

## **Defra Post Kiev Stakeholder Event, 21 July 2003, Ashdown House**

### **Full Report**

#### **Introduction**

As part of its follow-up to the Kiev Environment for Europe Conference (21-23 May 2003), Defra organised a Post Kiev Stakeholder event. The event had four key objectives:

- Identify key areas of follow-up from the conference for the UK;
  - What did Kiev achieve?
  - What are the key areas of follow-up?
  - Where can the UK make a difference?
- Agree on how the UK can deliver Kiev commitments;
  - What are the roles of different stakeholders – Government civil society and private sector?
  - How can the profile of the region be raised in WSSD follow-up? How can the 2 process be linked most effectively?
- Increase understanding of stakeholder involvement in the Kiev process;
  - How well were stakeholders' expectations met?
  - How well were they involved in decision making?
  - How could stakeholder involvement in the process and in preparing for the next conference be improved?
- Explore funding options.
  - What funding is available and how can it be accessed?
  - What priorities will help secure funding?
  - How can we make funding go as far as possible?

#### **Attendance**

The event was attended by approximately 40 people representing NGOs, 6 UK government departments, public bodies, the private sector and academia. Approximately half of the NGOs that had attended the Kiev Conference attended this event. A list of attendees is attached at Annex 1 of this report.

#### **Format**

The day was organised into 2 main sessions with break out working groups in the first session and part of the second session organised as a panel discussion. Helen Marquard, Head of Europe Environment Division in Defra chaired the morning sessions and Philip Stamp, Head of EU enlargement and Sustainable Development Branch, Defra chaired the afternoon sessions.

**Welcome** – Helen Marquard welcomed participants and outlines the objectives of the event.

#### **Session 1 – Outputs of Kiev**

Helen Marquard (Defra) and Paul Vare (Living Earth Foundation) gave the Government and Civil Society perspectives respectively of the Kiev conference.

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### Government Perspective

There had effectively been 3 different conferences going on during the "Kiev Conference". The formal, Ministerial segment, the parallel events, side events and seminars, and the negotiation of the Ministerial Declaration in the Working Group of Senior Officials.

From the Government's perspective, Kiev had gone well. The most important outputs for the UK were:

- Endorsement by Ministers of the continuation of the Environment for Europe (EfE) process and a refocusing of its mandate;
- Adoption and signature of the 3 UNECE Protocols developed for Kiev;
- Adoption of various guidelines, resolutions and Ministerial statements on issues such as biodiversity, education and compliance with MEAs.
- Reaffirmation of WSSD goals and outlines for addressing some targets within the region.
- Launch of the UK's Environment for Europe fund.

Dr Marquard outlined the next intergovernmental steps. There would be an EU meeting, which was likely to be in September or October, an Environment Action Programme Task Force (EAPTF) meeting and UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) meeting in October and then regional preparation for CSD XII, probably in January 2004.

### Civil Society Perspective

Paul Vare, from Living Earth Foundation, part of the UK delegation during Kiev, gave the civil society perspective of how Kiev had gone. He drew attention to the official parallel conference, organised by EcoForum, that had continued for the week of 19-23 May. He observed that the real work on the negotiations had been done at the Working Group of Senior Officials and that policy was "declared" from previously prepared set pieces by Ministers in their formal segment. There was therefore a feeling amongst NGOs that there was little scope for civil society to influence the formal outcomes of the Conference.

He acknowledged that Defra had made a good effort in involving stakeholders in the UK preparations for the conference, but that this was more consultation than participation. An important step for the future would be increasing and developing this involvement in the process, including ensuring that all relevant government departments were equally accessible; there was a feeling that for example, it had been difficult to influence DfES's response to the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Strategy.

There was disappointment by civil society in some of the outcomes; there was no mention of nuclear energy or Kyoto in the Ministerial Declaration. The UK was praised for its relations with NGOs during the Conference.

There were some divisions within the NGO community at Kiev. Some NGOs had more differences with other NGOs than they had with their government's view, but there was not an East/West divide.

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Future issues that NGOs would like to see on EfE conference agendas were sustainable consumption and production, and coastal and marine issues.

### **Discussion**

These reports were followed by a discussion from the floor. The relationship between some governments and NGOs was picked up. It was stressed that the UK Government wanted to work with others in partnership to deliver on commitments.

There was a feeling that hosting an EfE conference was a good opportunity for the host country, and that lessons could be learnt from what the Ukrainians had done. They were criticised for not developing a transparent and inclusive preparatory process. There had been no decision on where the next EfE conference would be, although both Georgia and Serbia and Montenegro had tentatively offered. A WGSO meeting in October was being convened to discuss this issue. It was suggested that it might be worth having some preparatory meetings in the host country rather than in Geneva. Lessons might also be learnt by looking at stakeholder participation in other processes such as WSSD and CSD, including involving business and local government.

There was debate about whether the EfE process should focus purely on the environment or whether it should be broader and look at sustainable development. This was not a debate that had taken place at Kiev, partly possibly because the process is called *Environment* for Europe. Some organisations at the event explained that they had moved on from thinking of the environment as a single concept and focussed on sustainable development. There had been hope before Kiev that the Conference would focus on sustainable development and be almost like a mini WSSD for Europe.

There were questions about the level of private sector involvement at Kiev. Although there had been some, there had been not nearly as much as there had been for example at WSSD. This was an area where there was a lot of scope for development.

Integration of Europe was also brought up, with a suggestion that there be a more formalised process of knowledge/expertise sharing. This was definitely a key issue for the EU at the moment, because of the accession process.

Following this discussion, working groups were convened to look at 3 issues for the region in more detail, and how they should fit into the UK follow-up action. The working groups looked at:

- EECCA Environment Strategy
- ESD
- Capacity building and increasing investment.

The groups reported back to the whole group after an hour's discussion. Their task was to come up with recommendations and key conclusions about future action in these areas.

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### EECCA Environment Strategy

This group aimed to identify priorities that donor countries had the capacity to bring to the table.

The following 3 issues were identified as possible priorities for the UK:

- Water and sanitation
- Energy
- Biodiversity

These echoed 3 of the 5 WSSD priority areas. There were a number of reasons for choosing these areas, mainly that these are areas of high need and areas where the UK has expertise and experience that it can offer. DFID had quite a large focus on water and sanitation and the FCO was currently working a lot on renewable energy and energy efficiency. UK expertise in biodiversity included sustainable agriculture practices, management of protected and non-protected areas and advice on GMOs and food safety.

ESD and public participation were pulled out as cross-cutting issues.

### ESD

This group aimed to answer the following questions:

- How can the UK best participate in the development of an ESD strategy?
- What expertise can the UK contribute to the development of the proposed strategy?
- How can we tap into the extensive expertise that exists in the UK on the subject?
- Should we convene some kind of contact group to bring together UK experts?
- What opportunities are there for tapping into the EfE fund?

It was reaffirmed that there was a lot of expertise within the UK in ESD. There was a more organised framework in England for sharing and disseminating knowledge in England (in the form of the Council for Environmental Education) than in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. However, many networks that do exist, were for practitioners, rather than those more interested in policy.

The working group recommended that a contact group be set up. This should include a number of different stakeholders and be open to all. The network could initially be UK based, but should rapidly expand to become international. There was a lot of enthusiasm for ESD in Eastern Europe and this needed to be tapped into. In addition, private sector involvement should be encouraged and the group's work should tie into that of other initiatives, without duplication of effort.

Further work would need to be done to identify the organisational details of such a contact group.

### Capacity Building and Increasing Investment

The group looking at capacity building and increasing investment came up with 3 focus areas:

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- Legislation
- Increasing inward investment
- Regions

Legislation within the non EU part of the UNECE region was described as good, but without secondary legislation and environment agencies, it was not sufficient.

The group looked at the need for increasing inward investment in the EECCA region. There was particular potential for the oil and gas and water sectors. There were some examples of decreasing investment. For example BA had recently stopped flying to Georgia and although in 1990s most Central Asians had access to drinking water, this had dropped to 25% by 2003.

On average, the cost of PPC project preparation was \$250,000, which highlighted the need to develop and use local capacity. Communication and education were important issues and project preparation material needed to be in local languages to win the understanding and support of local communities

Regions of the future would be Central Asia and the Caucasus.

### **Discussion**

It was noticeable that ESD had come up in all of the working groups, in the wider context of the EECCA strategy and capacity building. It was noted that the UK had a good opportunity in the form of the DFES Action Plan to contribute to this. There had been a commitment by Charles Clarke to lead on ESD across the Government, and this should be made clearer within the Action Plan.

### **Session 2 – How can the UK deliver UK Commitments?**

What is the role of Government? What should we be doing and how can we maximise the impact of other stakeholders' activities – Bill Stow

Bill Stow, the Director General of Environmental Protection in Defra welcomed participants and outlined the objectives of the event. He explained that Defra took the commitments it had made at Kiev very seriously, and that understanding the views of stakeholders was an important part of developing its follow-up strategy. EU and global issues were an important part of Defra's business and sustainable development was the overarching aim of the Department.

The EfE process had played an important role in raising standards in Accession countries and it would continue to play a similar role in raising the profile of environmental issues in EECCA countries in the future. It was very important however, that the process of enlargement did not create new barriers.

The Government had a number of roles:

- Negotiation of texts and new agreements
- Partnership in capacity building and facilitating investment

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- Funding – Defra's EfE fund should be used effectively including support to small projects.

Resources were limited, so the biggest challenge was making the most difference within those limitations.

Bill Stow saw Government playing an enabling and facilitating role, working in partnership with others, both within the UK and with EU colleagues.

### **Discussion**

There was sometimes a gap in funding mechanisms for small projects. They could be resource intensive in terms of project management and accountability. There was also concern about the inclusiveness of the application procedure for some grants. One example was a funding body that required an on-line application for funding. This effectively excluded many NGOs and this type of access mechanism was beginning to create an urban/rural divide or elitism amongst NGOs, with only those who knew how to fill in an application form well and having more advanced technical facilities ever being able to attract funding.

It was suggested that the Regional Environment Centres (RECs) could play a role in managing micro projects, although it seemed that there were widely varying capacities between RECs. The new RECs were fairly unknown quantities, and as such there could be some reluctance in using them. UK Government was however, encouraged to give them a chance to prove themselves and to support them. There could be some scope for delivering projects through a REC/NGO partnership, and this might help to establish their track record.

There was also a question as to the extent to which creating and strengthening these bodies actually sucked talent out of the environment ministries. The challenge was to strengthen the government side whilst working with RECs.

It was pointed out that it was not just a transfer of UK expertise and knowledge that was helpful, but that there was a lot of expertise, for example in biodiversity, that needed to be maintained in EECCA countries. It was a question of how the UK could help to sustain knowledge from elsewhere.

### How can we link Kiev follow-up to WSSD Follow-up? – Andrew Randall

Andrew Randall first outlined some of the aspects of UK follow-up to WSSD. He focused on Johannesburg's prioritisation of implementation. He pointed out that the Kiev follow-up matrix that had circulated to stakeholders identified some of the overlap, but that in some ways there were far more synergies. Kiev was just one of the wide range of processes that was contributing to WSSD.

CSD was the main global forum for WSSD follow-up. In May 2003, it had reformed its working procedures and outlined a 14 year work programme with 2 year cycles. Water and Sanitation and Human Settlements were the priorities for the first cycle.

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Kiev fitted in with this in a number of ways: the Kiev Ministerial Declaration reaffirmed a number of WSSD targets, and in some cases went further in terms of breaking down commitments and outlining practical steps to achieve those targets. Achieving some of the goals from Kiev, even if not explicitly linked to Kiev, such as the Central Asia Water Initiative would also help with WSSD follow-up by addressing similar issues.

Kiev was a regional conference and as such would make a contribution to the regional input to CSD XII.

### **Discussion**

There were questions about the evaluation mechanism for all this and the achievability of the WSSD goals. It was acknowledged by Defra that WSSD targets would be very difficult to achieve. The public would hold governments accountable for the targets they had signed up to and this would be part of the impetus for encouraging governments to deliver their commitments. It was not impossible to achieve them, but people and resources needed to be mobilised in time.

The OECD was trying to cost out achieving the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for water and sanitation in the EECCA region. This would demonstrate the huge need for investment which would need to be met primarily by EECCA countries themselves, but with the support of the international community.

Concerns were raised about CSD's long work programme and that there would therefore be infrequent and limited opportunities to revisit and assess progress. There were also concerns that the proposed regional forum as preparation for CSD would not be able to achieve anything concrete in just 1 ½ days. However, it was still acknowledged that it would be useful as part of the regional process.

The session concluded with a brief overview of priorities that had been outlined earlier. 3 priority issues had been highlighted (water, energy and biodiversity) and the need to work together to make a concrete difference.

### **Session 2 b – Stakeholder Involvement**

Trevor Rees started session 2b with a presentation of Stakeholder Forum's Stakeholder Survey report (attached at Annex 2) which was commissioned by Defra. The aims of this survey were to gather the views of participants of the Kiev Conference, focussing on levels of stakeholder awareness, the agenda items that were considered most important, for the UK and the region, and what the priorities of the process in the future should be. Data were gathered by interviewing a sample of participants at the Conference using a semi-structured interview. Most of those interviewed represented civil society organisations, although there were a number of interviewees from national governments and the private sector.

The report provided some clear messages for Defra and UK stakeholders in terms of priorities, views on the outcomes, and recommendations for the future of the process. Key results of the survey are summarised below:

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- Participants felt that there was considerable scope for improving levels of public involvement.
- Development of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) was a priority for all respondents, although UK stakeholders particularly emphasised the need for a focus on implementation, in particular the outcomes of WSSD
- ESD was more important than WSSD for non UK participants.
- Of the 3 Protocols, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Protocol was seen as the most significant.
- There were concerns that EU enlargement had the potential to cause new divisions within the European region and isolate some countries.

Key recommendations from the report related to:

- improving stakeholder awareness and involvement;
- ensuring dissemination of information
- increased consultation and communication with stakeholders;
- increased funding for participation of stakeholders in the process.

It was highlighted that all of the recommendations related to process oriented issues rather than policy content.

There were a number of limitations with the survey including:

- Short amount of time to prepare the survey
- Small sample of participants, mainly representing environmental NGOs
- English survey was translated into Russian. It seemed that it would have been better to develop a separate Russian language questionnaire with different questions
- Only relatively informed, aware stakeholders participated in the survey.

Defra commented that in the run up to Kiev, although they had held 2 stakeholder events, it had been difficult to identify and engage stakeholders. There had been no feeling of being pressured by stakeholders and that they had had a relatively passive voice. This was true both for general preparations and for specific issues such as ESD.

The agenda of the Kiev Conference was seen fairly universally as something which was difficult to get excited about. It was often difficult to see the direct relevance of a number of agenda items to people's everyday lives. This could have been the cause of some of the difficulty in engaging people and organisations.

There was then discussion about how Defra should take forward some of the recommendations. What type of model should be used for increasing stakeholder awareness and involvement? How should policy areas be grouped?

There was general agreement that there should be some form of contact group. and that the group should cut across sectors rather than there being sector specific groups. There was also an emphasis on trying to engage the private sector more, not just large companies involved in infrastructure projects, but also small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) both in the UK and elsewhere in the

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region. Trade and professional bodies could also be involved. There was the need to have both top-down and bottom-up approaches to be as effective as possible.

### **Session 2c**

The final session looked at funding. There was a panel of 5 participants who introduced the session followed by a discussion around how the UK could make most effective use of the resources that were available, and how existing funding could be used as levers for additional funds or co-funding.

#### Rob Mason – Environment Policy Department, FCO

Rob Mason introduced the Global Opportunities (GOF) which was a new FCO programme fund. It was a combination of new money from the Treasury and a number of existing funds such as the former Environment Fund. The sum available for the first 3 years was £120 million.

The purpose of the fund would follow some of the FCO's priorities closely. There were 5 streams to the programme, of which 3 had some relevance to the EfE process. These were:

- Climate change and energy
- Emerging markets
- Reuniting Europe

#### Rod Matthews – Chair, Project Preparation Committee(PPC)/DFID

In preparation for Kiev, the PPC examined the flow of donor funds to countries in the UNECE region. A very large amount of grant money had gone (and would continue to go) to countries of Central and Eastern Europe. This was not the case for EECCA countries. It was very difficult to see at present how these countries would be able to achieve the MDGs.

DFID worked from country strategies that outlined their priorities for different countries. They had such strategies for Russia, Ukraine, Central Asia, the Caucasus and Moldova. They were in the process of reviewing some of these strategies and already had more focussed programmes in Russia and Ukraine. The environment was not excluded from these programmes, but projects had to be at the wishes of local communities. The Defra EfE Fund was supporting DFID led projects in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. DFID were also beginning to work with Tajikistan.

#### Glenys Parry – Environment Protection International, Defra

Glenys Parry described the Darwin Small Grants Programme. She explained that grants were available for projects in countries rich in biodiversity yet poor in resources. More than 50% of the budget was spent in Africa and Asia, although there had been some projects in the UNECE region.

There had to be an applicant from a UK organisation for funding to be awarded, and projects had to be linked to the CDB work programme. Other than that, there were no specific criteria.

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3 new schemes were being developed: Darwin Initiative Scholarships, Pre-project Awards and post-Project funding.

### Luliiana Best, Europe Environment Division, Defra

Luliiana explained that Defra's new Environment for Europe's (EfE) fund (£2 million 2003/04) aimed to fund projects related to environmental protection and sustainable development in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. There would be a particular focus on following-up outcomes of the Kiev Conference.

Applications would be more likely to succeed if they were able to attract co-funding or lever in additional money. The average small project was about £20,000, although there were no particular upper or lower limits.

Due to resource constraints, there were difficulties with Defra directly managing projects. Embassies and facilitating organisations therefore assisted with this.

Further information about the fund had been placed on the Defra web-site.

### David Kirkwood – Groundwork UK

David Kirkwood presented some views from the perspective of a recipient organisation. He explained that a relatively large number of projects seemed to fall between donors; projects were often too small to qualify. There was a need for increased coordination between donors and donors were not always aware of organisations that were looking for funding and vice versa. It would be useful to try to organise some kind of forum whereby everyone interested in being involved in a particular area got together to see where shared interests lay. He gave an example of where this approach had been effective.

After these introductions, Philip Stamp gave a short introduction to a debt conversion programme that was being run by Export Credit Guarantee Department (ECGD). Under this programme companies, NGOs, public bodies or consortia could purchase debt that was owed to ECGD by a debtor country at a discounted rate. The debtor government would then pay the organisation in local currency to undertake a project in that country. Whilst projects did not have to be environmental, there were strict environmental criteria and it had been made clear that projects such as waste water treatment or waste management would be likely to be well looked upon. Large sums of money could be accessed in this way and debtors included Russia (£180million), Poland (£110 million), Serbia and Monte Negro (£113 million). Further information was available from Defra or from [www.ecgd.gov.uk](http://www.ecgd.gov.uk).

Discussion followed these presentations. Concern was expressed that much of the EfE fund had already been committed. Defra explained that although some funding had been allocated, this was only for the current financial year and that it was necessary to ensure funding was allocated relatively early during the financial year.

A number of EU funding streams were mentioned, and relevant funding could be applied for from DG Environment, DG Agriculture, DDG Trade, DG Energy and

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DG Transport. Organisations working in partnership with organisation(s) from another EU or Accession State were more likely to be successful in attracting funding. Applications sometimes took a long time to be processed.

There was a problem in some countries that funding from national governments and international organisations was often liable to host country taxation. There was some way to get around this for EC funding, and a similar option should be explored for UK funding.

A number of other avenues for funding were mentioned and participants were requested to send any information they had on funding options to Defra so that it could be incorporated into the matrix that was being developed.

There was also a suggestion of building international aspects into UK projects, for example to share knowledge gained during a project with international partners.

### **Concluding Remarks**

The day was concluded at around 4.30pm. The event had been useful for Defra and they would reflect on the views expressed during the day. Defra officials had waited for this event before submitting advice to Ministers on follow-up to Kiev and would draw on the views expressed during the day in preparing advice.

Three priorities had been identified for UK action – **water**, **energy** and **biodiversity**, with cross-cutting themes of **education** and **public awareness**.

A contact network should be established with focus groups for particular issues such as education. Defra would also consider how to improve private sector participation, and would explore options, including the idea of having a networking event to put organisations interested in the same sectors/countries in touch with each other.

There would also be further work to look at ways of supporting small projects and further involving the RECs.

Everyone was thanked for their participation at the event.

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### Annex 1

#### Attendees

| Name     |                | Organisation   | email                             |
|----------|----------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Natasha  | Barker         | CoastNet   | nbarker@devon.gov.uk              |
| Ashley   | Baker          | SDU, Defra   | Ashley.baker@defra.gsi.gov.uk     |
| Iuliana  | Best           | EED, Defra   | Iuliana.best@defra.gsi.gov.uk     |
| Dawn     | Bishop         | Council for Environmental Education                  | dbishop@cee.org.uk                |
| Jayne    | Boys           | SDU, Defra   | Jayne.boys@defra.gsi.gov.uk       |
| Fiona    | Brookes        | Forum for the Future                                 | fbrookes@forumforthefuture.org.uk |
| Maddy    | Cobb           | Stakeholder Forum                                    | Pop5053@pop3.poptel.org.uk        |
| Peter    | Coughtrey      | Mouchel Consling                                     | Peter.coughtrey@mouchel.com       |
| Matthias | Gelber         | White Young Green Environmental                      | Matthias.gelber@wyg.com           |
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| Andy     | Kirby          | EBC, Defra   | Andy.Kirby@defra.gsi.gov.uk       |
| David    | Kirkwood       | Groundwork UK  | Dkirkwood@groundwork.org.uk       |
| Chris    | Le Breton      | Strategic Environmental Adviser                      | lebreton@onetel.net.uk            |
| Helen    | Marquard       | EED, Defra   | Helen.marquard@defra.gsi.gov.uk   |
| Rob      | Mason          | FCO  | Robert.mason@fco.gov.uk           |
| Rod      | Matthews       | DFID   | Rh-matthews@dfid.gov.uk           |
| Steve    | Martin         | Institute of Environmental Sciences                  | esm@esmartin.demon.co.uk          |
| Danae    | Meacock Bashir | FCO  | Danae.meacockbashir@fco.gov.uk    |
| Toby     | Middleton      | Stakeholder Forum                                    | tmiddleton@earthsummit2002.org    |
| David    | Minter         | CABI   | dminter@cabi.org                  |
| John     | Mullen         | DoH  | John.mullen@doh.gsi.gov.uk        |

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| <b>Name</b>      |             | <b>Organisation</b>                          | <b>email</b>   |
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| Oz               | Osborne     | WestDen                                      | Osborne@westden.co.uk  |
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| Tania            | Plahay      | EED, Defra                                   | Tania.plahay@defra.gsi.gov.uk                                    |
| Andrew           | Randall     | EPINT, Defra                                 | Andrew.randall@defra.gsi.gov.uk                                  |
| Trevor           | Rees        | Stakeholder forum                            | trees@earthsummit2002.org  |
| Peter            | Ritchie     | Stakeholder Forum                            | pritchie@earthsummit2002.org                                     |
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| Philip           | Stamp       | EED, Defra                                   | Philip.stamp@defra.gsi.gov.uk                                    |
| Bill             | Stow        | Defra  | Bill.stow@defra.gsi.gov.uk                                       |
| Tony             | Thomas      | Field Studies Council                        | marion@field-studies-council.org/fscee@field-studies-council.org |
| Paul             | Vare        | Living Earth Foundation                      | Paul.vare@livingearth.org.uk                                     |
| <b>Apologies</b> |             |  |  |
| Georgina         | Ayre        | Stakeholder Forum                            | gayre@earthsummit2002.org  |
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| Lloyd            | Martin      | Severn Trent Water International             | Lloyd.martin@stwi.co.uk  |
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