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# esPossible

Publisher: Ecodes Plaza San Bruno, 9, 1º offices 50001 Zaragoza - revistaesposible@ecodes.org / Editorial Board: Cristina Monge, Víctor Viñuales, Eva González y Ana Mastral / Coordination: Rafael Bardaji / Design: César Jiménez / Cover illustration: Josema Carrasco / Collaborator: Clara Presa / English translation and review by: Carlos Giner, Diane McAndrew, Michele Weldon, Silvia Romeo, Jason Morris y Clara Presa / Support for the coordination: Pilar Puebla.

The Rio de Janeiro Summit aims to define a clear roadmap for the next twenty years to ensure sustainable development through boosting regulatory and policy changes towards a green economy.

## Rio+20, the driving force to achieve changes



*Rio de Janeiro hosts 200 people this month of June in order to fight for the sustainability of the planet.*

Engaging governments, business and social entities to pursue the shift towards a global governance for sustainability, and correct errors that have so far prevented an economic development model that includes the limits of the planet are prominent targets that global society should look at Rio+20 Summit, to be held on June 20-22 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Therefore, the two main themes to be discussed at the Rio +20 Conference focus on the green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and the institutional framework for sustainability.

Almost all 193 countries Member States of the United Nations (UN) are participating in Rio+20. Marathon sessions are expected in which countries have the last word, but in which society has much to say through their initiatives.

These Summits are often branded as rambling and are blamed for a slow implementation of results. It seems utopia the existence of an organism able to get all governmental and social actors to agree. We live in extraordinarily complex societies, but also on a planet whose inhabitants are increasingly aware of the need to act decisively to prevent degradation.

At a time when the planet has entered ecological deficit, the Rio +20 summit shows as an opportunity, not the only one, but one that is able to bring together the leading agents of the international community. As noted last 31 days in Madrid, Josefina Maestu Director of the **UN office of the Water Decade**, based in



*The 1992 Rio Summit accepted the "polluter pays principle".*

## 20 years ago

The UN Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, was a major boost to international environmental law and the decisive step in the concept of "Sustainable development". The Conference was named as the "Earth Summit"; an important number of international instruments were agreed and are now under development.

The Earth Summit Declaration introduced the right to development and the need of environmental protection, as well as common but differentiated responsibilities. Among the principles adopted in Rio, we highlight the related public participation in sustainability, the "Precautionary principle" and the "polluter pays principle".

Agenda 21 was also adopted in the Earth Summit, as a program of action that Member States should take to transform the current development model. Finally, three conventions were launched: conventions on Biodiversity (for conservation of biological diversity), Combating Desertification, Climate Change (stabilization of concentrations of greenhouse gases).

Zaragoza -Rio +20 summit, as in other high-level meetings, it serves to establish a minimum common denominator.

This common denominator may not be very ambitious to the multitude of interests and lines of thought. It would be naive to think that all citizens of the world suddenly agree. But apart from the global agreements that will be reached, one fact remains: The huge potential we can find in civil society and the possibilities that Rio +20 brings to raise awareness among the society, push governments and use the numerous ways and opportunities of mutual learning offered by the summit. This was a fact too at the meeting held in Madrid on 31 by

**ECODES** and **CONAMA** Foundation and from which we account on other pages in this publication.

### Clara Presa (ECODES):

**"Rio+20 should consolidate the participation of civil society in the decision making process. We're talking about our planet, our future "**

Clara Presa, project manager of ECODES stated "civil society cannot allow Rio +20 to be a failure. Global problems require global solutions. Rio +20 must consolidate the involvement of civil society in decision-making. We are talking about our planet, our future".

The continuous news about the overexploitation of resources, the end of the era of fossil fuels, data of global warming and the risks of nuclear power – evidenced with Fukushima, are all a tremendous concern are a force for change. And it is increasingly evident to society and experts that it is necessary to redefine the economic model and create a new concept of prosperity, in which the myth of reaching GDP

# General Data of the Summit

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), also known as Rio +20, will take place from 20-22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), 20 years later of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, also in Rio de Janeiro, and ten years after the World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002 in Johannesburg. It is a high-level meeting that will bring together Heads of State and Government or other representatives and focused on a political document, currently under negotiation entitled "The future we want."

The objective of the conference is to achieve a renewed political commitment to sustainable development, assess progress to date and gaps in implementing the results of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges.

The Conference is focused on two topics: Green economy in the context of sustainable development and eradication of poverty, and the institutional framework for sustainable development.



*Green Economy is a paradigm shift in which GDP is not the sole indicator of progress.*

growth stops, and new parameters are valued to measure development such as the defense of nature, access to education, a better distribution of resources and social justice criteria. To clean the economy, saving the planet and reaching wealth. A shift towards green economy is needed in national policies and ethical standards of behavior.

And the question is whether these summits are worthy, when, after holding many of high-level appointments appears a familiar sense of disappointment, failure and frustration. Antonio Cerrillo, a journalist for La Vanguardia, stated this issue in December last year about the summit in Durban.

**There is enormous potential in civil society organizations and Rio+20 offers many possibilities to raise awareness and push the governments"**

In article reflected the idea that, although many experts criticize the UN, "there are no other forums to combat global warming."

Rémi Parmentier, director of The **Varda Group** and actively involved in the process of Rio+20 from the start, is clear: "In the Summits little is said about the success stories and people remember almost only the failures and difficulties." but he considers that there is progress: "For example - he said- in the time of Rio '92 the dumping of industrial and radioactive waste was still not prohibited, now it is. Or rich countries feets could dump their waste legally on the beaches of poor countries but not now" Rémi Parmentier provides another

## Lessons not to lose oneself in Rio+20

Rémi Parmentier, director of The Varda Group and closely linked to Rio + 20 offers these tips.

- 1) Have a clear goal and stick it without distraction, like a distance runner.
- 2) Do your homework: Before going to Rio, or instead of... you promote your target before the meeting.
- 3) Discern what is important against all the background noise.
- 4) Communicate clearly with your target audience.
- 5) Take lessons and followup afterwards (the world does not end in Rio).



*Rio+20 Summit is preceded by preparatory meetings and the work of organizations and companies.*

example of the many which demonstrate the impact of these international events: "In 1998 the Aarhus Convention was signed, that recognizes the right of citizens to access to environmental information, to the decision making processes and the judicial system".

This summit is intended to also be an important moment not just as an exercise of raising awareness, but as a driving force for political and regulatory changes. New initiatives in line with the Millennium Development Goals as the "**Sustainable Energy for all**" to ensure universal access by 2030 to modern energy services can be set at Rio +20. As highlighted by Clara Presa, "Member States, alone, have

### Josefina Maestu (ONU)

**"The summit of Rio + 20, and other high level meetings serves to establish a common minimum denominator"**

not been able or willing to lead the transition towards sustainable development. "" Presa from Ecodes added -we think that leadership from business entities, local governments, NGOs and citizens committed to sustainability is essential to ensure the success of Rio+20".

In conclusion, Clara Presa added: "The Declaration of Rio +20 should allow us to work for the next 20 years to correct the errors of the economy based on growth, speculation and unsustainable consumption and production through a roadmap working towards a green economy for sustainable development. There is still time to make courageous decisions".

**Rafael Bardaji**

# EXPERIENCES THAT EMERGED AFTER THE 1992 RIO SUMMIT

The Earth Summit of 1992 was the progressive inclusion of actions focused on environmental responsibility on the agenda of governments, multinational corporations and NGOs. We tell you which highlights some of the actors.

## A path which took off 20 years ago



### Home composting against climate change

**A**migos de la Tierra has promoted home composting since the 90's and has led this self-management organic residue over 40 municipalities throughout Spain, along with families, schools, associations and government. While allowing a reduction of waste and, therefore, saving natural resources, composting encouraged citizens' participation, essential in the Summit of the Earth, 1992, and contributes to stopping desertification and climate change, both object to the Rio Conventions.



**BBVA**

### Eco-efficiency Plan to reduce impacts

**I**n 2008 BBVA released its Global Eco-efficiency plan, with specific targets of emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>, water, paper, ISO 14.001 certifications and LEED. After this first plan we are working to reduce our environmental footprint and save management costs of our direct impacts. In credit policy, we have integrated the environmental and social variables with the Ecuador principles in large infrastructures and Ecorating for business. Regarding the asset management, the employment plan is administered with SRI criteria of socially responsible investment.



### Green corridors and rivers integration in the city

**O**ne of the key issues undertaken by the City of Zaragoza focus on the integration of nature into the city through the implementation of trails and biological corridors, what is called the "humanization" of the Ebro, Gallego and Huerva rivers. Zaragoza has developed 65 kilometres of green corridor and the city has multiplied by 2.5 the surface of green areas, from 3,429 hectares to 8,200. This volume means an average of 11.74 m<sup>2</sup> per inhabitant in the urban area and 34 m<sup>2</sup> in the whole city. In Zaragoza have decreased the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from transport by 15.6%. Between 2005 and 2010 the decrease in the whole city was 7.2%. Moreover all control stations provide air quality data adjusted to EU standards since 2009, while in the case of particles the city approaches the WHO recommendations. In water, in 2011 it has reduced its consumption to 100.2 liters per inhabitant per day, representing a total decrease of 35% of water demand.



# B/S/H/

## Pioneering Action: Oil instead of fluorinated and chlorinated gases

Following the summit of RIO 92, BSH decided to create a central department to promote the systematic management of environmental improvements already underway before. It edited the first environmental report and created environmental departments in each factory. Since then it has dramatically increased the efficiency of water and energy in both the processes and products. For its relevance, the phasing out since 1993 of all its cold gas appliances of chlorinated and fluorinated gases for hydrocarbon without potential of destroying the ozone layer and very low greenhouse effect. With this action, a worldwide pioneer, BSH anticipated the Montreal Protocol compliance by years.



## Corporate responsibility for the benefit of everybody

The group has made a firm commitment for sustainable management. Actions such as replacement of air shuttle by the train, promoting the use of hybrid cars, public transport or video-conferencing where possible, and reducing and offsetting all our emissions to become a company certified with the seal CeroCO2, are linked to environmental conservation and combating climate change. The company has implemented measures that are in line with the main points of the Rio Summit, as the scrutiny of patterns of production, the use of alternative energy sources and support for public transport to reduce vehicle emissions, congestion in cities and the health problems caused by pollution. The ISO and EMAS certifications attest the company's effort to fulfill its commitment to sustainable development.

Also the fact that it is the first insurance company in Europe which calculates and verifies the environmental cost of an insurance policy, according to PAS 2050:2011, a product whose carbon footprint is particularly difficult to quantify. Also the company has created the figure of EKOamig@, an environmental volunteer present at each work center whose mission is to educate and train their colleagues with simple actions on how to incorporate eco-efficiency in the workplace and how to live more friendly and sustainable.



## Biodiversity as a source of economy and employment

With the 1998 launch of the Biodiversity Foundation, a pioneering and reference institution was established to assist in the attainment of one of the international commitments acquired for Spain in Rio 92: Convention on Biological Diversity.

Since then we are involved in the great challenges facing biodiversity as the fight against the loss of species, marine environmental conservation and climate change.

We also work to raise awareness in society about the close ties that biodiversity has with the economy, employment and quality of life of people.

In addition, we act as a forum for collaboration with civil society through more than 2,000 projects in which we have participated in our 10 years of life. We maintain relationship with all stakeholders identified in Rio.



## Energy revolution is here. And it is not going to stop

**R**egarding the actions of Greenpeace in Spain, you can talk about the ban on drift nets, the closure of the Zorita nuclear power plant, the banned cluster bombs and the plundering of natural resources of Antarctica was avoided. The world decided in Stockholm to begin the process of elimination of twelve toxic and hazardous chemicals. It was signed the Kyoto Protocol to combat climate change and the Montreal Protocol to eliminate CFC gases that were destroying the ozone layer. And a long list of advances. But if we had to choose just one, we will say the Energy 3.0 project, towards a 100% renewable energy by 2050.

For the first time in Spain, an environmental organization proved conclusively that it was possible to successfully fight climate change without losing the quality of life standards in force. The project's findings are irrefutable and proven technological and economic feasibility. Spain has the potential of renewable electricity generation, 56 times higher than that needed in 2050 and the country is able to meet 10 times the actual energy demand. Political courage is to be expected to face the future and avoid the greed of oligopoly of power companies. Greenpeace, with the financial support of its members could show that another energy model was possible and could also be in peace with the planet. We wonder why our leaders do not invest our taxes to boost its implementation.



eco-union

## Annual international meeting for debate and dialogue

**E**co-union is a non-profit association created in 2005 which, in the spirit of the Rio Conference, drives agents of change in the various sectors of society to accelerate the transition towards sustainability. Eco-Unión empowers people, links actors and innovates in the society with training programs, citizen participation and the Global Eco Forum event, an annual international meeting on Green Economics and governance of sustainability that promotes dialogue and debate among different stakeholders in the Euro-Mediterranean region.



## Safety, efficiency and respect for the environment

**S**ince the Rio Summit in 1992, the main challenge that Fenosa Gas Natural has faced is meeting the energy demands of society in a safe, efficient and environmentally friendly way, with a growing concern for low carbon power.

Because of the nature of our activity, biodiversity is a key aspect in our environmental management, and we have multiplied our actions in this aspect since late 90's. We have also committed with the United Nations Global Compact Principles about ethics, integrity, respect and human rights defense.

The main contribution of the firm for the environment and people's wealth is our model of low carbon company.



## Citizenship, collecting and recycling protagonist

**A**mbilamp has collected since its inception nearly 70 million of light bulbs and fluorescent lamps for recycling. This would not have been possible without the active participation of citizens. Therefore, the AMBILAMP's commitment, before and after Rio +20, has been to approach the society to inform and raise awareness about the collection and recycling of lamps.

Therefore AMBILAMP has developed different communication tools on TV, radio, press and abroad and has launched a training program that has reached more than 20,000 students of vocational training, future professionals of lighting.



## Defending artisanal fisheries

**L**onxanet Foundation for Sustainable Fisheries was founded in 2002 as an initiative to support sustainable development of artisanal fisheries projects, which were designed from a holistic and systemic approach. The Foundation has already implemented several initiatives in the Lira Fisheries Community in the economic axis (through a direct commercialization company), culture (sustainable fishing tourism) and environmental axis (development of a Marine Reserve of fishing interest that is co-managed with artisanal fishermen).

The latter project aimed to facilitate the methodological process of design and inception of Marine Reserves of Fishing interest that are co-managed in Os Miñarzos (2007) and Ria de Cedeira (2009), with the following objectives: 1) ensure the artisanal fishermen access to fishery resources against more industrialized fleets; b) Implement a management plan under environmental sustainability criteria; c) involve the artisanal fishermen in decision-making through a Management body made up of four fishermen and four representatives of the fisheries administration. This co-management structure would be able to adapt and react to significant changes that the marine ecosystem may suffer.



## Wind Power World Leader

**I**berdrola has been investing since more than 100 years on environmentally friendly power. In the past decades it has become world leader in wind energy development.

The company anticipated the needs of society to invest in this technology, nowadays the most mature energy in the renewables sector and the third one in importance. Thanks to this strategy, Iberdrola has reached 8,360 megawatts (MW) of renewable power in Europe. This made the company a wind power reference in the continent. With such amount of installed power the company would be able to supply more than 4 million of European inhabitants, avoiding 15 million Tons of CO2 emissions.

In addition, the group has created an Offshore Business Division, based in Scotland, to promote the gradual implementation of offshore wind energy facilities.



## A reference for European cities

Decisions made in the past 20 years in Vitoria-Gasteiz have set the way forward for the benefit of citizens to achieve higher quality of life and to ensure a sustainable economic activity in the territory. The work developed has been able to turn Vitoria-Gasteiz into a reference regarding environmental respect and coexistence. But this work does not end with the grant of 2012 European Green Capital Award, but the challenge is to continue with a sustainable city planning and maintaining the same determination at institutional level, thereby achieving the same citizen involvement and recognition.

One of the pillars that have supported the achievement of this green philosophy has been the high degree of consensus and coherence in management, from the creation of the Center for Environmental Studies (CEA) in 1995 to the unanimous approval of the Agenda 21 in 1998. Many projects have been developed in our city on waste management, water planning, environmental health, pollution management, and mobility and sustainable management of public areas.



## A Human Rights Approach

Since its establishment in 1991 and especially after the Rio Summit 92, UNESCO Etxea works for a Sustainable Human Development, to support the poverty eradication and inequality, respecting, protecting and promoting human rights of all people (present and future) of the planet. To this end, UNESCO Etxea, under its Programme for Sustainability, works on environmental issues such as water, climate change, biodiversity and environmental education, trying to ensure the incorporation of a Human Rights approach and gender equity in all our actions, and always in harmony with the mission and the development of the rest of our activity.

As remarkable activities worth mentioning the impact on environmental policies and cooperation of Euskadi, the Agenda 21 for Schools support, the organization of seminars and campaigns, our publications and the enhancement of the natural heritage of Euskadi and in particular of the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve.



## Available information to stimulate change

Sustainable Development has progressed significantly since Rio'92. The Sustainability Observatory in Spain (OSE) stimulates social change towards sustainability by providing the best information available, making it accessible to society, decision making and public participation.

Some examples of the work of OSE are the seven annual reports based on indicators that analyze the evolution of sustainability in Spain, and the nine thematic reports, as "Challenges for Sustainability: Road to Rio +20" that supports the Spanish position in the upcoming Rio +20.

## Applying laws to protect the environment

Since the Instituto Internacional de Derecho y Medio Ambiente (IIDMA- International Institute for Law and the Environment) was founded in October 1996, one of our main priorities has been to contribute to environmental protection and to promote sustainable development through the study, development and effective implementation of environmental law. A few examples of the projects we have carried out with that purpose are:

- n Ondina (1998-1999) and Iberagua (2002-2003) projects, aimed at improving the management of shared river basins in the Iberian Peninsula and promoting public participation in their management, in accordance with the Helsinki Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, the Water Framework Directive, or Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.
- n The preparation of the Practical Guide "Environment and International Law" (2007) which, through studying international governance of the environment and Multilateral environmental agreements, and European Union and Spanish environmental law, aimed to promulgate these laws and therefore contribute to their effective implementation.
- n The project "Legal Mechanisms for the Protection of the Marine Environment in Spain: The state of the art" (2008-2009) aimed at improving the situation of our seas and oceans through the effective application of all the regulations of protection of the seas and oceans as stipulated in Chapter 17 of Agenda 21.

## Poverty is the main enemy

In the Sustainable Development Summit in Río 20 years ago, the direct link between sustainable development and sustainable consumption was already apparent. We're talking about responsible consumption, ecologically and also socially, because poverty is the main enemy of sustainability.

In this sense, global consumer patterns have not yet changed enough, and conventional models continue to cause serious environmental and social damage. Fairtrade proposes the promotion of Fair Trade to combat this global tendency.

Thanks to better trade conditions, producers and workers in the South can improve their production practices, have more stable incomes, and invest in their communities.

**Certificamos  
un mundo  
mejor**

**BLOQUE CACAOTERO N° 2**  
**POZO PARA AGUA POTABLE**  
CONSTRUIDO CON FONDO DEL PREMIO DEL CACAO  
VENDIDO EN EL COMERCIO JUSTO (FLO)  
CON CONTRA PARTIDA DEL BLOQUE Y EL APOYO DE LA COMUNIDAD





## Before and after 1992. Twenty years of change

**T**wenty years ago, Catalonia was very involved in the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro. Since then, and thanks to this summit, there have been significant positive changes in the field of environment and sustainability. The main environmental tendencies show us that there was a before and an after 1992: in waste management, with the introduction of waste sorting into different components and the construction of the corresponding recycling plants; in water quality thanks to more than 400 urban water treatment plants; in environmental conservation with 30% of Catalanian territory with some kind of protection; and in air quality for which a wide network of stations has been installed throughout the region to monitor atmospheric contamination and meteorological information in order to predict air contamination and the weather. Other significant milestones in the last 20 years, amongst others, have been the endorsement of the Sustainable Development Strategy, the setting up of the Network of Schools for Sustainability in Catalonia, the promotion of the Energy and Climate Change Plan, and activities for the promotion of environmental rating systems for products and services.



## Active, committed and involved citizens

**E**AREA (Estrategia Aragonesa de Educación Ambiental) - the Aragonesa Strategy for Environmental Education; GIRA (Plan de Gestión de Residuos) - the Comprehensive Waste Management Plan; and EACCEL (Estrategia Aragonesa de Cambio Climático y Energías Limpias) - the Aragonesa Strategy on Climate Change and Clean Energy, are participatory plans, in accordance with Principle 10 of Río '92. The Government of Aragón's technical services, external experts, and especially the public, have all been consulted throughout their preparation and development. Debate, analysis and the incorporation of contributions have made these documents ones in which everyone, citizens and government representatives alike, can see our views reflected and feel greater involvement. Voluntary support systems - EAREA with about 400 organisations, and EACCEL with about 250, many of which have specific emission reduction measures - indicate the social dissemination and energy of plans which would never achieve their aims without the commitment and initiative of society.



## A process for building the future

**A** few days ago WWF presented the 2012 edition of Living Planet Report and the results couldn't be more worrying. We're using 50% more of the natural resources than the Earth can give us, and unless we change our way of life this percentage will keep increasing rapidly. By 2030, two planets will not be enough to maintain our current level of consumption.

WWF sees Río '92 as an opportunity to change the speed and the direction of this course, and despite the obstacles and the enormous challenges we face, it should be the start of a process which enables us all to build a prosperous future, with food, water and energy enough for a growing population, whilst reducing our ecological footprint and protecting and recovering the ecosystems and biodiversity that sustain us.































































