Environmental Law Research Centre (IELRC)

www.ielrc.org

The IELRC is an independent, non-profit research organization established in 1995. It is an Association under Articles 60ff of the Swiss Civil Code. It has offices in the International Environment House in Geneva (Switzerland), Nairobi (Kenya), and New Delhi (India). IELRC provides a unique forum for collaborative research between researchers in the North and South.

IELRC is uniquely positioned to provide policy-relevant research at the international level given its strong network of competence in two significant regions of the developing world. IELRC's offices in Geneva and Nairobi give researchers access to primary international materials for research.

The aim of the IELRC is to contribute to the establishment of legal and institutional frameworks, which foster sustainable environmental management in developing IELRC's undertakes policy-related academic research relating to the environment in a North-South context. IELRC specifically seeks to contribute to the development of legal and institutional frameworks, that foster equitable and sustainable environmental management at the local, national, and international levels by fostering links between research communities and policy-makers in the North and South.

Medica Mondiale

www.medicamondiale.org

The international women's and relief organization

medica mondiale has been supporting traumatized women in areas of war and crisis since 1993. After the 2004 tsunami, *medica mondiale* started to support the women's centre *Flower Aceh* in Indonesia. The support includes financial aid for emergency relief immediately following the tsunami and reconstruction as well as training measures for the staff on dealing with traumatized people. The trainers not only imparted professional social therapeutic know-how but also knowledge on stress symptoms and protection measures against burn-out and secondary traumatizations of helpers. On the political level, *medica mondiale* calls for the integration of standards and trainings on raising awareness for gender issues into the quality framework of humanitarian aid. *medica mondiale* furthermore offers training on 'women-centered trauma work'.

The International Year For Deserts and Desertification

www.iydd.org

The United Nations General Assembly, at its 58th session, adopted resolution A/Res/58/211, which declares 2006 the International Year of Deserts and Desertification. The decision was taken to

help prevent the exacerbation of desertification around the globe.

The main objective of the year is to get the message across that desertification is a major threat to humanity, compounded by both climate change and loss of biological diversity. Land degradation affects one-third of the planet's land surface and around one billion people in over a hundred countries.

While fully addressing the growing threat that desertification represents for mankind, the year also seeks to celebrate the unique ecosystem and cultural diversity of deserts worldwide, therefore establishing a clear difference between the need to protect deserts as unique natural habitat and the fight against desertification as a global sustainable development challenge.

With UNCCD, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, the international community possesses a key instrument to deliver the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that must be met by 2015. The MDGs are the most comprehensive and ambitious strategies ever put forward to combat global poverty.

Compiled by the Editor