

Title of Side Event:

“Innovative field actions as leverage for change”

Time and location:

June 18, 09h30-11h00, Pavilion 3 Riocentro, Rio de Janeiro

Organizing Partners:

FACTS Initiative of Institut Veolia Environnement (environmental think-tank) (lead organizer), CIVICUS (World Alliance for Citizen Participation), CONCORD (European NGO federation for Relief and Development)

Short Introduction

Field practitioners involved in local initiatives play an important role in the transition towards sustainable and inclusive development. Technical, social, managerial, and financial innovations are designed and implemented all around the world by local actors. Due to the lack of a means of systematically documenting these initiatives, comparable to peer-reviewed publications in the scientific community, these innovative field actions are not sufficiently reported and shared and, very often, get lost.

FACTS Initiative and its partners propose a method and tools for documenting innovative initiatives undertaken by field practitioners (NGOs, governmental organizations, etc.). Together, they propose to promote it at Rio+20. This will also be an opportunity to launch collaborations with partners from all the countries involved in what could be a great project, whose aim is to establish an available “Global Database of practices for sustainable and inclusive developments”.

Detailed Description

The side event will bring together key civil society representatives to share their views and to lay the foundations for a broader partnership on “Innovative field actions for sustainable development”.

In the first instance, this project supposes a commitment of grass-roots actors, and of those involved in implementing innovative experiences and local initiatives. Further, we anticipate and will be actively seeking the involvement of: NGOs and civil society organizations for the identification and documentation of innovative actions; scientific and university teams for their evaluation; the media for their dissemination; and public services and international cooperation agencies for their promotion. The recognition of the Major Groups by Agenda 21 shows that the sharing of the responsibilities has been taken into account since Rio 92. However local actors, in particular local innovators, have lacked tools for communicating successful experiences. FACTS Initiative and its partners propose an operational approach that could allow progress in this direction.

- The first session of the side event will present the Initiative, which enables the identification, documentation, evaluation, publication, dissemination and promotion of local innovations in terms of sustainable development achievements. Through its publications, FACTS Initiative provides key international development actors with a neutral and independent platform for communicating good practices and exchanging experiences. In particular, the presentation will highlight some of the

recently published articles from the special issue on Brazil referring to innovative Brazilian practices for sustainable development. (*FACTS Initiative - 10 minutes*)

- The second session will be dedicated to interaction with international and Brazilian platforms of NGOs. Their members will be invited to express their opinions on the Initiative and to discuss appropriate conditions for creating a network of partners. It will also be a great opportunity for them to highlight the importance of their initiatives to the identification and implementation of solutions, as in the design of innovative governance models and partnerships, etc. The presentations will be illustrated by some of their actions and projects. (*Civicus and CONCORD +/- 20 minutes*)

- A third session will be a platform for presenting an award to two innovative and exemplary local initiatives in the field of sustainable and inclusive development. The recipients of the award will be invited to explain their methods and their results. Such feedback will stimulate discussion on how new methods of documentation, evaluation and promotion of innovative field actions can be critical for progress towards sustainable development (*20 minutes*).

The selected case studies could be taken from the partner's innovative field actions, new submissions dedicated to Rio+20, or from the bulk of articles already published in FACTS which are in line with Rio+20 themes. For example: biogas production to meet collective energy needs in the Sahel (<http://factsreports.revues.org/134>), the experience of Sustainable Tourism in The Vale Encantado Community in Tijuca Forest in Brazil (<http://factsreports.revues.org/1131>), or the institutional aspects of local participation in natural resource management (<http://factsreports.revues.org/275>).

- Time will be allocated for exchanges with and testimonies of participants (*30 minutes*).

- Finally, a Senior Official involved in the negotiation will conclude the side-event and highlight the outcomes that could be disseminated further in the Rio Centro (*10 minutes*).

Targeted audience

Practitioners themselves, to encourage them to document their own initiatives.

NGOs interested in sharing their own experiences, or participating in the constitution of a network of partners.

Media, to communicate the news about innovative field actions for sustainable development.

Negotiators, who could convey concrete examples to the table of negotiations.

Public aid agencies, which could replicate this capitalizing approach internally.

Thematic focus: all innovative field actions that can contribute to progress towards sustainable and inclusive development, be it through improved access to basic services for the poor, creation of jobs that contribute to preserving or restoring the quality of the environment, civil society mobilization in local governance, education or agriculture projects to help eradicate poverty, reduce exposure to natural disasters, etc.

Speakers: Henri Rouillé d'Orfeuill, former President of Coordination Sud (FACTS Initiative); Henri Valot, Outreach Director (CIVICUS); Olivier Consolo, Director (CONCORD); and two to three Brazilian experts/counterparts.

Potential contributions to the outcome of Rio+20: Local actions and, more specifically, local innovations have a major role to play in the transition towards sustainable and inclusive development. This role will become all the more important as these innovations are identified, documented, evaluated, published, disseminated and promoted. The side event will contribute to:

- raising awareness and demonstrating through concrete examples that solutions exist, and that they can be reproduced or scaled-up to move towards “the future we want”;
- building consensus more widely on best practices and create opportunities for partnerships in Brazil and internationally;
- highlighting the importance of practitioners and their “innovative field actions”; and
- initiating the preparation of larger “innovative field actions crossroads” that could be duplicated in several international summits, conferences, etc.

- Contact Information

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