

**The global water crisis:
from the mountains to the seas
A "World Environment Day" roundtable
4 June 2004, 9h – 11h45**

International Environment House 2 (MIE 2)

The world's oceans, lakes and rivers form an invaluable natural resource. Linked through the global hydrological cycle, they provide products and services that even our high-tech 21st century civilization could not function without. More fundamentally, the earth's salt and fresh waters are the source of life for virtually all plants and animals – the oceans alone are home to more than 90% of the planet's living biomass.

Unless current high levels of pollution and over-exploitation can be dramatically reduced, the health of these vital ecosystems will continue to decline. Today's roundtable will explore the dimensions of this growing problem and possible actions by both governments and civil society.

Programme

9h00 Coffee

9h15 Welcome by Frits Schlingemann, Director, United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for Europe

9h20 Introduction by the moderator, Philippe Roch, Director, Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape

9h30 Presentations by the Panellists:

- **What's in Water? The Ramsar Convention, wetlands and water**, by [Nick Davidson](#), Deputy Secretary-General, Ramsar Convention
- **Managing H₂O from the hilltops to the oceans**, by [David Osborn](#), Head of Partnership and Policy Unit, UNEP Global Programme of Action
- **Rainwater - Water for Life**, by [Margarita Pacheco-Montes](#), Head of the Secretariat International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance
- **Water for Development**, by Samir Amin, Forum du Tiers Monde

10h50 Discussion with panelists and participants

11h35 Wrap-up by moderator

11h45 Close

Panellists

Philippe ROCH is Director of the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL). He frequently heads Switzerland's delegation, as State Secretary, to major international environmental negotiations. In recent years, Mr. Roch has served as a Bureau member and Rapporteur of UNEP's High Level Committee of Officials. He is also a member of the GEF Council and the Geneva International Academic Network.

Dr. Nick Davidson is Deputy Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, with responsibility for supporting the global scientific and technical implementation of the Convention. An estuarine and waterbird ecologist by training, he has over 30 years experience of research, conservation and sustainable use of wetland species and ecosystems, working in the academic, NGO and inter-governmental sectors.

David Osborn has been with the United Nations Environment Programme for the past three years. Currently he is the head of the Partnerships and Policy Unit at Coordination Office for the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, based in The Hague. Prior to joining UNEP, he worked as an Assistant Director with the Marine and Water Division of the Australian Government's Department of the Environment and Heritage, and as a Commissioned Officer with the Royal Australian Navy. David has a Bachelor of Applied Science and Master of Environmental Law.

Margarita Pacheco is Swiss/Colombian and originally trained as an architect and urban planner. She was an assistant professor at the Institute of Environmental Studies of the National University of Colombia and also an advisor on the urban environment to the Colombian Ministry of the Environment. Mrs Pacheco is a former environmental NGO representative to the Colombian National Planning Council. In Switzerland she worked as an urban planner for Office de l'Amenagement du Territoire of the Canton de Vaud. She holds a diploma from the IEUD in Geneva and has experience both in East and West Africa. Mrs Pacheco is currently head of the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance and sits on the boards of other development NGOs.

Samir Amin, Forum du Tiers Monde, is one of the foremost critics of the faults in the development process over the past 40 years. Of Egyptian origin and living in Dakar, Samir Amin maintains a trenchantly southern perspective from which he views the changing instruments of northern institutions to bring to the rest of the world 'development' in their own image and, in the final analysis to bring the putative benefits of capitalist liberalism. He is presently preoccupied with the cavalier way in which the US administration is ignoring the sovereignty of increasing numbers of southern nations and in the process destabilising the internal political conjunctures resulting in 'civil' wars.

REGISTRATION FORM

Roundtable on The global water crisis: from the mountains to the seas

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You are cordially invited to participate in this roundtable. Owing to the limited number of seats available, please indicate your participation in advance by completing this form and returning it by **3 June 2004** to Ms. Fatma Gordon at the address below by fax, post or email (Fatma.gordon@unep.ch).

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____