

Comments on the State of the World 2005: Redefining Global Security

by

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In a report as comprehensive and complete as this it is difficult to know where to start – other than congratulations to the WorldWatch Institute, its staff and the various contributing authors.

In preparing for this panel session, I began to think about environment and security in a current EU context. I was struck by the Caucasus case study in pages 156-7 of State of the World Report. The new EU budget for the 2007-13 period (financial perspectives) has a heading on External Relations. This describes the new Economic Cooperation and Development Cooperation funding instruments. I could say a lot about that but I want to restrict my comments to one particular – and new – funding instrument.

One of the current EU priority programmes and funding instruments is the Neighborhood policy.

This is a new draft regulation is designed with international and border security very much in mind – security of the EU with its immediate international borders. These are four countries on the eastern border of the EU (Russia, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus) – three in the Caucasus – and 10 in the Mediterranean. You can't get much more security minded than that since these are our common borders of the new EU-25. To this end the EU will pay these countries 15 billion in the 2007-13 period.

"Action plans will promote good environmental governance in partner countries to prevent environmental degradation and pollution, protect human health and achieve a more rational use of natural resources. Priorities will be identified in key areas such as water quality, waste management, air pollution and the fight against desertification. Regional agreements will be enhanced and ratification and implementation of international agreements promoted."

I asked a WWF colleague to give me an account of progress in two of the most neighboring countries – Morocco and Tunisia. I read you his quick assessment of the two relevant documents.

The Country Reports and action plans for Morocco and Tunisia:

- Cover very little about the environment/natural resources.
- Environment treated sectorally, no cross checking with environmental impact in critical sectors (e.g. water resources and agriculture).
- There is no identification of environmental priorities and no mention of the most unsustainable trends (e.g. water use, deforestation in Morocco, soil erosion, unsustainable fisheries such as Moroccan driftnet fleet).
- Natural resource sectors largely overlooked (how possible that forestry is not even mentioned in Morocco?).
- There is little or no connection among the three sustainability pillars and in particular the connection between ecological trends and economy (which for example is dramatically evident in Moroccan mountains where overgrazing and deforestation are strictly connected to poverty).
- Insufficient reference to the complex of MEAs to which the countries have committed (CBD for instance).

- Economic chapters are all focused on reforms to increase foreign investment and market liberalisation.
- No indication of market mechanisms in support of environmental sustainability.
- And No connections with the EU Sustainable Development strategy.

So what does this mean?

They are an interesting set of conclusions in themselves. Environment as a sector is one of them.

- It means poverty and environmental connections are not being reflected in programming.
- This is no doubt the case with a wider network of EU partnerships with the Cotonou countries. It is almost certainly the case with PRSPs and other multilateral and bilateral agencies.
- There are clearly a set of established procedures, processes, personalities and perceptions about 'development' that largely exclude environment and security issues.
- In other words, development and programming dialogue has chystallised into a set form. This is the second law of thermodynamics in action – heading to entropy.
- An institutional inertia is in place that is innadequate to the task of meeting new environmental and security challenges.

So what is to be done? How is new 'energy' put into the system?

1. Shake up the old system by bringing in new players. Look in particular at the investment community, the finance sector and the private sector.
2. Empower and build the capacity in the ciivil society sector 'in-country'. This is the key – the watchdog and whistle-blower function.
3. Look to the European Parliament – and national Parliaments – to monitor the country programming involving EU andf national funds. Even where these funds are off-budget (as is the case with EDF expenditure) all the country programming documents are now available on the internet. This allows the Parliaments to play a key oversight function.

Thank you.

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