Launch of The People’s Environment Narrative
50 Years of Environmental Policy

Highlights of the contributions by Stakeholders to UNEP@50 & Stockholm+50

Isis Alvarez - Introduction to the People’s Environment Narrative Publication
Leida Rijnhout - Connecting UNEP@50 with Stockholm+50
Daniel Magraw - The Human Right to a Healthy Environment
Dalia Marquez - Intergenerational Equity
Jorge Laguna-Celis - UNEP Sustainable Consumption & Production (SCP) Secretariat
Sue Miller - Ecocide+50: Now is the Time
Nathan Thanki - The Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty
Jan-Gustav Strandenaes - Conclusions

Moderated by Isis Alvarez, Stakeholder Forum

13 October 2022
Session 1

Isis Alvarez
Introduction to the People’s Environment Narrative Publication

Leida Rijnhout
Connecting UNEP@50 with Stockholm+50

Daniel Magraw
The Human Right to a Healthy Environment
50 years of work for the environment by civil society, the global NGO community and other stakeholders including representatives of the UN system to commemorate the 50 years of the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and 50 years since the first Human Environment conference (aka - Stockholm+50)

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October 2022
Introduction to the People’s Environment Narrative, the PEN

You are about to read a unique document. Its content is about documenting 50 years of global work to safeguard the environment. We have called it the People’s Environment Narrative, PEN for short. The reason behind creating and producing the PEN was the opportunity presented by the commemoration of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 50th anniversary. UNEP was established by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which took place in Stockholm in June 1972. 50 years later, two commemorative conferences were organized to mark this anniversary. The first of these conferences, UNEP50 - a two-day high-level meeting on March 1st and 2nd 2022 - took place in Nairobi, Kenya at UN EP’s headquarters. The second, in Stockholm, Sweden on the 2nd and 3rd of June 2022, was simply called Stockholm+50. Its formal title was "Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all - our responsibility, our opportunity.”

Official meetings are documented well, their outcomes are duly archived for posterity. This is not always the case with the efforts made by civil society. In fact, to have their voices heard at these official, intergovernmental, multilateral conferences is not mandatory. An official outcome document is also but a summary of what the participating official government representatives agreed to. The long hours of deliberations and negotiations, the background papers, the input from break-out groups are rarely included. And as the outcome document is a synthesised product of what took place at the official conference, the inputs from civil society are often negligible in these documents. The multitude of voices from non-governmental and non-state actors are rarely taken notice of and presented for posterity. “Having consulted with civil society,” is a standard reference to the input from nongovernmental actors and is more often than not what politely learns about their contributions in their official documents. The outcome document from the Rio+20 confer-

"Please note: the PHN is an anthology with contributions from many authors. There are their own views on external, mapping and using words and concepts. Civil society is a frequently used concept, as is "stakeholder," "major groups," "non-state actors," "non-governmental organisations" and NGOs. Further in this section, we offer a thorough explanation of these concepts, concepts which are sometimes synonymous, sometimes not, depending on context. We have in this process chosen to use civil society and non-governmental organisations and NGOs, as synonymous but as direct references to what these concepts imply that civil activity is different from private sector and from government. NGOs include all types of organisations that are not belonging to the authorities, be they elected or appointed."

SECTION 1: An introductory background
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To stay true to our original vision of the PEN, we have organized it into eight sections:

SECTION 1

Introducing a commemorative document will always pose challenges. We invited two people who were key persons at the 1972 Stockholm conference to send a greeting. Wayne Kines, a Canadian, who was the first Director of Communication at UNEP, and the small gathering was the first ever of its kind on the Stockholm conference. Wayne Kines and from the UN worked closely with Lady Barbara Ward who represented civil society in 1972, and together they came up with the process that allowed the daily report-backs and presentations of civil society matters to the official plenary.

SECTION TWO

This section gives a thematic introduction to the content of the PEN. Leila Ruphout has a long history of working with civil society and environmental governance. She was very active in the run-up to UNEP50 as well as to the Stockholm50 Conference. Leila also worked on the famous resolution UNCAC/Res/73/333 which became a central element in the declaration that the official UNEP50 high-level meeting agreed to. Because of her involvement in the two commemorative conferences, she the right person to link up the two events.

In a document where the intention is to give an overview of 50 years of work, a historical overview is needed. Being asked to prepare an issue, we often think that presenting a critical review is the best and most convincing way to do so. And surely, all events, incursions, organisations and institutions have a critical aspect to their existence. This time, however, we also wanted to focus on the positive accomplishments that have become the results of UNEP’s 50 years’ existence. Jan Gustav’s presentation on UNEP’s history tries to do precisely that.

SECTION THREE

This section has a focus on the process organized by civil society and the global NGO community leading up to the June Stockholm conference. The three elements here are outcomes from key webinars organized by civil society. More than a thousand persons participated in the nine webinars that were organized. We asked participants in each of the webinars to submit recommendations on environmental work that would eventually be presented to UNEP during the Stockholm50 process and conference. This section synthesizes the recommendations from those webinars.

SECTION FOUR

This section contains the seven legacy papers, or rather an executive summary of the seven legacy papers. At the end of each of these papers, there is a hyperlink to the complete paper. As our legacy writers immersed themselves in their topic, their creative efforts grew and as these papers are quite long, we decided to include them this way.

SECTION FIVE

The United Nations Environment Programme, with its staff was one of the official organizers of the two commemorative events. The Executive Director of UNEP, Ms. Inger Anderson, was appointed Secretary-General of the conference by the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres. In addition, the Swedish and Kenyan governments were the hosts of the Stockholm50 conference. More than 4,000 people attended the two-day event. Sixty-plus ministers attended, and 50 side events were organized, including leadership dialogues, action hubs, and the plenary sessions.

The UN also engaged in pre-meetings. The UNEP Development Programme (UNDP) was tasked to organise these. According to the UN, some 250 national conversations were held in about 50 countries with nearly 50,000 participants.
SECTION 1: An introductory background

the UNDP national reports; we also present a
summarized comparative analysis of the out-
comes from the five regional stakeholder con-
ferences organised by UNEP (these regions
were: Europe, Africa, West Asia, Asia-Pacific
and Latin America); and we have included the
summary points of the three official leader-
ship dialogues that took place during the
two days in Stockholm in 2022. We have also
included an event by UNEP around Sustainable
Consumption and Production (SCP), a sum-
mary of the One Planet Network Forum. We
include this as UNEP was given a particular
responsibility for this issue by the Rio+20 con-
ference in 2012.

And finally, we have included the Stockholm+50
Declaration. It might be interesting to com-
pare this with the declaration from the first dé-
claration made 30 years ago in Stockholm back in
1972.

We have provided all these elements with hy-
perlinks so the interested reader can check the
official outcomes as well.

SECTION SIX

Civil society and the global NGO commu-
nity took the commemoration of UNEP seri-
ously. They saw this as an opportunity to
rejuvenate and strengthen the global com-
mmitment for work on the environment.
Paolo Magalhães, founder and director of the
Common Home of Humanity, initiated the
Stockholm+49 process which involved hun-
dreds of NGOs and individuals. Stockholm+49
was organised as a virtual two-day event to
raise interest for Stockholm+50 and to de-
velop a charter to challenge the decision-
makers who would be present in Stockholm. We
have brought a summary of the content of this
event here.

As climate issues have become inextricably
linked to environmental issues, and a wide ar-
ray of different actors mobilize around it, we
invited members from the Demand Climate
Justice movement to contribute to the PEN
with a focus on their activities around the Fossil
Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Clotilde Palme, the late Swedish Prime Min-
ister and host to the 1972 conference, brought
up the issue of Ecovero in his keynote to the
delegates in June 1972. Official interest in the
issue has never been greater. Civil society has
nevertheless kept the issue alive, and the Stop
Ecovero International network hosted a two-
day event at the conference. We have includ-
ed this issue since it has disappeared from the
official reports.

SECTION SEVEN

This section has a quiet impression of what
took place with the 50th commemoration of
UNEP’s work for the environment.

What took place at Stockholm+50 in June 2022?
and how was it viewed by participants? Jan-
Gustav Strandenes, who was a young partic-
ipant in Stockholm in 1972, working then as an
intern with Wayne Kines, Hiro Shibuya, and
Maurice Strong, and has worked on the en-
vironment and the UN ever since, offers in this
epilogue his personal views on this Stockholm
meeting, 50 years after the first one.

SECTION EIGHT

This section offers short biographies of all of the
people involved in making this unique pro-
duct. And we also acknowledge the fact that
this would not have been possible without
the financial support from the Government of
Sweden or the incredible support from
Alexander Juras, Chief of the UNEP Civil Society
Unit in Nairobi, his colleague Aurora Cheung
and his colleague Leclaire Zobel who were the
Stockholm+50 persons in his staff.

On behalf of the Towards Stockholm+50 and
Beyond project.

Jan-Gustav Strandenes, Convener and project
Manager of the Stockholm+50 project and Senior
PEN Editor © Futurum Norway

Isis Alvarez, Chief Programme Officer and PEN
Editor © IED

Isis Alvarez, Chief Programme Officer and PEN
Editor
SECTION 3: Civil Society Organisations and other stakeholder recommendations – focussing on what needs to be improved
OUTCOMES FROM FULL-DAY EVENT ON PEOPLES ENVIRONMENT NARRATIVE*

An online event for civil society and other non-state stakeholders was held on May 10th, 2022. The purpose of the event was to engage civil society and non-state stakeholders in contributing to the content of outcome documents in connection with the Stockholm+50 conference. Seven themes guided the discussion which are referred to as the Legacy Themes. They have been given this name because the themes played significant roles in the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. The Legacy Themes have been presented and discussed during online expert legacy webinars which were open to all stakeholders which a set of recommendations emerged. The goal for the session included the active participation of civil society and non-state stakeholders in identifying the gaps in the 3 Legacy webinar outcome recommendations and whether any recommendations missing should be included, according to the participants’ areas of work thus, it also served as a space to hear about their efforts to build a healthy planet for the prosperity of all.

The seven themes were clustered in three groups:

**CLUSTER 1**
- Environmental rights, human rights and environmental justice
- “Strengthening environmental governance and law” with reference to UNEP’s50
- Connecting the dots - making a forceful canon of the Rio Conventions and the MEA

**CLUSTER 2**
- Civil society, non-state stakeholders, and how they have worked for the environment and UNEP
- Environmental diplomacy and the need for multilateralism

**CLUSTER 3**
- The environment, education and the future
- Science and the environment – What now?

*A statement based on these outcomes was presented during the closing Stockholm+50 plenary on June 3rd, 2022 (see below).
### SECTION 3: Civil Society Organisations and other stakeholder recommendations – focussing on what needs to be improved

#### Recommendations for Member States/ Nations/ Regions:
- Increase corporate accountability
- Multilevel governance culture
- Subsidiarity principle (environmental decisions at level closest to those who are affected) - implies multilevel governance (i.e. opposite to power concentrated on a specific centre)
- Anti-corruption initiatives
- Value-added economies (diversifying economies)
- Keep performance under constant peer review
- Strengthen generally environmental governance as this is the first thing to be obscured or sacrificed in the case of conflict

#### Recommendations for Governments:
- Implementing good environmental governance structures and strong institutions for environmental issues
- In order to implement good governance, include, facilitate and support Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
- Maintain Ministers for the Environment
- Implement international agreements
- Legal framework to enforce corporate accountability
- Of critical importance not just for youth to be listened to, but to be included as equal stakeholders in decision-making processes; and structures
- International trade systems include sufficient focus on environmental impact on increased consumption
- Renegotiate trade agreements which only focus on maximizing economic returns, without enough recognition of social and environmental impacts
- Stop fossil fuel and other perverse subsidies and incentives and move towards supporting a cleaner and greener future

#### Recommendations for UNEP:
- Urge for a global consensus on binding norms on corporate accountability
- Increase coordination and facilitation to implement and enforce environmental governance and law
- Frameworks in place with goals, targets, means of implementation, review mechanisms, indicators
- Need for increased political leadership
- Foster capacity building and enable financial sustainability
- More clarity on what the right to a healthy environment entails, how to implement it, etc. - no clear international global statement, accepted shape or definition on how those rights can be implemented
- Upgrade UNEP to a Specialized Agency
- Promotion of mechanisms, procedures, protocols, and institutions for accountability at all levels for good environmental governance. These tools support access to justice that can remedy environmental wrongs

#### Recommendations for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other Non-state Actors:
- Increased active roles in decision-making processes given the shrinking of the civil society space
- Increased efforts for collectively demanding good governance including governance structures and strong institutions for environmental issues
- Publish widely the "UNEP we Want" document and continue to use it for advocacy on good governance and environmental laws, etc.
- During Stockholm+50, promote foundations for a binding norm on corporate accountability
- Make visible CSOs role as bridges between Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and local action (bridge between international and national levels)
- A stronger and more active involvement both at national and international level of CSOs is urgently needed
- Be prepared for the meetings
SECTION 6:
Civil society and non-state stakeholders – key environmental concerns for the future
SECTION 6: Civil society and non-state stakeholders – key environmental concerns for the future

Stop Ecocide

Stockholm +50 was a symbolically significant event for the Stop Ecocide movement, marking 50 years since the first use of the word “ecocide” by then Prime Minister Olof Palme. It also highlighted the discrepancy between the strong support among civil society and the timidity at political level. Following an intensive programme of activities and events, the movement to criminalise ecocide internationally emerged from the conference having made some real progress, and in the knowledge that the case for ecocide had registered and was being taken seriously at the highest levels.

We, and an exponentially growing body of both civil and political society, see ecocide law as an essential piece of the framework of measures and regulations which is being created to protect the Earth and future generations. Whilst serious and widespread damage to nature remains legal and perpetrators unaccountable, it will continue to happen, regardless of the facts, agreements, goals and targets we may put in place. It is simply too easy to continue established and profitable practices. A new international crime of ecocide, within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court, would see the key decision makers of the companies behind acts of serious environmental destruction face personal criminal liability and potential loss of personal freedom. They will no longer be able to write off environmental harm on a balance sheet as a cost of doing business.

A new crime of ecocide will not only have a strong deterrent effect once it is enacted and ratified, it will start to curb destructive activity from the moment corporations realise that it is on its way. It not only has enormous preventative power, but it will also steer corporations and governments towards creative innovation and new ways of doing business. By supporting the recognition of the crime of ecocide in international law, businesses, organisations and their employees can play an active role in protecting people and planet.
Session 2

Dalia Marquez
Intergenerational Equity

Jorge Laguna-Celis
UNEP Sustainable Consumption & Production (SCP) Secretariat

Sue Miller
Ecocide+50: Now is the Time

Nathan Thanki
The Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty
Towards Stockholm +50

Photos provided by Sue Miller, Head of Global Networks at Stop Ecocide International
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A bold project to phase out fossil fuels and support a global just transition.
Our network directly influenced major global summit, making it the **first UN conference to clearly recommend the “phase out of all fossil fuels”** and to recognise the urgent need for “financial and technical support to realize a just transition.”
Global Week of Advocacy for a Fossil Fuel Treaty
It's time for a Fossil Fuel Treaty.
Vanuatu becomes first nation state to call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty at the UN General Assembly
Conclusions

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Thank you for joining us today
Merci de vous être joints à nous aujourd’hui
Gracias por acompañarnos hoy
https://towardstockholm50.org/

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Your host: Charles Nouhan, Stakeholder Forum