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Learning from each other in North and South: Local Agenda 21 in Germany and the Republic of Korea

Petra Stephan (ed.)

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Introduction

This report is based on an international workshop which took place at the Institute of Development and Peace (INEP) in Duisburg/Germany in June 2000. A delegation of the Republic of Korea - including members of local communities and local governments, as well as NGO representatives – on a study trip to Germany - had been invited to exchange experiences and information about Local Agenda 21 processes in Germany and the Republic of Korea. The following papers reflect important issues which have been raised and discussed during the workshop.

The first paper (**Petra Stephan**) presents an overall view of the latest developments in Local Agenda 21 processes in North and South in general and in Germany in particular. The relevance of local processes in the age of globalization are discussed. The paper emphasizes the importance of comprehensive, crossdepartmental national and international frameworks for sustainability. Even promising Local Agenda 21 processes will fail without such frameworks.

Ulrich Nitschke presents in his paper five theses which point out critical issues in the German agenda work. These theses are enriched with practical examples which demonstrate the chances for change that exist on the local level. He argues that without Local Agenda 21 processes taking place worldwide, the ideals of Rio wouldn't have any chance to survive. But eight years after UNCED there is a need for redefinition and a need to integrate „One World aspects“ into Local Agenda 21 processes.

This aspect is further elaborated in the paper written by **Thomas Fues**. He points out the need to integrate the issue of international justice into local activities. So far, most of the Local Agenda 21 processes in the North give only little coverage to this dimension. He presents an analytical framework for integrating North-South aspects into Local Agenda 21 processes and into local indicator programs. He demonstrates that many indicators for global sustainability can be directly linked to the local level.

In his contribution to this report **Uwe Hoering** presents communities with advanced Local Agenda 21 processes in Germany, like Berlin-Köpenick and Münster. He analyses the role of women in Local Agenda 21 processes, gives examples for Local Agenda 21 processes which have successfully integrated the North-South dimension into their work and he identifies “blind spots” in Local Agenda 21 processes: It is still very difficult to motivate companies or industries to participate, and social issues are neglected in many processes.

Hildegard Pamme gives a “view inside” local governments and their role within Local Agenda 21 processes in Germany. She points out that local administrations are main players to initiate, organize and implement Local Agenda 21 processes and that they are very active. But there is the danger that these activities remain in political niches. In order to meet this challenge she argues, sustainability has to become part of organizational changes and bureaucratic reforms on the local level: Local Agenda 21 processes have to be transferred from

committed individuals to organizational structures and procedures.

The Korean contributions to this report start with an introduction by **Kern Soo Yoon**. He gives an overview of the environmental challenges in Korea since the late 1980s and describes how the citizens in Korea have responded to them. At the same time, he presents a review of the development of citizens' environmental movement in Korea.

The importance of the civil movement within the Local Agenda 21 process in Korea is further stressed by **Myong-Jae Cha**. He points out the differences of Korea's civil movement compared to other countries, the internal structure of the new social movement, and – by this – on how Korea's civil society will develop in future. He gives us an in-depth analysis of the role that environmental NGOs in Korea play in the Local Agenda 21 process.

Kwi-Gon Kim shares with us the present state of Local Agenda 21 initiatives in the Republic of Korea. Being the president of the Commission for the Kyonggi Agenda 21, Kim presents a detailed analysis about Local Agenda 21 activities in this province. Besides a lot of promising results, the process in the Kyonggi Province faces problems such as the lack of residents' participation due to the fact that the Agenda process has not been based on partnership between the local stakeholders. Moreover the processes are hampered by poor implementation and insufficient budget.

Petra Stephan

Duisburg/Germany, December 2000

LOCAL AGENDA 21 IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

Petra Stephan

1 "Think Globally – Act Locally"! – in the Age of Globalization

At the beginning of the 21st century, all areas of life show tendencies towards globalization. Cross-border processes include trade, finances, labour, environment, social systems and communication. In environmental politics, there has been an increasing understanding that global environmental problems, such as global climate change or the loss of biological diversity, can only be solved by means of an internationally agreed global environmental policy. Global environmental agreements, like the conventions and agreements signed at the Rio environmental summit, were a logical consequence of this development.

In view of these tendencies, it seems to be justified to ask what contribution is being made at the local level to solve global problems, e.g. with regard to the environment. Experience, however, tells us that international environmental agreements such as the legally binding conventions on climate protection and on the protection of biological diversity, but also Agenda 21 as the Rio programme of action, must eventually lead to activities at the local and regional level. Only in this way these agreements can be implemented successfully (cf. Quennet-Thielen 1999, p. 2). Many examples give evidence that in environmental politics, local approaches which rely on the participation of all concerned citizens have

advantages as compared to an approach which relies on central control. Local and regional processes running parallel to the tendencies towards globalization therefore increasingly gain importance, not only with regard to environmental issues. Decentralisation and federal organisational structures play a decisive role in solving serious problems. "There are less and less fields of politics in which one single political centre of decision making would be able to solve problems single-handedly. A global governance architecture can only be sustainable and functioning if the layers at the bottom have been "built" in a solid way: Global environmental regimes, for instance, will not make much difference unless there is an effective environmental policy established at national and community level" (Messner/Nuscheler 1996, p. 5).

"Agenda 21", signed by the community of nations in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, takes this realisation into account. In chapter 28, emphasis is therefore placed on the special role of local authorities in implementing the vision of "sustainable development". As the level of governance closest to the people, Agenda 21 explicitly names local authorities as independent actors in the implementation of the plan of action. Solutions to (not only) environmental problems including global ones are possible only if towns and municipalities also pursue sustainable development. They are the ones who play a key role in constructing, operating and maintaining economic, social and environmental infrastructure. Towns and municipalities thus do not only contribute to communal

but also to national and international politics. Only if they practice sustainability which integrates environment and development issues within their community it can also be implemented in a global context. Towns and municipalities play an important role, for example in reducing the emission of greenhouse gases and in protecting the atmosphere. In many places they already contribute significantly to the implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol by taking concrete measures in the fields of traffic and transport and in the energy sector. Therefore, local authorities are supposed to develop and implement a long-term community plan of action for sustainable development in their respective communities in the 21st century.

In the following, we will look at the question to what extent local authorities world-wide play an active role in contributing to the global challenge of sustainable development, where we can identify blocks or impulses for Local Agenda 21 processes and what implications national as well as international frameworks have with regard to local sustainability initiatives.

2 Local Agenda 21 Processes in Industrialised and Developing Countries – a Global Assessment

Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 set the following objective:

"By 1996 most local authorities in each country should have undertaken a consultative process with their populations and achieved a consensus on "a local

Agenda 21" for the community" (BMU 1997, p. 231).

On the occasion of the UN General Assembly's Special Session "Rio plus 5" in 1997, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), in cooperation with the United Nations, evaluated the global state of affairs with regard to LA 21 processes. Compared with the objective spelled out in chapter 28 of Agenda 21, this evaluation gave a rather sobering impression. According to its findings, in 1996, only 1,812 communities in 64 countries dealt with Local Agenda 21 processes at all. At the time of the evaluation, half of these communities (933) were already working with an LA 21 programme of action, the others (879) were still in the preparation phase (ICLEI 1997). Consultation processes with local citizens were at the centre of most of the activities. Concrete measures to implement Local Agenda 21 are rather an exception. Most of the communities active in LA 21 were still at an early stage of the process.

In 1996, 90 % of all LA 21 processes took place in industrialised countries. In most of the developing countries, this approach was still completely unknown. Only 10 % (181) of the activities took place in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition. 75 % (1.385) of all the initiatives were concentrated in only six countries: Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, the UK and the Netherlands. In Sweden and Norway almost 100 % of the towns and municipalities had initiated an LA 21, in the UK at least more than 60 %.

2.1 The Importance of National Platforms

In general, communities in countries with national platforms or other types of co-ordination mechanisms were more willing to participate in LA 21 processes. A communal participation worth mentioning only seemed possible if central co-ordination offices encouraged local processes by providing information and advisory services. At the end of 1996, eleven countries had national platforms or campaigns supporting communal LA 21 processes. Immediately after the Rio conference, Australia, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, South Korea, Sweden, the UK, Bolivia, China and Japan established central offices to promote local Agenda processes. 82 % of all documented LA 21 activities in 1996 were carried out in these countries. At the time of evaluation, Brazil, Colombia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Malawi, Peru, South Africa and the United States started national campaigns (ICLEI 1997). These campaigns usually take up the task of informing about LA 21 processes, of providing materials and funding and of offering training programmes and opportunities for exchange. In the Scandinavian countries above all, government institutions started early to support LA 21 activities. This explains why especially in Scandinavian countries almost all towns and municipalities have LA 21 processes. A similar development is emerging in the Netherlands and in the UK. In countries without national co-ordination centres, LA 21 has not been so common. In 1996, for example, only 30 communities in Germany and 19 communities in the United States ac-

tively participated in the Local Agenda 21 process.

2.2 The Importance of International Programmes

International programmes carried out by various institutions, organisations and networks support the implementation of Local Agenda 21 world-wide. They mainly support countries in the South in their activities. These programmes include, among many others, the "Sustainable Cities Programme" of UNCHS¹ and UNEP² as well as various ICLEI projects. These also include support for 14 pilot communities from all five continents in setting up their Agenda 21³ as well as the "LA 21 Charters Project". In the "LA 21 Charters Project", one city from the North and one city from the South respectively work together as twin cities⁴. The aim of the project is to implement a bilateral charter for a communal Agenda 21. The project is financed by the European Commission and the Dutch government. Development organisations such as the Deutsche Gesell-

¹ UNCHS United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, Nairobi

² UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi

³ These are the following 14 communities: Buga (Colombia), Cape Town (South Africa), Durban (South Africa), Hamilton (New Zealand), Hamilton-Wentworth (Canada), Jinja (Uganda), Johannesburg (South Africa) Johnstone Shire (Australia), Lancashire County (UK), Manus Province (Papua New Guinea) Mwanza (Tanzania), Pimpri Chinchwad (India), Quito (Ecuador), Santos (Brazil).

⁴ 10 communities from the South (6 in Africa and 4 in Latin America) as well as their twin cities in the North (8 in Europe, 2 in North America).

schaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)⁵ also support LA 21 activities in the South.

The integration into this kind of funding programmes entails the risk of LA 21 processes, especially in partner countries in the South, being controlled from outside, organisationally as well as with regard to their contents. This risk is particularly high if the processes are not original processes developed from within the communities themselves, but were initiated from outside (Wilhelmy 2000, p. 214). Important preconditions for successful LA 21 activities, however, include that the communities have a certain degree of autonomy and that the individual citizen can participate in political decision making at the local level. Not all of the 178 countries that agreed to Agenda 21 in Rio in 1992 meet these criteria. Many of these countries do not have autonomous municipalities or municipal councils. It is not surprising that LA 21 processes in these countries are likely to fail.

However, there are also various examples that in Southern communities LA 21 processes have been initiated from a position of communal strength, e.g. in Curitiba and Porto Alegre (Brazil), in Montevideo (Uruguay) and Cajamarca (Peru) but also in Istanbul (Turkey), Tunis (Tunisia) and Dakar (Senegal) (Oestereich 1997, p. 88). According to

ICLEI, in certain regions LA 21 processes have already worked in support of decentralisation processes. In South America, for example, LA 21 activities encourage the decentralisation of government administration. In many places in South America, communities are granted more responsibility with regard to their budgets and for community development. In South East Asia, similar – even though considerably slower – processes are taking place. Both regions increasingly open up their administrations and allow people's participation in planning processes. While in these regions, LA 21 is seen as a "vehicle for communal collective autonomy to strengthen identity, legitimacy and competence" (Oestereich 1997, p. 85), many centrally governed countries of Africa still perceive people's participation as a threat to their power. (ICLEI European Secretariat 2000, p. 14f).

2.3 LA 21-Processes - a European Phenomenon?

According to recent estimates by ICLEI, today more than 5.000 communities world-wide participate in LA 21 activities. The evaluation is based on a rough estimate by LA 21 experts at the regional offices of ICLEI. With 3,400 active communities, the percentage of European communities today is estimated at 75 percent of all LA 21 processes world-wide (cf. table 1). 25 percent of the Local Agenda 21 processes take place in Africa, Asia and South America. In North America, Local Agenda 21 does not play any role to date.⁶ The results

⁵ The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH is a service enterprise for development cooperation with world-wide operations. Owned by the Federal Republic of Germany, the organisation operates as a private-sector enterprise with a development-policy mandate.

⁶ The reason for this phenomenon has not been analysed so far (Kuhn 2000).

suggest that the LA 21 activities continue to be mainly a phenomenon of the Western industrialised countries - although communities in the South have made up since 1996. With more than 1,400 Local Agenda resolutions⁷, Germany is taking the lead among all the countries with LA 21 activities worldwide - even though only 10 percent of all communities in Germany have up to now decided to implement Agenda 21. These, however, are above all big cities and districts. That is why almost 50 percent of all German citizens live in cities or communities with LA 21 resolutions (Wilhelmy 2000, p. 214).

Summit, it had an elaborated system of communal environmental planning. Compared with other European countries, Germany had a pioneering role in communal environmental politics. "Unlike other European countries, Germany has got an established environmental policy which encompasses the communal level. In the Local Agenda 21 process, it can therefore build on various existing policy components. Urban planning, landscape planning, urban development concepts, environmental quality reports, programmes for climate protection, environmental impact assessment, procurement, compensation measures, public participation in project planning,

Table 1: LA 21 Processes – a Global Assessment (1996 and 1999)

Regions	LA 21 active communities 1999 (rough estimate)	LA 21 active communities 1996
Europe	3.400 (1.400 of which in Germany)	1.580 (30 of which in Germany)
Africa	35	39
Asia	200 (112 of which in Japan)	89 (26 of which in Japan)
South America	60	34
North America	no data available	19

Sources: ICLEI 1997; ICLEI European Secretariat 2000, p. 5.

2.4 LA 21 Processes in Germany

The figures confirm that the discussion of Local Agenda 21 in Germany started only with a time lag. This development seems to be striking at first. Germany in particular has a long tradition of urban planning, and even before the Earth

etc." (BMU 1999, p. 3). It was because of all these being in place, however, that German communities first of all thought about whether in principle a new procedure in the context of LA 21 processes is required in Germany at all. In view of the tight financial situation, many German communities did not see any further need for action with regard to sustainability (Zimmermann 1997, p. 35). The idea that LA 21 processes en-

⁷ 1.651 Local Agenda resolutions by september 2000 (CAF/Agenda Transfer 2000).

compass much more than conventional environmental politics and are thus attractive for German communities, too, has only gradually gained acceptance: "Now there is a chance of integrating the various approaches of communal environmental and development politics under the umbrella of a local Agenda in a more systematic and condensed way and under the special angles of precaution and sustainability."...."The deciding factor for the success of the Local Agenda 21 process in Germany is the integration of the ecological, economic and social strands of communal decision making in the political concept of sustainability" (BMU 1999, p. 3).

In autumn 1995, the first national conference on Local Agenda for German communities took place in Berlin-Köpenick. The activities carried out by the Centre for Communal Development Cooperation⁸, the Co-ordination Office for North-South-Initiatives⁹, as well as the Forum Environment & Development¹⁰ of the German NGOs have, since 1996, contributed to motivating communities in Germany to become active in LA 21 processes (Zimmermann 1997, p. 35). In the past few years, German states such as North Rhine-Westphalia, Hesse, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg have begun to actively support LA 21 initiatives. Campaigns at the level of the federal states inform about LA 21 processes, and materials are provided to support interested communities. North

Rhine-Westphalia was a pioneer in establishing the office "Agenda-Transfer". All these initiatives have been contributing to the fast promotion of the LA 21 idea and to the exponential increase in the number of LA 21 resolutions in Germany since 1997. Especially citizens' movements, not only in the field of environment, as well as communal institutions in development co-operation often initiate German LA 21 processes. It has also become increasingly fashionable among mayors to initiate an LA 21 process in order that the community should be considered to be innovative. More and more politicians at local level incorporated concepts such as "sustainable development" and "Local Agenda 21" in their vocabulary. To obtain funding from the national government or the EU and in competitions for innovative communities, LA 21 activities have had positive effects. At first, quite a few communities were surprised to find that in addition to helping to obtain the funding applied for or winning an award, their LA 21 activities set off a literally sustainable process with tangible positive results (Kuhn 2000, personal communication). For municipalities, proactive flexibility, close to the grass-roots has paid off twice.

Many communities active in LA 21, however, have come to realise not only the success of local strategies for sustainability but also their limitations. Quite a few unsustainable federal or state regulations that have to be implemented at the local level hinder local activities for sustainability or stand in their way. In this situation, more and more local politicians, at fora such as the

⁸ Zentrum für Kommunale Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (ZKE).

⁹ Koordinationsstelle für Nord-Süd-Initiativen

¹⁰ Forum Umwelt & Entwicklung

German Städtetag¹¹, have demanded a comprehensive, cross-departmental national framework for sustainability in Germany.

3 The National Framework for Local Processes:

National Council for Sustainability and National Sustainable Development Strategies

Already at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, States were called upon to set up national strategies for the implementation of sustainable development. So far, however, only a few countries, such as the UK, have developed a national Agenda 21. In May 1999, the British Labour government presented already the second British national sustainable development strategy, entitled "A Better Quality of Life". The main concern of this strategy is to integrate environmental issues into all government departments. The first national sustainable development strategy in the UK was developed under the Conservative government in as early as 1994. In the UK, there is, as compared to Germany, less organised resistance against increasing sustainable development considerations in politics and business. This makes it easy for the UK to take the lead as far as national sustainable development strategies is concerned (Maier 1999, p. 3f).

The United Nations General Assembly's special session "Environment and Development" in 1997, five years after the Earth Summit, re-emphasised the special responsibility of national

governments in developing local Agenda 21 processes. In Germany, the "National Committee for Sustainable Development"¹², was established in 1992 to support the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) by implementing Agenda 21 at national level. The task of the committee is "to advise and support the government in the Rio follow-up process and to serve as a dialogue forum for the different groups of society, the government, parliamentarians, the federal states, municipalities as well as individuals" (BMU 1999, p. 16). This committee has not shown any actual profile to date, and not only environmental and development NGOs regard its work as badly in need of improvement (cf. GTZ 2000, p. 15). After long hesitation, the German Environment Ministry started a process, which, at the beginning of 1998, led to the draft of a priority programme for environmental policy: "Steps towards environmentally sustainable development" – Draft of a priority programme for environmental policy "Sustainable Development in Germany". Soon after that, in their final report, the "Enquete Commission Protection of Man and the Environment" of the German Bundestag¹³ unanimously demanded a national sustainable development strategy. After the 1998 Bundestag elections, the new coalition agreed on developing such a strategy and anchored this decision in the coalition agreement. Meanwhile, there is a resolution passed by the Bundestag to establish a German "Council for Sus-

¹¹ association of German municipalities

¹² Nationales Komitee für nachhaltige Entwicklung

¹³ German parliamentary assembly

tainable Development": "The Government will soon convene a "Council for Sustainable Development". This council will not be just another scientific advisory body, but a discussion forum for the different social stakeholders. In this forum, individuals – or rather personalities – from the environmental movement, industry, trade unions and from cultural and public life shall formulate their expectations of a long term policy plan. The government's objective is to develop a long term strategy for sustainable development which is based on a broad public consensus. [...] The first priorities in this strategy will be *environmentally sustainable mobility, climate protection and energy*" (Trittin 2000, p. 4). On 26th July 2000, the Cabinet passed a resolution to that effect (BMU 2000).

The creation of a "Council for Sustainable Development" which politically ranks much higher than the "National Committee for Sustainability" and which motivates a broadly based discourse on the national strategy for sustainable development and initiates the necessary steps towards implementation, seems to be more suitable in order to anchor sustainability concepts in German politics in cross-sectoral manner (cf. Fues 1997, p. 11). Thus upgrading environmental and development issues on the domestic front would not only support local processes but also have an effect at the international level.

4 Linking Local and International Processes

Local processes for sustainable development must not only be linked with national but also with international ac-

tivities. The framework for this is provided by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). The CSD was established in 1992 with the objective of examining progress made in implementing Agenda 21 at international, regional, national and local level. It provides a forum for actors of civil society. At the annual conferences of the Commission in New York, selected representatives of civil society, including representatives of local authorities, can present their positions. The "Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue" practised during the past two conferences as an action oriented discussion forum for civil society explicitly supports this. The dialogue gives representatives of "major groups", such as local authorities, NGOs, trade unions and industry the opportunity to intensively discuss the implementation of Agenda 21 with government delegations (cf. Stephan). Local processes, such as "Local Agenda 21" are thus given a forum at the international level. At this point we have come full circle: from the global level (Agenda 21 as a global programme of action) to the national level (national sustainable development strategies) to the local level (LA 21 processes for the implementation of Agenda 21) back to the global level (Commission on Sustainable Development – monitoring the implementation of Agenda 21).

5 Conclusion: Promoting Horizontal and Vertical Networking

The LA 21 processes taking place worldwide today offer various possibilities of learning from each other - from the neighbouring community, or from a twin

community in the South or from a community with similar problems in any other country. Learning from each other, however, depends to a large extent on the international networking of LA 21 initiatives. National co-ordination offices inform and advise interested communities about LA 21 processes and offer opportunities for exchange in a national context. They play a decisive role in motivating communities. Regional conferences in the different regions of the world also play a part in encouraging an exchange of experiences as well as the networking of communities. The "Aalborg Charter" was the result of a European conference of sustainable cities and communities in Aalborg/Denmark (1994). It has in the meantime been signed by 550 European cities and communities. In 1998 and 1999 respectively, the first international conferences on Local Agenda 21 took place in South America and in the Asia/Pacific region. Communities in the South and in the North receive support for their LA 21 activities through international funding programmes which enable the communities involved – especially in the context of North-South-partnerships – to get in touch with each other. International institutions and networks such as the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), the United Nations Environment and Development Programme (UNEP/UNDP), the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and the United Nations Towns Development Agency (UNTD) carry out projects with the objective of spreading the idea of Local Agenda 21. In this role they have an important multiplying function in the hori-

zontal networking of the LA 21 processes world-wide. Apart from horizontal networking, vertical networking also plays an important role in motivating LA 21 activities. One starting point for the vertical networking of sustainability processes – from the local to the national to the international level – is the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). At the CSD conferences, local experiences can be fed into the international process. At the same time, this forum offers opportunities for an exchange with both representatives of the national level and other actors of civil society.

There are thus various structures already in place which can support the horizontal as well as the vertical integration of local Agenda 21 processes. These structures should be used more intensively by communities active in LA 21. It is the task of the multipliers to create awareness of the existence of these structures and to develop them further.

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**LOCAL AGENDA PROCESSES
IN GERMANY AS A
DEVELOPING COUNTRY -
ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES
AND SUCCESSES IN
SHAPING PARTICIPATORY
POLITICS - A CRITICAL
OVERVIEW**

Ulrich Nitschke

1 Introduction

Germany has about 50 formulated local agendas today. Some federal states such as North-Rhine Westphalia and the city-states of Bremen and Hamburg are slowly starting to develop agendas at state level. The Bavarian agenda, however, which is already in place, is rather an environmental protection programme with the aim of making a kind of environmental deal between the business sector and the government of Bavaria. It promises, in return for voluntary commitments by the industry, commensurate deregulation in public law or in the granting of permissions. Other debates about agendas at state level also show a tendency into that direction. Only a few of them currently identify this as a dead end or see the deficiencies of these deals, because: From the global point of view, we are the developing country. The North itself must develop if it wants to meet the demand for sustainability. This means it has to promote a kind of development that keeps fighting the blatant ecological and social imbalances.

20 per cent of the world's population continue to use 80 per cent of the planet's natural resources for consumption and production. This is still true

eight years after the adoption of Agenda 21. To take a new course, however, is very difficult, as we continue to hear every day from the big lobbying associations representing smallest social strata. If 40 per cent of the trade consists in importing and exporting similar or equal products, this does not equip society for the future. Everybody can see the problem and feel the uneasiness at the latest in front of the shelves in the supermarket where the prices of foodstuffs and consumer goods do not at all reflect the ecological, let alone the social truth.

In view of these developments, five theses shall be presented in the following, which show the critical points in the agenda work. At the same time, these theses emphasise the need for concrete action at the local level, according to the motto of our CAF/Agenda-Transfer office: "Learning from good examples and experiences!" The theses will therefore be enriched with practical examples which show the potentials for change that exist at the local level, and the chances and opportunities for sustainable development.

1st Thesis:

The Agenda 21 adopted in Rio de Janeiro – what needs to be done at the dawn of the 21st century – marks the end of classical development politics and the start of a new process of learning in the developing country of Germany, especially at the local level. Without the agenda processes under way in about 1,700 German communities and an estimated 5,000 local agendas worldwide, the ideas of Rio would

be left with hardly any chance of survival.

Rio thus also marks the end of the period in which the earth could, always inadequately though, be split up into a "first" and a "third" world, into donors and recipients. According to the principle of sustainability, we all live in developing countries. Rio is a new beginning for the development debate. Beyond theories of modernisation and dependency, the signatory states not only agreed on the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity as well as the Convention to Combat Desertification. The revolutionary aspect of Rio is the search for and the finding and accepting of the principle of sustainability as the basis of all development. 178 governments, involving important representatives of industry, trade unions, churches and other NGOs, subscribed to this principle.

The German reality eight years after Rio, however, still shows a big gap between awareness on the one hand and corresponding action on the other. And this remains so despite the fact that the principle of sustainability is so easy to describe: "Differently – Better and Less"! Two examples:

- **Regional shopping centres instead of global dependence on the world market!**

Some cities have, in the course of their agenda processes, set up new regional shopping centres in the city centres. In Nuremberg, a shopping centre will be opened at the end of this year, which exclusively offers products from the vicinity of not more than 100 kilometres. The project was developed in the agenda

working group "Economy, work and environment", which is being moderated by the local chamber of industry and commerce. 40 companies from the region are involved in this project. Thanks to increased direct marketing in the region, the conscious decision of many consumers for ecologically sustainable and socially responsible products and the provision of a central fallow area, the shopping centre can be realised after a conceptual phase of only two years.

Apart from foodstuffs from the region, the shopping centre offers only fairly traded products from the South that cannot be grown locally: coffee, tea, chocolate and bananas. Most of the products are grown organically. Soon after the opening of the centre, a variety of services shall be provided in addition, and new ones shall be developed: repair shops that aim at the longevity of goods, an agency for social learning that imparts technical as well as cultural skills, district enterprises that provide public services as well as a recycling exchange for electronic scrap where new products will be developed from the materials.

- **Second-Hand Store founded – Sustainability Creates Jobs!**

Through the local agenda process in Düsseldorf a second-hand store has been initiated. Almost 50 per cent of the roughly 8,5 kg of old clothes generated per citizen in Düsseldorf are still of such a good quality that they can be sold second-hand or can be recycled. Sustainability creates jobs. In sorting and selling the textiles, the non-profit limited company 'renatec' provides jobs for eight persons who had been out of work for long periods of time and depended on

social assistance. These jobs are sustainable positions with regard to the protection of resources and the environment. In the meantime, the city administration accepts the second-hand store as an example of best practise.

2nd Thesis:

Eight years after the Earth Summit, the 1,700 German local agenda processes already in place in German communities are entering into a phase of redefinition with regard to "One World" aspects and urban planning. There is a need to search for guiding visions, measures and indicators that aim at globally sustainable communities.

Most of the LA21 processes are linked to the departments of environment and planning. In many places, this not only reduces the processes to mere environmental measures, but also falls short of the full understanding of Agenda 21 and its structural demands. Cross-sectional issues should be dealt with by the head of department, and should be embedded in the central management. The example of Munich shows how comprehensive agreements for more sustainable consumption and production patterns can be developed together with representatives of politics, administration and industry.

- **Round Table "Development Politics" in Munich**

At the beginning of the Agenda process in Munich (1996), an issue and stakeholder oriented round table was established by the third mayor together with the "Forum One World" to deal with One World issues. The development campaigns discussed at this round table „Fair Trade“, „Clean Clothes“,

„ethical/ecological investment“ and „Flower Label“ represent agreements with the respective stakeholders concerned. Success was achieved when different groups, previously not concerned with One World issues, such as citizens, politicians, administrators and business representatives set down at the table and agreed on concrete objectives. The campaigns on the re-use of old clothes as well as on ecological and social investment funds are the first results of this cooperation.

3rd Thesis:

The limitations of an environmentally biased and often self-centred process, which does not have any impacts beyond the own sphere of influence, need to be overcome. International partnerships can be expanded and developed into fora for joint learning for sustainable development. This, however, not only requires a change of perspective on the part of the major stakeholders, but also calls upon social movements and initiatives in the agenda process to contribute their experience and interests.

Learning from the South – an example:

- **Porto Alegre's Citizens' Budget**

The citizens of Porto Alegre did not have much trust in their politicians and administrations when in 1989 they heard of the plans of the newly elected city council, which included that citizens should be involved in the setting up of the budget, the most important political instrument at the local level. Today, 11 years later, the picture is a different one altogether. Porto Alegre, "The capital of democracy" has implemented a participatory model of budget allocation. The citizens make budgetary decisions and

set the priorities. They increasingly decide on administrative budgets and personnel matters. The model, which has won several awards, meets with lively interest in all parts of Brazil, and also in Europe. How did the citizens, politicians and administrators in Porto manage to make that move into the direction of a "glass" town hall and a transparent budget intelligible to the citizens?

First condition for success: More and more citizens got involved in the process; in 1998 more than 35,000 citizens took part. Second condition: the municipality supported, encouraged, accompanied and managed the process. This achievement of the administration to encourage and to manage the process without patronising the citizens is the third criterion for success.

What kinds of structures have proved successful? In the 16 parts of the city, town meetings were called. At these meetings, the municipality presents its work to date as well as their programme. A representative of the finance department informs about the financial possibilities of the community. The rules of the game established by the municipality are being disclosed. They refer to certain standards (e.g. construction standards) and responsibilities (e.g. within the departments). Since 1994, five issue-oriented plenaries have also been offered, in which local issues such as "Transportation and traffic", "Health and social affairs", and "Economic development and communal fiscal policy" are being discussed. The delegates elected at the town meetings are usually representatives of citizens' organisations such as tenants' associations, women's organisa-

tions, environmental protectionists, small and medium size enterprises, farmers, street vendors, associations of the disabled, teachers, sports clubs, trade unions, etc, but also single persons. The initial scepticism of the council members has in the meantime died away. Since the introduction of the citizens' budget, there is a visible increase in the interest of the citizens with regard to the long-term development of their community. Accountability, transparency and a new sense of responsibility have strengthened the communal identity of citizens with their city. Corruption has also decreased considerably. Citizens' groups that had not been involved in communal politics could be won over to join in. Meanwhile, the citizens have come to pay close attention to the implementation of the measures agreed upon. For example, they inspect and accept construction measures in their areas themselves. The initial fear that the citizens would not know enough about administration and budget allocation could be calmed down through a close cooperation of an educational NGO and the finance department. In the past 11 years, more than 2,000 citizens have been qualified in budgetary regulations and moderation methods. The incumbent mayor of Porto, Raul Pont, sees the most positive impact of this model in the fairer distribution of communal resources and finances. By now, almost all the slum areas have got running water and trafficable roads.

The case of Porto Alegre and the experiences made can well be transferred to the German context. Hermann Dietz, mayor of the little place of Mönchweiler in North Rhine Westphalia (NRW), can

confirm this. In mid 1998, he invited citizens to think about the financing of communal tasks such as street cleaning, the fire brigade and the library. As surprisingly many as 25 per cent of all citizens took part in the opinion poll, which also had political support. Hermann Dietz: "The best of all is the effect that the citizens who filled out the questionnaire are increasingly getting involved in communal issues." In February 2000, the city of Mülheim/NRW conducted a hearing on budget allocation with great success. Trade unionists in Duisburg/NRW wanted to consult with their colleagues in Porto Alegre on international labour standards, exchange concepts for sustainable urban development and share their different experiences with job creation in view of structural change. The ministry of urban planning in NRW already promised financial support of the two-year project. Manfred Brinkmann, who works with the DGB-Bildungswerk, hopes that through the programme "it will not only be trade unions who will finally come to appreciate the agenda work, but also communities, who will have a concrete chance to experience North-South work as an opportunity for international learning."

4th Thesis:

Agenda processes do not fail because of the resistance of individual groups of stakeholders or because of insurmountable conflicts of objectives, but because of the political understanding of the persons involved and diminishing commitment.

In many communities, political parties meanwhile generally agree on issue focussed questions. Communal politics,

however, still suffer from a serious communication problem. This finds expression not only in weaker polling. Many citizens do not see any perspective in getting involved in local politics. They feel they are not being taken serious and rather get involved in areas that directly promise a better quality of life and more enjoyment. The example of Unterhaching, however, shows that local agenda work does offer opportunities for citizens and politicians and that it can also be fun and can mean a better quality of life.

- **People's Participation as an Opportunity**

The Agenda 21 of Unterhaching is marked by strong citizens' involvement, good public relations initiatives that are suitable for small communities and an agenda initiative that is really exemplary because it is well anchored in politics and administration. Already in 1995, the discussion started in Unterhaching on how the little Bavarian municipality could embark on its own agenda process. In May 1996, after one year of preparation, the city council decided to develop a vision for Unterhaching, involving as many citizens as possible. At the same time, the structures and rules of procedure for a local agenda 21 were introduced into the communal regulations. They provide for monthly meetings of the five agenda working groups initiated, and quarterly plenary assemblies that are not being chaired by local politicians but by a people's representative who would be elected for a term of three years. In the plenary assembly, mayor Dr. Erwin Knapek and the municipal officers may only speak when requested to do so:

„We are used to talking. Agenda, however, means to take citizens as the experts in every day experiences serious and to listen to them.“ is Erwin Knappek's opinion with regard to people's participation.

Since 1996, the working groups have worked out concrete projects and measures, which have to be approved by the plenary assembly. The working group on energy, for example, developed a competition on how to save energy for all institutions, companies and private households in Unterhaching. Since the successful implementation of the programme, politicians and administrators work together with the experienced members of the working group on an energy concept for the whole community. Since the end of 1999, working group no. 6 works on „Consumption and One World“. In the project „Lifestyle“, questions of the global distribution of resources and issues of justice are being dealt with by youth associations and in schools.

5th Thesis:

The communities involved in local agenda 21 need political encouragement from respective agendas at the level of the federal states as well as from a national strategy for sustainable development, which would be complementary in content. Otherwise they are in danger of drowning in "projectitis" and of being regarded as a "playground of people's participation" not taken serious by the relevant decision makers in politics and administration.

In the sixth sentence of its coalition agreement of October 1998, the German government promises that Agenda 21

and the vision of sustainable development provide the framework for all the necessary political decisions. Up to now, those involved at the local level did not notice much of this. A national strategy for sustainable development should learn from the experiences at the local level and should analyse process management, agenda fora as well as the content of the respective processes. The governments at both national and federal state level are well-advised to make use of the experiences at the local level in devising umbrella strategies for sustainable development. In order to do so, a process of broad participation needs to be initiated at an early stage. In Germany, however, such a process is not yet in sight.

At the moment, there is a particular need for visions and applicable sets of indicators that reflect sustainability at the local level, make it visible and checkable. This presents another field of action for the higher political levels. In the about 50 agenda drafts in hand, there are often complaints about these shortcomings. Together with other organisations, Agenda-Transfer has therefore developed various sets of indicators, which have partly been tested in the field¹⁴. With these, we want to support the qualitative development of agenda activities. Indicators offer the possibility not only to measure the status quo, but also to show potentials for change and to adopt more ambitious aims with regard to sustainable local development.

¹⁴ Information on sets of indicators at local level at www.agenda-transfer.de.

2 Conclusion

The due discussion about the future of towns and communities can only reach a new qualitative stage if all the stakeholders are being involved. In this process, local agenda is not more and not less than a helpful tool, which at least finds increasing support and application in Germany. The major challenge is to shape the future.

Formulating demands that others should fulfil, without making own suggestions and showing approaches to sustainable solutions is no more in keeping with the times. By publishing innovative approaches, CAF/Agenda-Transfer therefore tries to speed up sustainable development at the local level and internationally¹⁵.

The networking efforts of international communities for learning offer great potential for everybody involved to participate in approaches to sustainable solutions. Even if different contexts are characterised by different struggles and challenges (poverty, environmental destruction, desertification), we can notice similar phenomena in many places of the world, last but not least because of the tendencies towards globalisation. In this context, the international exchange of experiences initiated by the Institute for Development and Peace (INEF) in Duisburg (NRW) as part of the research project "Structural adjustment – Competitiveness – Sustainability. Meso-policies in North Rhine-Westphalia from the Perspective of Advanced Developing Countries" deserves particular acknowledgement. Experiences and strategies for solutions shall be exchanged between Chile, Korea and Germany, to the benefit of all the countries involved, and the different viewpoints will help enrich all of them¹⁶.

¹⁵ available through www.agenda-transfer.de.

¹⁶ further information on the research project at www.inef.de.

INDICATORS FOR THE NORTH-SOUTH DIMENSION OF LOCAL AGENDA 21 PROCESSES

Thomas Fues

1 Introduction

Local Agenda 21 processes in Germany are mainly focused on environmental issues, while less attention is being paid to social concerns at home or international justice. In theory, all would agree that North-South relationships are of central importance for the globally accepted model of sustainable development. But in most practical cases, making this aspect concrete and operational at the local level in the context of Local Agenda 21 has only just begun. This is also seen in the design of local indicator programs which often give little coverage to or entirely omit the North-South dimension.

Fortunately, things seem to be moving forward now in Germany. One World groups, in particular, are devoting increasing efforts to clarifying the conceptual foundations of sustainability and the specific need for action concerning the interrelationships between rich and poorer countries, and to integrating this into the overall Local Agenda 21 processes. The following article will proceed in three steps. At first, a theoretical model will be developed as an overall analytical framework. Secondly, different aspects of North-South relations are specified which are relevant to global sustainability. And finally, a structured approach to the construction of indicators for the North-South dimension of Local Agenda 21 processes is presented.

2 Theoretical model of sustainability

Designing indicators for the North-South dimension of Local Agenda 21 presupposes agreement on the underlying theoretical model. Here I follow the concept developed by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) together with Canadian institutions, which has been put into actual use in a number of countries of the South for grass-roots, participatory analyses of sustainability. It uses the symbol of an egg to represent the various segments of sustainable development. The yolk of the egg stands for all the individual and social aspects of human interrelationships. The white of the egg represents the ecosystems in which humanity is essentially and inseparably embedded.

In this view, the assessment of sustainability is divided into two steps of equal importance. First, the ecological footprint (relationship of humans to nature) is examined to see whether vital environmental assets and functions are impaired or endangered by human influences. This step in the analysis is oriented primarily to the scientific laws that are relevant to the stability and functioning of the ecosystems.

In a separate step, the human subsystem is analyzed to see whether the conditions of sustainability applying to the human sphere are fulfilled. These are oriented to ethical principles. The relationship between human beings can, in turn, be subdivided into various partial aspects, such as the social, economic, political, and cultural spheres.

In the view of the IUCN, the separate evaluations of the natural and hu-

man spheres must give positive results in both cases for conditions to be judged sustainable in the overall evaluation. If the criteria are not met in one or both subsystems, the assessment will be negative.

3 Conceptualizing the North-South dimension

The theoretical model will now be operationalized with regard to the various meanings of sustainability in the interaction between North and South (see Table

tions of sustainability criteria that create a need for action by the North. Therefore, only the influences of the North on sustainable development in the South are considered. In principle, influences in the other direction are also possible, such as harm to global biodiversity, or unemployment in the North due to imports of industrial consumer goods from the south.

Three basic categories of assets to be protected can be distinguished. The first four groups of subjects in the natu-

Table 1: Impacts of the North on sustainable development in the South

Natural aspects	Human aspects
Soils in the south <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil erosion • Soil fertility 	Human and labor rights in the South <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political and social rights • Rights of women • Rights of children • Rights of indigenous peoples • Labor rights
Water and air in the South <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water supply and quality • Air quality 	Social justice in the world economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade restrictions • Terms of trade • Financial markets • Labor markets • Biopiracy
Renewable resources in the South <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forests and Plants • Wild animals • Water 	Equality of opportunity in the world society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to knowledge and communication networks • Cultural diversity
Biodiversity in the South <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant and animal species • Sensitive biotopes 	Peacekeeping and global governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arms exports • Support for non-violent conflict resolution • Distribution of power in international institutions
Global environmental commons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earth's atmosphere • International waters 	International solidarity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty-oriented development cooperation • Debt relief • Mechanisms for international resource mobilization • Support for refugees

1). As explained above, the ecological and social dimensions of sustainability are separated strictly for analytical purposes. The focus is on possible viola-

ral sphere relate to the South's most important environmental assets: The environmental media soil, water, and air as well as renewable resources and biodi-

versity. The five human assets to be protected are structured according to the keeping the peace, and international equalization of prosperity.

Table 2: The North-South dimension in local sustainability analysis (Northern perspective)

Field of action	Individual aspect
Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imports (e.g. agricultural and forestry products, mineral raw materials, industrial goods, tourist destinations in the South) • Exports (e.g. military goods, old clothes, chemical products, capital goods and engineering services for large dams, toxic wastes) • Indirect effects (e.g. reduction of imports from the South due to the strengthening of regional markets and dematerialization of production and consumption in the North)
Direct investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company subsidiaries and shareholdings in the South
Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solidarity actions (e.g. One World shops, sales promotion for Fair Trade products, publicity and educational work, political campaigns) • Intercultural encounters (e.g. music, art and film festivals with Southern participation, events organized by immigrant groups) • Long-term “twinning” (e.g. schools, universities, church groups, solidarity groups) • Exchanges of people (e.g. mutual visits of delegations, volunteer services, work camps, training programs between North and South) • Donations (private transfer of resources to the South)
Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official resolutions (e.g. resolutions of local councils on the importance of North-South relations at the local level, analysis of the historical and current links to the South, commitment to consume Fair Trade products) • Publicity and educational activities (school projects and programs, support for activities of local groups, financing of their staff) • Twinning of towns (e.g. conferences, exchanges of staff, supporting meetings between groups of citizens, long-term exchanges of experience and joint learning) • Financial transfers (e.g. direct support for development projects in the South, subsidies to projects by civil society groups, financing of town twinning activities) • Support for immigrants and refugees in the North (e.g. financial aid to individuals, subsidies to cultural centers)
Global environmental commons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Per-capita emissions of greenhouse gases • Public passenger and goods transport systems • Support for energy-saving measures and renewable sources of energy

ethical guidelines of sustainable development, which are associated with the normative principles of human and labor rights, social justice, equal opportunity,

The fifth natural sector, the use of the global environmental commons, is a special case, since here natural and human assets to be protected overlap. It is not only a question of respecting the

limits of the natural carrying capacity here, but also of distributing the permissible global total burden among the world's population or individual countries according to certain notions of justice.

3.1 North-South aspects in the local context

Before dealing with the formation of indicators for Local Agenda 21 processes in the last step, it is necessary to describe the main North-South interlinkages which are relevant at the local level. From a Northern perspective, the focus must be on the following five areas:

- trade (exchange of goods and services in both directions),
- direct investments (by the North in the South),
- society (relations between individuals and organizations in the North and South),
- politics (decision-making processes in the North relevant for the South),
- global environmental commons (overexploitation by the North).

In order to better understand the issues in each area, it is advisable to categorize them by individual aspects (see Table 2).

3.2 North-South indicators for the local level

It must always be remembered that sustainability indicators are simply instruments which are meant to support collective processes of agreement on the contents and objectives of sustainable development. Their value lies in making the monitoring and assessment of implementation successes easier. The specific character of sustainability indica-

tors consists in the dynamic comparison of actual and desired values. Starting from the identification of an unsustainable initial state, the objective is specified, often with a deadline for achieving it. Subsequently, the indicator values are monitored continuously, so as to provide information on the effectiveness of measures taken.

Informative indicators for the North-South dimension of Local Agenda 21 processes can be derived easily from the fields of activity and individual aspects listed above. In most cases, quantitative conditions can be measured, e.g. public funds provided for projects in the South or the local share of fairly traded coffee. Qualitative aspects or Yes-No questions are less fruitful. An important characteristic of sustainability indicators is their action orientation. Stock-taking per se, such as a quantitative survey of imports of tropical woods, is of less interest than raising consciousness and providing a perspective for correcting the violation of sustainability.

Experience, especially in a grassroots context such as the Local Agenda 21, has shown that positive indicators, which address alternatives for action, provide better motivation than negative measures aimed at eliminating an unwanted condition. This explains the attractiveness of seals of quality for economic relationships with the South. For example, products of Fair Trade, such as coffee and tea, have a mobilizing effect, because they offer individuals and groups numerous approaches at the local level. Collecting data can be used to reinforce local activities, if groups carry out their own empirical research locally,

for example if they find out how many stores carry carpets made without child labor (under a label called Rugmark), and what percentage of total sales these represent.

So in designing indicators for the areas of trade and direct investments, preference should be given to those seals of quality which provide for an independent certification of standards related to environment, human rights, and labor rights, as well as fair trade. This approach has experienced an impressive growth of attention and improvements in methodology recently. Reliable and widely recognized sets of criteria and monitoring systems now exist for the ecological sphere, e.g. ISO 14000 standards, the European Union's environmental audit and its certification procedure for biological agriculture. In contrast, standard setting with regard to human and labor rights is only just beginning.

The US non-governmental organization "Council on Economic Priorities" has met with considerable response for its concept of Social Accountability (SA) 8000. In the United Kingdom, the Ethical Trading Initiative is trying to achieve uniform standards. The Clean Clothes Campaign has presented a far-reaching proposal for the textile and garment industry in its Social Charter. An international harmonization of human-rights and labor-rights standards is urgently needed, in order to improve transparency and increase the motivation of consumers. This would also reduce the risk of certain sections of industry countering the impact of ethically and ecologically

aware consumer demand by introducing their own, lower-caliber seals of quality.

Social seals of quality are suitable not only for product evaluation, but can also be used as a basis for the analysis of direct investments by local companies in the South. The introduction of human-rights and labor-rights standards offers a fruitful topic for a dialogue with the business sector in the Local Agenda. Government subsidies at all levels could be tied to meeting such specifications. However, certain areas of the North-South relationship remain in which the sustainability criteria can only be met by ending the unwanted activities – such as the export of arms, large dams, and toxic wastes.

This article has shown how the North-South dimension can be integrated into Local Agenda 21 processes. Many indicators for global sustainability can be directly linked to local conditions. Local Agenda 21 processes in Germany and elsewhere should now turn their attention to North-South issues and expand their cross-border dialogue.

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AGENDA IN ACTION: FIRST STEPS ON A LONG JOURNEY

Uwe Hoering

1 Germany – A developing country

Mayor Horst Müller was overwhelmed. Around 200 citizens of Olpe, a small industrial town east of Cologne, attended the start-up meeting for the Local Agenda 21, much more than expected. “From Rio to Olpe is a long way”, Müller said, “and we want to proceed without getting lost”. The destination is social, ecological and economic sustainability. And the citizens were invited to discuss about ways and means how to achieve it. The message is to start at home to change the course of the world towards sustainability, “think globally, act locally” is the catch-word.

To introduce the new, little known instrument of the Agenda 21 to the gathering and to illustrate its objectives, Ulrich Nitschke from CAF/ Agenda Transfer Office in Bonn made a projection into the year 2010: imagine a city, he told his audience, where public transport is free, so traffic is reduced, air quality improved and CO₂-emissions plunged by 30 percent. Traffic is reduced further because the city decided to buy products in the region itself where ever possible. Because of the increasing demand for local products many farmers shifted to organic farming, thus improving soil and protecting water resources. And with a huge new department store for second-hand clothes set up by the local association of traders, new jobs were created and trousers, jackets and shoes no longer discarded or sent to Third World mar-

kets, destroying local production. The store became a sales point too for products from developing countries traded “fairly” like coffee, tea or bananas. That may sound like Utopia, Nitschke told the meeting, but all these projects have already been realised in other municipalities in Europe.

As an immediate result of the meeting, three working groups with member from church groups, trade unions, environmental organisations, Third World initiatives and the administration were set up, one on employment and economy, one on development, trade and energy, the third one on consumption. Their agenda: to start the dialogue on how to make Olpe into a “sustainable city”.

2 Mobilising the public

Olpe is one of the “youngest” members among the more than 1.300 municipalities and towns in Germany that joined the Agenda process so far. Partnership and cooperation of all groups of society is a centre piece of the Agenda 21 to achieve social justice, ecological stability and economic sustainability. Chapter 28 asks specifically local authorities to implement Agenda 21 locally, not leaving the necessary activities exclusively to national governments.

The idea of sustainable development is especially relevant for cities, where for example in Germany 60 percent of the population live. Urban areas with their dense population, industry and traffic create tremendous problems: air pollution, garbage, noise, traffic jams, etc. Health and general wellbeing is being effected, national resources like land,

disappearing under concrete, tarmac and expanding settlements, or water, spent on toilets, dishwashers and car wash, are threatened.

LA21 promotes the idea of participation in planning and political decision making at the local level. It was for the first time that a UN-document clearly underlines the important role of NGOs, social groups and associations. Especially mentioned are women and the youth to be provided with opportunities to participate in decision making. Two key elements are significant for LA21: Firstly the procedure, which should allow for new ways of cooperation within the community and open up opportunities for everybody to contribute ideas and creativity. Secondly the contents, developed into a long-term action programme at the local government level, using existing experiences. Thus, LA21 offers an approach to grassroots democracy. Citizens should not only be informed and listened to by the local government and administration, but recognised as people with their own experiences about their city or municipality, as local experts so to say, on equal footing with local government.

Soon, existing and new initiatives at the local level like Third World groups, environmental initiatives, church groups and citizens organisations discovered the LA21 as a new common Agenda and rallying point for their activities. It seems to offer a way out of the political weakness experienced so far in the face of seemingly insurmountable and complicated problems and deadlocked discussions. In other cases, it was the administration itself, which initiated the

process. Very often, Commissioners for the Environment hoped, that the LA21 will give a fresh impulse to the debate on environment and development.

At the same time it is obvious, that only the cooperation between well organised local citizen alliances and an administration, which is willing to support the process politically and financially, will bear results. To bring the various interest groups and actors together is much easier at the local level: actors are known and in most cases locally present, causes, responses and responsibilities easier to localise than on national or international level, implementation easier to control and results more visible.

After the formal resolution by the city or municipality council as the first step, citizens, experts and administration sit together at "round tables", symbolising the non-confrontationist approach, chalking out plans for the improvement and development of their city. It is understood, that isolated measures are not sufficient any more to solve the problems. For viable solutions a holistic approach is needed, involving every sector and every actor, facilitating new forms of cooperation inside of local governments as well as between administration and the citizens and a wide exchange of information, ideas and experience.

Accordingly, the International Council for Local Environmental initiatives (ICLEI) defined the Local Agenda 21 as follows: "LA21 is a participatory, multisectoral process to achieve the goals of the Agenda 21 at the local level through the preparation and implementation of a long-term strategic action

plan that addresses primarily local sustainable development concerns". The lead actor in the efforts to implement the concept should be the local governments themselves [see box 1: *Elements and Factors...*].

rapid de-industrialisation in East Germany which did not spare Köpenick. Factories, laboratories and research institutes closed down. Since hardly any new jobs or new industries came up, unemployment rate among the popula-

Box 1: Elements and factors for the success of Local Agenda 21 planning

- Multi-sectoral engagement in the planning process through a local stakeholders group which serves as the co-ordination and policy body for preparing a long-term sustainable development action plan.
- Consultation with community groups, NGOs, business, churches, government agencies, professional groups and unions in order to create a shared vision and to identify proposals and priorities for action.
- Participatory assessment of local social, economic and environmental conditions and needs.
- Participatory target-setting through negotiations among key stakeholders in order to achieve the vision and goals set forth in the action plan.
- Monitoring and reporting procedures, including local indicators, to track progress and to allow participants to hold each other accountable to the action plan.

Source: ICLEI, Local Agenda 21 Survey, March 1997

While on national and global level the 'spirit of Rio' is rapidly fading, on local level the commitment to environmental and development activities is continuously growing. Ernst Welters, city councillor in Berlin-Köpenick, even believes, that without the activities of the Local Agenda, Rio would already be dead and forgotten.

3 Berlin-Köpenick: the pioneer

Köpenick, a district in the south-eastern part of Berlin, once was an important fishing centre because of the many rivers and lakes in the region. Then, it became a main industrial area of the former GDR, with chemical and engineering industries. The fishermen have gone long time ago. And now the industry too. With German unification there was a

tion of 110.000 is high. Old houses in the centre of the town are decaying. Commuting for work increases traffic burdens. "We are a developing region", says Helmut Nowatzky who heads the Agenda 21 office.

"The Agenda process was born out of necessity", says Helmut Nowatzky. It was seen as a chance to cope with the structural changes. In the new development strategy, environment and sustainability became quite naturally a central focal point, explains Ernst Welters, city councillor for the Youth and the Environment. The region around Köpenick with lakes and forests is the biggest source of drinking water, an important area for recreation and the "green lung" of the capital Berlin. In 1993, Köpenick started the first Local Agenda initiative in Germany.

“Father” of the “Three pillars model”, Köpenick became known for, is Klaus Wazlawik. Wazlawik had been active in the former GDR in the ecumenical dialogue groups, which were guided by the process for peace, justice and integrity of creation, an outcome of the 1983 meeting of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Giving cover to numerous independent peace groups, human rights groups, environment and solidarity groups, this process contributed a lot to the citizens movement, which finally led to the political changes in 1989 and subsequently to German reunification.

Soon Wazlawik realised, that the political change alone was not enough. It was not accompanied by a similar, fundamental change in the way of life and production. The global situation is still the same, the ecological crisis continues. Still, there is injustice and waste of resources. And technology alone is no solution. A change of values is necessary, Wazlawick maintains.

The Agenda 21 then came as an instrument, to implement what he has had in mind all the years. Now he got the opportunity to integrate his experience with grassroots activities and church groups into the political level. Luckily, he found a willing partner in the district administration of Köpenick and especially in Helmut Welters. The “third pillar” besides the administration and the church groups became the “public” or the civil society. Today, there is an elaborate structure in place, co-ordinating the activities of the different actors. The Agenda Office has been set up to inform the general public, to or-

ganise the consultation process and to mobilise support and activities. The Ecumenical Office co-ordinates the Agenda related activities of the church parishes, supports them and advises about projects and funding. Church members meet regularly to discuss issues of the Agenda 21. A platform for the participation of all interested groups – so to say the “people’s parliament” of the Agenda process – is the “Forum Environment and Development”.

Right from the beginning, the Agenda process in Köpenick was a “holistic approach”, not “issue based” like in many other municipalities. It combines environmental, social and economic objectives. While the Local Agenda for Köpenick is being drafted by the city administration, the other two “pillars”, the public and the churches, discuss it and submit their own proposals. The final Local Agenda 21 then will be passed by the district parliament as an action programme for the sustainable development of Köpenick. It defines fields of action, measures and commitments, ranging from modernisation of administration to climate protection, from economic development to housing policy.

Because of their history of activities like One-World-Shops for example, where “fairly traded” products are sold, combined with information on the countries of origin or the people producing them, the “ecumenical pillar” is quite strong. But the “third pillar” is still rather weak, says Nowatzki. Public awareness about the existence of the Agenda process is low. Reaching the people proves to be difficult. The best

response so far came from the more than 130 watersports associations like boat clubs and angling clubs. They have a keen interest in an intact, undisturbed environment and clean waters. But the non-organised public has hardly been reached yet, Nowatzky says.

“If we want to reach more people, the Agenda process should show ways how to create new jobs, because that is relevant for most people. But so far we can do little in this respect”, Nowatzky admits. Business organisations are reluctant to join or support the process. Many of them view it as “artificial” or even as a “chatter house”, only interested in environmental questions.

There are exceptions of course. The manager of the new Innovation Centre, set up to support innovative enterprises and to create jobs, participates regularly in discussions. The showpiece so far is IBASOLAR. Here, house owners and companies get information, advice and training on solar energy. It is part of the efforts to make Köpenick a “solar district”. Already, boats driven by solar energy are plying the lakes around the city.

4 Women for Agenda 21

Like the environment, women politics in Agenda 21 is considered a “cross sectoral issue”, to be taken care of in so diverse fields as environmental protection, traffic and mobility, labour market, social issues, health and city planning. Thus, when Doris Freer, head of the women’s office in the harbour and industrial town of Duisburg on the river Rhine learned of the city council’s resolution to set up a Local Agenda 21, she

immediately called on women in Duisburg to commit themselves to the Local Agenda. More than 100 women – individuals and representatives of 50 institutions – attended a start-up event in June 1997, discussing “women’s requirements of a Local Agenda 21”. In several workshops they drew up an “inventory” of the situation and a list of demands for a sustainable future in Duisburg.

It is mostly women, older people and children, who are dependent on the quality of life in the living quarters of the cities. They buy in the neighbourhood shops, go to the local post office, bring down the garbage to the garbage container and use the city parks or playgrounds. But they have no voice in the development of their city or quarter. While everybody would agree, that a sustainable development is impossible without participation of women, city councillors and administration are normally either not willing or not capable of including women’s issues, views and demands into the Local Agenda. Like in Duisburg, in most municipalities women’s issues are included in the Local Agenda only, if women themselves take up the issue. And in many cases, the Office for Equal Opportunity, set up by many local governments to counter discrimination against women, was instrumental.

Like in Duisburg, in the city of Hagen, situated right in the heart of the industrial belt of the Ruhr region of North-Rhine Westphalia, women too took the initiative. When the city council decided to initiate a Local Agenda process, the women’s office proposed five women for the Advisory Board, all of

them highly qualified. "The male board members were really puzzled", remembers Hedwig Schuermann, working for the Trade Union Congress "DGB".

The intention of the women was not to write ambitious programmes, but to use the Local Agenda as an opportunity for quick action. Urgently needed were for example jobs for women, because many of the growing number of urban poor are women and single mothers. While the local employers favoured part time jobs without any social benefits, the women with the support of the local branch of the DBG started a campaign to discourage this kind of employment as exploitative and to convince local businesses to pay old age insurance for their employees.

The women are also concerned about working conditions and low payment for women in other countries. "Agenda 21 means to me partnership with the South too", says Klaudia Pempelforth, who works for a Third World

clothes, they sell, where mainly women do the work.

Sigrun Dechêne, an architect and city planner herself, knows from experience, that housing policy or traffic planning hardly ever is concerned about women. Roads for example are being designed for ever more cars, forgetting about pedestrians. She sees the Local Agenda as an opportunity to remind the male board members of the existence of women and their interests – successfully. Today, male members agree, that the strong presence of women in the Advisory Board has widened their views and given new ideas and perspectives.

The role, institutions like Women's Offices played in widening the scope of Local Agenda discussions underlines the importance of framework conditions supporting the Agenda process. The attitude of the state government towards the Agenda process is important, because it strongly determines these framework conditions. With the set-up

Box 2: CAF/Agenda Transfer

CAF, Clearing-house for Applied Futures, is a small company, which in July 1996 was commissioned by the government of the State of North-Rhine Westphalia, to organise the exchange of information and experiences on local Agenda processes. The Agenda Transfer Office was then set up in Bonn to research activities related to Agenda 21 across Europe. Promising practices and initiatives are passed on through lectures, seminars and publications like a bi-monthly magazine, in particular to local governments, groups and people, helping them to develop their own LA21. Albrecht Hoffmann, co-founder of CAF, had the idea for the Agenda Transfer Office.

initiative. So she introduced into the discussions the Clean Clothes Campaign, which tries to convince department stores to care about labour and social standards in the countries of origin of the

of the Agenda Transfer Office in Bonn [see box 2: *CAF/Agenda Transfer*], the government of North-Rhine Westphalia contributed to the fast increase of municipalities in the state with an Agenda resolution from just four in 1996 to 213

at the end of 1999. Even more important was the decision to provide additional funds for the Agenda process, more than anywhere else. “Where such a financial support is missing, the Agenda process often runs into difficulties”, knows Albrecht Hoffmann.

The state government of North-Rhine Westphalia, governed by a coalition of social democrats (SPD) and Greens (Bündnis90/Die Grünen), supported the LA21 process much stronger than most of the other 16 German states. This openness to new, innovative ideas has more to do with the structural economic changes in the state’s economy dominated by steel and coal, accompanied by a high unemployment rate, than with the strong presence of the Green Party, feels Albrecht Hoffmann of the

CAF/Agenda Transfer Office in Bonn. The Greens are not more active than the SPD or the conservatives from the CDU, he says. In his experience, activities depend not so much on a specific party, but on individual actors.

At the same time, the autonomy of cities and municipalities is severely restricted by state or county legislation and powers. Important sectors like for example garbage collection, energy and infrastructure projects are dealt with by county governments or state government. Therefore, some NGOs, politicians and officials started an Agenda process on the state level. But there is too much party politics involved, says Hoffmann, to move forward quickly.

Box 3: Networking

Towns & Development (T & D) is an international network of local governments and NGOs in North and South, which promotes the cooperation of local administrators and NGOs. In 1999 around 2.000 partnerships between European and African, Asian and Latin-American municipalities were established. In cooperation with the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), T & D supports the strengthening of local governments through information exchange. Objectives and principles of T & D and an Action Programme have been formulated in October 1992, shortly after the Rio summit, in the “Charter of Berlin”.

International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) has been formed with UN-support after the Rio summit to support the Local Agenda 21 process. The Council initiated a “LA21 model project” with local governments in different continents and organised in 1994 the European Conference of Sustainable Towns and Municipalities, which passed the “Declaration of Aalborg”. The signatories commit themselves to assess and improve the areas of land use, traffic, industrial production, agriculture and consumption, which means the whole way of life, according to the objective of sustainability. The local governments commit themselves to co-operate with all groups of society in the development of a Local Agenda.

The Climate Alliance of European Cities with Indigenous Peoples is a very active partner in many LA21 processes. Member cities commit themselves to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to ban tropical wood in public projects as a measure to protect tropical forests. They co-operate to develop local strategies of climate protection and to improve the framework conditions for an environment friendly energy and transport policy.

5 Partners in development

Bremen, a city state in Northern Germany, has a long history of links with the world. The second most important German port after Hamburg, it is the seat of powerful trading houses, coffee importers and shipping lines. It too was one of the first German cities to initiate with the Indian city of Pune a city partnership outside of Europe and to set up an Office for Development Cooperation.

Not surprisingly, after the “Bremen call to initiate a Local Agenda 21” was signed by the city mayor in June 1996, “international cooperation and partnerships” became one of the seven working groups set up to promote the LA21. As part of the “Charter Project”, a joint programme by ICLEI, IULA and Towns & Development [see box 3: *Networking*] to implement bilateral agreements between municipalities in North and South to support each other in the development of LA21. Windhoek, the capital of Namibia, became another partner city. Contacts to the present governing party and former liberation movement SWAPO have existed since 1979. Also, NGOs based in Bremen, have contacts to Namibia, for example promoting the installation of solar cookers in day nurseries with the involvement of women who manage these projects.

One example of an activity, which has become possible through the close linkage between the city partnership, the Agenda process and the civil society activities is “Saving electricity in Bremen’s churches”. A large part of the money saved through reduced electricity consumption is paid into a joint church fund, from which decentralised energy

supply projects in Namibia are supported. Further activities are being planned, contributing to greenhouse gas mitigation.

Bremen too launched a campaign aimed at strengthening the LA21 process in Windhoek, and declared its willingness to promote local civil society networks in order to support and further expand the Agenda process in Windhoek. For this, an intensive cooperation and exchange of experience on common problems and on handling of issues related to sustainable development shall take place, in which both sides can learn from each other.

One idea, how this can happen, is to have the partner organisations from Windhoek carry out a study how Bremen’s citizens think about sustainability and global interdependence. The findings shall then be debated in the Agenda bodies.

But most observers agree, that the process is developing very slowly. One explanation given is, that actors have very different approaches and cultures. Although many citizens are involved in the Agenda process in Windhoek, the black population majority is largely absent, as are women. Like in many Agenda municipalities in Germany, in Windhoek Agenda 21 is frequently reduced to environmental issues, so it is hard to achieve broad public participation in view of the urgent problems of poverty and unemployment. And the administration in Windhoek prefers to develop poverty reduction projects.

Unlike in Bremen, One World issues are not the usual “entry points” for

Agenda processes, Ulrich Nitschke from CAF/Agenda Transfer in Bonn observes. Only five percent of the more than 4.500 city partnerships in Germany, an idea, which came up after the Second World War to promote friendship and support across borders and to reduce barriers and even hostility between long time enemies like France and Germany, are with cities in the South. And environment, town development, economic changes or traffic are more visible, immediate problems.

To strengthen the North-South issues, the state of North-Rhine Westphalia pioneered a programme of Third-World-Promoters, which has been taken up by other states as well. Many of them have first hand experience in Third World countries as volunteers. Very often, there they learned about the relevance of people's participation, and ideas like "people centred development", which they now try to introduce as "development aid workers" in Germany.

For many Third World initiatives and solidarity groups, the Agenda process opens up opportunities to reach new groups and to involve new actors in Third World issues. In addition to awareness creation on development issues and development policy by information, publications or public discussions, LA21 offers an opportunity for political influence, at least at the local level.

There exist already quite a few activities, to be included in LA21 programmes, besides city partnerships. The promotion of "fairly" traded products, campaigns against child labour or the Clean Clothes Campaign for example

find tremendous response in Agenda processes, linking local activities and individual behaviour with "global" issues like trade relations, foreign debt or the power of multinational corporations.

Farmers in the northern German state of Lower Saxony for example exchange information with peasants and the movement of landless people MST in Brazil about access to land or the environmental and economic problems of growing and exporting soy beans as cattle feed. The people of Hellersdorf, a district of Berlin, supported the construction of a school in Maputo, Mozambique. When donations proved to be insufficient, children and students collected tins, bottles and plastic waste from streets and parks and sold it to recycling companies. Thus, the money for the roof of the school was raised and the green areas of Hellersdorf were cleaned up – environment and development benefited.

6 Blind Spots

Sustainability is for us an important trade issue, says Klaus Wilmsen, in charge of environment at the Karstadt AG, a large department store chain. Therefore, the company wants to promote products from "fair trade" and increase its share further from just two percent.

Department stores, supermarkets, food processors and industries become more and more aware of their responsibility for the environment or social standards. Eco-audit, Eco-labels, recycling and resource flow management contribute to a "greening of industry", labels like Rugmark for carpets without exploitative child labour or for Colombian

flowers, grown without health hazards for the women workers are spreading. But most of these activities have been started outside the Agenda process. To motivate companies or industries to participate in the Local Agenda 21 process, communicating with other actors and trying to sort out possible conflicts of interests proves difficult.

Large companies like Karstadt, which operate on a national or even global level, decide about their policy not at the local level. Others are sceptical or even hostile. They often suspect more regulations and limitations, especially from ecological demands. Not surprisingly for example, the spokesman for Mercedes in a hearing on the Local Agenda in Hanover rejected the idea to reduce private transport in the cities. Other comments at the hearing were “unrealistic”, “romantic”, “out of this world” and “restrictive”.

Social issues too are neglected in many Agenda processes. Unemployed people, migrants or trade unions are hardly involved, their situation, problems and needs not sufficiently included. Projects like in Aachen are still rare: There, a church parish, a social organisation, the association of building cleaners and teachers from a job training school joined and started a small cleaning company, where six unemployed women, migrants as well as Germans, found a new job.

7 From dialogue to action

Münster, often described as the unofficial “agenda capital” of North-Rhine Westphalia, was one of the first cities to complete a Local Agenda 21. Several

working groups and citizens groups over a period of two years developed more than 80 proposals like a Department for cultural diversity, a revival of the defunct regional railway, a trade mark to promote regional products and a system for resource flow management within the municipality. “Now it must go on. Now it will go on”, was the mood of the participating organisations, initiatives and individuals, after the city council accepted the Agenda, but decided at the same time to close down the Agenda Office, which had facilitated the dialogue and discussions. Now, the different departments are in charge to implement the proposals, a process, “which moves at different speed and different intensity”, as Anne Peters, who headed the Agenda Office, says.

After finalising the LA21 it is mainly up to the local government and administration as the “lead actor” to implement the concept. As Jürgen Maier, co-ordinator of the Forum Environment and Development in Bonn, set up to coordinate the NGO-activities in the post Rio process, warns, that while participation of citizens is necessary, it can not be a substitute for firm actions and decisions by the municipalities themselves.

Like Münster, more and more municipalities and towns are now reaching a point, where the question of implementation in a systematic way comes up, after years of sometimes heated debates, discussions of possible solutions, stock taking of problems and ideas, exchange of experiences, planning and lobbying. So far, a sometimes impressive range of single activities or projects have been realised. But taking the Agenda process

serious means much more. As the “Charter of Aalborg” declared, the LA21 is only a chance to strengthen local policy and local identity if it succeeds to establish an integrated, holistic and sustainable solution for the problems faced.

But in many cases, LA21 seems to be just a new label for things, the administration has been doing anyway. The integration of different resorts policies, so vital for the process, is often missing, says Bernd Hamm, Professor for Sociology on Habitat, Environment and Planning. Even agenda enthusiasts like Ernst Welters, councillor for the Youth and the Environment in Berlin-Köpenick admit, that mayors and city councillors may see the LA21 as some sort of public relations measure to improve the popular image of the local government, while in day to day politics, the usual short term considerations, financial constraints or party politics continue to dominate the agenda.

While Environment Departments like in Berlin-Köpenick, Offices for Development Cooperation like in Bremen, or Women Offices like in Duisburg may be enthusiastic about the chances of the Agenda process, the “hard issue” resorts like industrial policy or finance, which have to be prepared to shift resources towards the Agenda activities, may be reluctant or even hostile, once the step from dialogue and discussions to action is necessary. This conflict is further aggravated by the financial situation of most towns and municipalities, which are heavily indebted. Their budgets are tied by fixed expenses for salaries, debt service, social services and social welfare. This underlines the necessity of having independent funds for the

Agenda process like in North-Rhine Westphalia, a privilege, which is far from normal for most municipalities.

Another shadow over the future of the LA21 is the tendency to reduce and limit further the already limited rights of local governments through central legislation in favour of regional governments or even the national authorities. To speed up infrastructure projects or to attract investments, the participation at the local level is being cut back and the powers of municipalities and citizens to be heard on plans and to raise objections is being curtailed.

But what is needed is the opposite, says Jürgen Maier. Without pressure and changes from below, there will hardly be any progress at the global level, he says. And for building up such pressure and promoting changes, local activities need to have more influence, decision making powers and space, not less.

Here and there, there are also signs of frustration among actors and activists coming up. One reason is the lack of support from above. Even with a Green Party in power in some of the states and at the central government, the Agenda process and the development of a National Strategy of Sustainability has a very low profile. Neither the former Minister for the Environment, Klaus Töpfer, nor the present one Jürgen Trittin from Bündnis 90/Die Grünen ever moved a national resolution to promote LA21, Albrecht Hoffman from CAF/Agenda Transfer Office regrets. And there has been little support from the national level to strengthen the Agenda process.

Another reason is the time and energy needed to move the process forward, often only inch by inch. There are working groups, forums, co-ordinating bodies, advisory boards, and public gatherings to be attended. Proposals have to be written or commented upon, information distributed and publications produced. Several networks of agenda towns or on issues like climate change or North-South relations have been set up at the regional, the national and even at the international level and put another obligation on activists, many of them volunteers or paid from employment generation funds for just one or two years. Jörg Pietschmann, who works in Berlin as a consultant for Agenda groups, observes, that “many initiatives on development policy withdraw from the discussions about the LA21 because of the workload involved”.

Of course, it is still too early to see results of the LA21. But its limitations become more and more visible. “Faced with limited responsibilities, little will to the required changes and chronically low funds, the LA21 soon reaches its political limits”, says Jürgen Maier. Some consider it already as a “playground” for academicians, NGOs and local groups, with little consequences for real politics, lest steps forward towards sustainability. Compared to the activities on paper, there is too little political action, observes Bernd Hamm too.

Still, Bernd Hamm offers a different, more optimistic interpretation for the gap between a lively dialogue process and progress on the ground, between knowledge and action. Civil society is pushing and demanding an implementation of the LA21, he believes, and the plethora of activities could be a sign of a “new, participatory model of society”, oriented towards more self sufficiency and independent organisation. But the necessary and unavoidable reforms are still resisted by the “dinosaurs”, the decision makers in politics and society.*

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**LOCAL AGENDA 21 AND
LOCAL
GOVERNMENT IN
GERMANY:
A VIEW INSIDE**

Hildegard Pamme

1 Introduction

Although Local Agenda 21 (LA 21) got started rather late in Germany, there has been a continuous increase in the numbers of local initiatives in favor of sustainability since the middle of the nineties. The number of towns and cities initiating a LA 21 resolution has increased (see Chapter 5). A wide network of nongovernmental organizations which support “sustainable change” has emerged (Höring, in this report). Even at the federal level and in some ‘Länder’,¹⁷ first steps toward “sustainable strategies” are being taken (Stephan in this report). Some municipalities are making efforts to develop indicators to measure the progress in relevant projects, others are implementing best-practice “sustainable projects” (Höring, in this report), while other municipalities are still discussing and arguing about the idea of sustainability. A few have taken all of the necessary steps. Most of these ‘sustainable developments’ are located in new participatory networks in which citizens, politicians and members of interest groups are working out their visions of life.

A special feature of LA 21 in Germany is the fact that it is perceived not only as a movement within civil society

but also as an effort to integrate sustainability into the institutions of the political-administrative-system (PAS). The present contribution will discuss local government and in particular local administration as one of these institutions.

The following essay attempts to describe the current situation of local administration¹⁸ with regard to LA 21 processes: What it should be – according to the goals of the (global) Agenda 21 and its follow-up, and what it is – as described by empirical studies. I start out with a short introduction on the status of local administration/government in German federalism with a view to making clear the latter's specific scope of action as well as some restrictions. The distinction made in the following section between local council¹⁹ and local administration is intended to give an impression of the local PAS. Actions undertaken on behalf of LA 21 are conditioned by both.

2 Constitutional arrangement of local government in Germany: A short introduction

The self-government of German local authorities is not as extensive as international comparisons may suggest. The scope of local responsibilities depends partly on the way they are integrated into the federal system and partly on the constitutional right of self-administration.

¹⁷ ‘Länder’ = german federal states

¹⁸ local administration = ‘Kommunalverwaltung’

¹⁹ local council = ‘Stadtrat’ or ‘Kommunalparlament’

As formulated in Article 28 of the German constitution, local authorities have the right to decide on all local affairs –albeit within the constraints of current law. Local autonomy is restricted by the division of functions and responsibilities under German federalism - concerning legislative, administrative and fiscal powers. Although different constitutional articles give legislative powers to the *Länder*, in practice most legislation is effected by the federal government. The *Länder* are responsible for administration (Diekmann 1998). Finally, in about 80% of public tasks policy implementation is the job of local authorities.

Local influence on policy-making depends on the character of individual policies: If it is national or *Länder* law that is being implemented, local influence is limited, whereas there is a high degree of local autonomy in developing ‘voluntary local programs’ (Sundermann 1995, p. 56ff.).

In consequence, the number of issues regulated under federal or *Länder* laws determine the scope of local autonomy. Both the development of the welfare state and the federal planning and environmental policies typical of the seventies saw an increase in the number of laws in effect. And it was not only the number of laws, it was also the degree of policy regulation that increased: Technical and quality standards in social and ecological policy as well as in planning procedures became very detailed and – as a consequence - limited local self-administration (Grunow/Pamme 2001).

Last but not least, the opportunities of local self-government are determined

by financial situation. As far as the implementation of laws is concerned, the federal and *Länder* governments are obliged to provide resources for implementation. Because of the difficulties in estimating the required resources, local authorities, the federal government, and the *Länder* evaluate and describe requirements quite differently: the local level regularly complains about financial shortfalls.

To reduce these shortfalls, local governments have had to reduce both the tasks they decide to undertake themselves and the services they provide to the public: The more costly the tasks transferred by the legislation of the federal government and the *Länder* to local governments, the less autonomy and freely available financial resources local governments have. This cost-cutting trend in local government is typical of the development in recent decades.

No local approval is required for the allocation of fiscal resources in the federal system. Cities levy rates and other charges, but this accounts for only half the resources they need. Furthermore, the majority of local tax revenues come from tax cooperation between federal government and the *Länder*, without any formal influence of the municipalities.

Another influence of the federal government and the *Länder* is what is known as the „golden reins“: Many local public investments are supported by federal or *Länder* financial contributions. A share of these contributions is earmarked for special investment projects. By deciding which projects are to be supported, the federal government and the

Länder influence municipal decision-making.

What does this imply for the scope of local action? All areas of local tasks and activities are influenced by the legislation and financial limitations imposed by the federal or *Länder* governments. In addition, the success of local initiatives is also governed by the economic situation of the region and its economic resources, the participation of citizens and local initiatives, the local budget, the unemployment figures, the level of education and even the discretionary powers exercised by the local authorities.

3 Local council and local administration

The formal decision-making process and the implementation of public tasks at the local level is dominated by two main actors: The local council and local administration. The local council decides on specific local programs, projects and modes of implementation; local administration implements instructions from the local council as well as federal and *Länder* laws (see above). The relationship between council and administration is a complex interdependence: In most cases the administration cannot act without the agreement of the council, nor is the council able to work without the preparatory work done by its administration. With regard to LA 21, the local council has to decide on the general initiation of the process. Local administration is responsible for the organization and implementation of the process. At the same time, permanent feedback to

the council is necessary to prepare and anticipate its future decisions.

This essay concentrates on local administration. We will start out by describing expectations at the local level. These are taken as evaluation criteria for LA 21; they will be analyzed subsequently.

4 The role of local administration in Local Agenda 21 processes: What it should be

Chapter 28 of the (global) Agenda 21 assigns to local authorities the responsibility to incorporate the idea of sustainable development into their local policy. To accomplish this, the local authorities are required to initiate, organize and implement a consensual dialogue process between local government, local interest groups and citizens.

Concentrating on general issues, and bearing in mind the concept of sustainability in Agenda 21 (Fues 1998, p. 59ff.), the following points may give an idea of “local sustainable policies and politics”:

- a) Activities and programs bearing on development policy should be initiated at the local level.
- b) Preventive environmental policies should be taken into consideration in all local problems and decisions.
- c) There should be compliance with the ‘polluter-pays principle’ in all local policies.
- d) Activities aiming at a shift in consumer behavior and in the conditions of production need to be initiated in order to achieve a fairer distribution of resources between

industrialized and developing countries.

As regards the academic discussion on sustainability, three conceptual dimensions are emphasized (Arts 1994): the ecological, the economic and the social. The social dimension includes issues of justice both between industrialized and developing countries and within societies in the industrialized countries (Enquete-Kommission 1994). Local sustainability policies have to consider this issue as well.

Sustainability is not only a question of policy. Questions of participation, that is the 'design' of politics, are as important as sustainability policies. In spite of the many possibilities available to participate in German local politics – as a member of a local parliament, as an interest group in corporate structures, as a citizen participating in a local referendum or in different planning procedures for example – a participatory debate on our common future is something new. New participation models with decision-making competences for civil society would be a step towards sustainability in terms of (global) Agenda 21. In consequence, the initiation of a participatory network is also a quality criteria for LA 21 processes.

To sum up, there are different roles conceivable for local administrations in LA 21 processes: They might include (a) the main players initiating, organizing and implementing the consensual dialogue process of LA 21, (b) the main players implementing a "sustainable change" in local policies, (c) a public consumer considering sustainability rules in its procurement practices, and,

finally, (d) a sponsor (know-how, staff, material or money) of "sustainable projects" created by civil society. We will now have a look at first empirical results concerning the progress with regard to LA 21 processes achieved thus far in Germany.

5 An empirical account of Local Agenda 21 processes in Germany

Based upon the data of CAF/Agenda Transfer, local councils have decided to initiate an LA 21 process in 11,6% of all German local governments (CAF-Agenda Transfer 2000). As regards the cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants, 84 of 85 cities have passed the respective resolution. Moreover, about 50 cities have completed their consultations, giving approval to a first concept of change in a final LA 21 document (Nitschke, in this report).

What are the processes about? Do they fulfill the expectations of the Earth Summit with regard to the local level? Unfortunately, no complete data are available for all the cities. But the DIFU²⁰ conducted surveys in 1996, 1997, and 1999, and some selected results for 150 larger German cities of Germany will be cited to document LA 21 processes in Germany and the role of local governments in these processes.

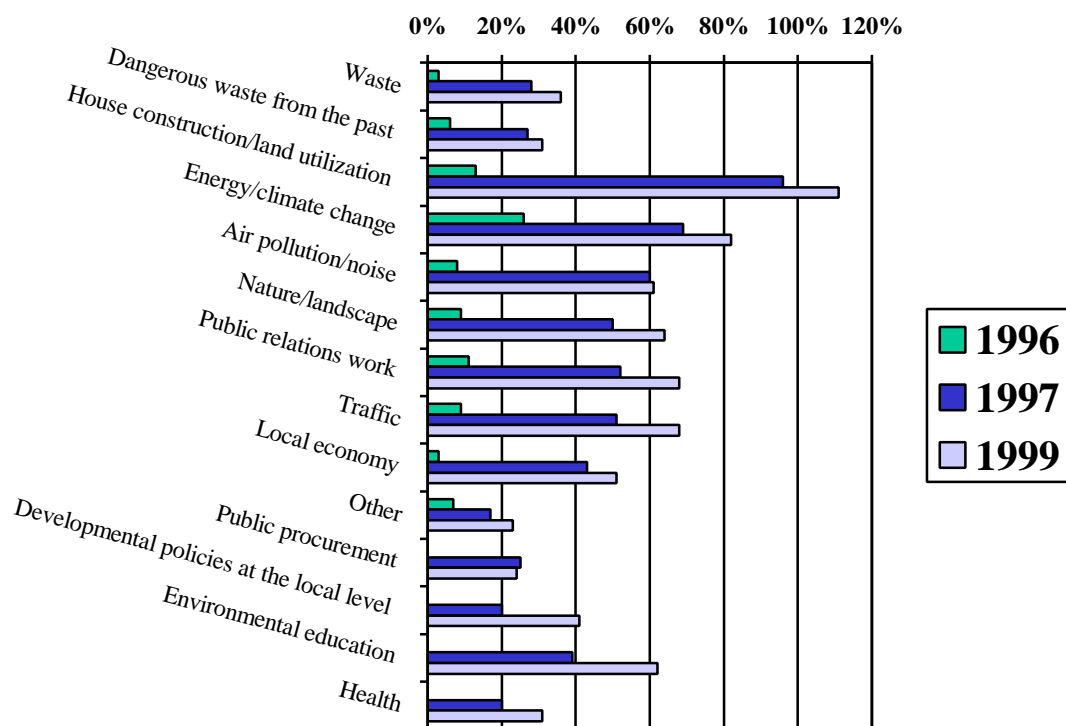
The first table gives a perspective of the main issues of LA 21 processes which have been discussed in its con-

²⁰ DIFU = „Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik“: Research institute of the „Deutsche Städte-tag“. The „Deutscher Städtetag“ represents the interests of the bigger cities at the federal level.

sultations. As regards the three dimensions of sustainability – ecological, economic and social – most of the issues named are ecological. Integration of developmental policy at the local level does not appear to be as important as it was expected to be. Issues such as local economy and local public procurement, which may be seen as the first signs of structural change, are of less importance. These are shortcomings of sustainability policies in local practice.

Table 1: Main Local Agenda 21 issues in Germany (multiple answers possible)

public procurement, developmental policy at the local level, environmental education and health were put on the agenda. This expansion continued in 1999 (data not included in Table 1), and the new issues – judging by the percentage they were awarded - were seen as important in the very same year in which they were introduced: projects for youth and children (about 53%), work and employment (48%), social policy in general (47%), town planning (47%), women’s projects and programs (44%), new life style and changes in consumption behavior (41%) and eco-audits (33%). The initial reservations on the concept of



Source: Difu, Special information, August 2000; Fig. 4 in Rösler, 1996

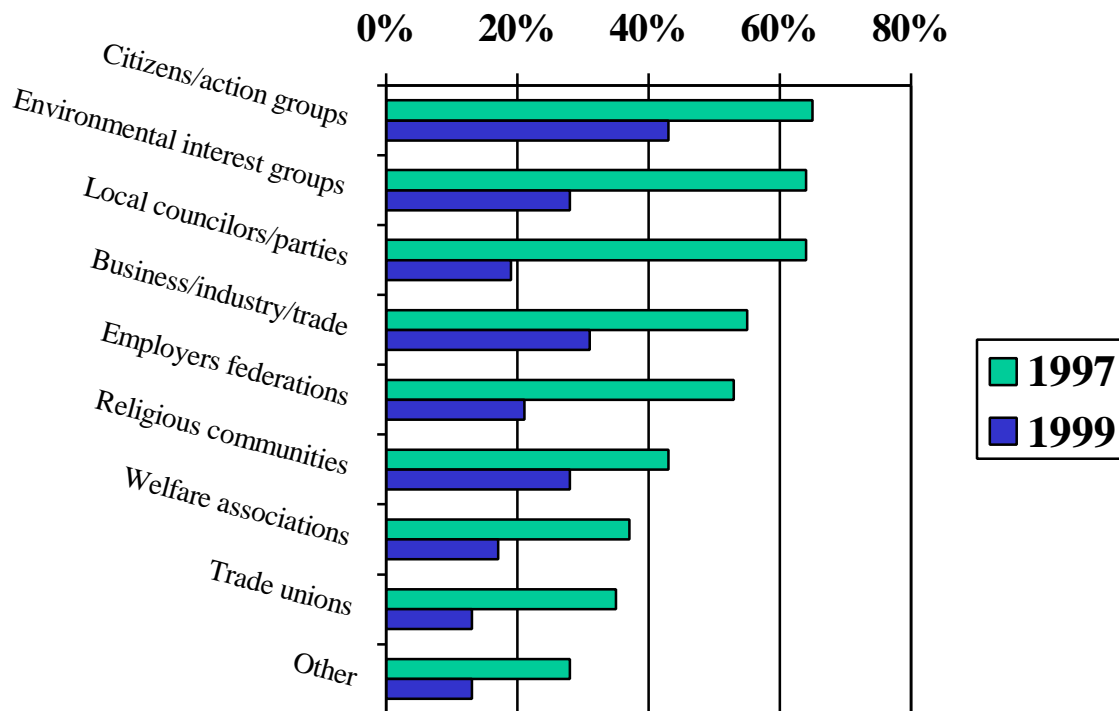
Furthermore, the figure shows the wide variety of subjects discussed in the consensual dialogue processes during the three years –as regards quantity and quality. In 1997 issues such as local

sustainability are coming to an end: Since 1999 the social and economic dimensions of sustainability have also come in for discussion.

This leads us to the next question: Who is discussing these issues in the cities?

Table 2: Participants of Local Agenda 21 processes (multiple answers possible)

At this point, it can be asked whether the actors of the representative political system have accorded decision-making power to other participants. The following figure attempts to answer this question.



Source: Difu, special information August 2000, data 1996 not available

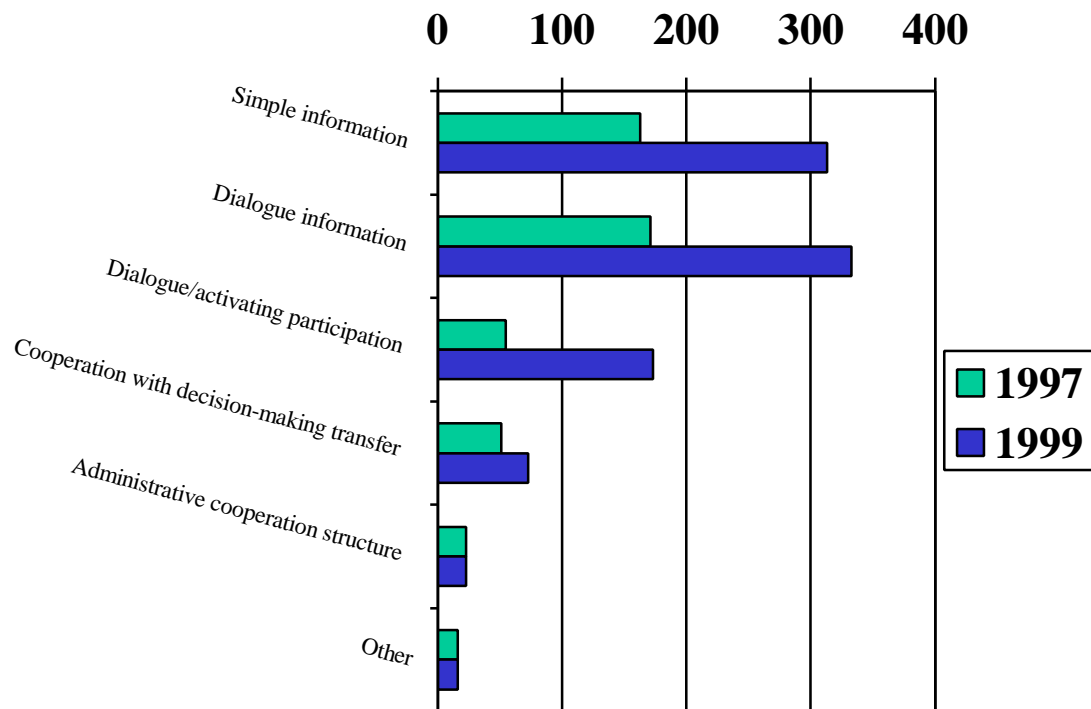
The figures indicate a broad participation of important local groups, though they show decreasing participation in 1999. Trade unions and welfare associations – seen as part of the social dimension of local politics – are less involved, but the mixture of participants is more widely distributed than the substantive issues might have suggested. Even local councilors and local parties participate – this is an indicator for my argument that the LA 21 processes are not only a movement within civil society.

Before Table 3 is looked into, the different categories have to be explained. Each category in Table 3 is a summary of information or participation models. The category „simple information“ includes activities such as cooperation with the press, television and radio, organizing and presenting special exhibitions and producing information papers. Within the following categories – including "cooperation in the transfer of decision-making" - the informational and dialogue aspects become less im-

portant and participation in the sense of decision-making increases.

Table 3: Degree of participation possibilities in Local Agenda 21 processes (total, multiple answers possible)

However, caution is required with respect to these conclusions. They are based only on data from about 150 local authorities. In addition, it is not clear to what extent the answers given are influ-



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ource: Difu, special information, August 2000, data 1996 not available

The figures indicate that there are few forms of participation in LA 21 processes which really share decision-making power. Even "dialogue/ activating participation" is not such an example. Different types of information distribution to the public account for most of the LA 21 activities.

The low level of importance of administration cooperation structures also has to be mentioned. What is meant here is the participation of local government staff, which should be the first step towards an integrative approach to implementing sustainability.

enced by the nature of the questionnaire.

But at least a trend can be inferred: The various activities do not affect the local political-administrative system as deeply as they should with a view to the normative concept described in Section 4 of this essay. A closer look into the functioning of local administration may explain the difference between this high 'output' of LA 21 effects and their low 'impact'.

6 Difficulties in implementing LA 21 processes: An empirical view with a focus on administration

The following arguments are based on various empirical studies on LA 21 - dealing with basic questions of implementation or examining specific LA 21 processes (Anton, 2000/ Bauersch, 2000/ Brand, Christ, Heimerl, 2000/de Haan, Kuckartz, Rheingans-Heintze, 2000/ FFU, Difu, 1999/ Hilligardt, Preiß, 2000/Kissling, 1998/ Tiedke, 2000/ Menzel, 2000/ Stark, 1999). Their empirical results need to be presented in a comparative way. They are therefore placed into a set of categories developed for implementation analysis (idea from: Mayntz, 1978, pp. 12f.). This makes it possible to address and look into the question of what role local administration plays in LA 21 processes. The following list of issues is based on these considerations:

- characteristics of the responsible coordinating bodies in local administration;
- characteristics of the implementation structure in the administrative organization;
- relationship towards the administrative leadership positions in the administrative organization;
- relation to local politics;
- relation between the coordinating body responsible for LA 21 and the dialogue network;
- implementation structure of LA 21 network;
- characteristics of (Local) Agenda 21 policies, politics and polities;

The functions of the coordinating bodies are restricted by a lack of money and staff. All studies emphasize the important role of sufficient manpower and financial resources for a successful LA 21 process. The small LA 21 offices are not concerned with 'normal' tasks of local administration; the LA 21 coordinators thus often do their jobs without being integrated in the administrative structure.

In addition, in most cases the coordinating jobs are assigned to temporary staff. Typically, they are held by previously unemployed people who are employed on the basis of a job-training scheme. Their status inside the organizational hierarchy and vis-à-vis the local participants is therefore low. They often lack specific administrative skills, and this reinforces the difficulties.

Empirical studies indicate that a high level of personal involvement on the part of the coordinators is necessary to secure a positive effect on sustainability issues. At the same time, the results show that thus far, the idea of LA 21 has not become deeply rooted in organizational and staff structures: There is constant need for individual support.

The **characteristics of the implementation structures inside the local administrative organizations** are faced with structural and personal problems. Structural problems are due to the lack of sustainability-related responsibilities and processes within the administrative organizations. The lack of routine cooperation between the different official bodies intensifies this problem. The integration of sustainability with respect to its ecological, economic and social di-

mensions in the organizational structures and processes is confronted with a bureaucratic division of labor. The first cooperative panels dealing with the issue of sustainability urgently need the personal commitment of individuals to survive.

Not only cooperation but also personal exchange of information in the bureaucratic structures pose difficulties. The surveys show that this is due to a lack of interest on the part of many public employees in supporting sustainability issues. There are different reasons:

Because of the non-integration of the consensual dialogue and the administrative implementation of sustainability, each “sustainable task” causes extra work. However, working priorities, are weighted against sustainability.

In the view of the public employees – especially those working in the area of traffic, planning, energy resources and other fields of local environmental policy – sustainability is not really new and therefore the motivation to take up the new task is low (Stephan, in this report).

Another handicap is the bureaucratic culture, which is characterized by single-issue competence, lack of flexibility and inability to cooperate.

The new participatory models of LA 21 sometimes give rise to reservations with regard to citizens' cooperation and participation – in fact, this ‘anxiety’ profoundly reduces the chance of administrative support for LA 21.

Considering the **relationship toward the administrative leadership in the administrative organization**, the

success of LA 21 is dependent on personal commitment of top officials. If LA 21 is not accepted at the top management level or if a lack of information disturbs the relationship between coordinators and top management, the chance of a successful LA 21 process is low. The situation is almost the same in **relation to local politics**: The close interconnection between local council and local administration in Germany requires good support among the local politicians. One consequence of a lack of interest on the part of the local councils is a lack of “sustainable inputs” into the task structures of local administration (see above).

In addition, most of the daily resolutions of the local councils are concerned not with sustainability issues but with, for instance, expansion of airports and roads. They are in competition with “sustainable change”.

As regards the **coordinating bodies and their relation to LA 21 dialogue networks**, one often reported difficulty is the inadequacy of public relations. A disturbed flow of information to the local economy or any other interest or issue group may deeply hinder the dialogue process. Lack of support from local mass media increases the problem. Powerful local players who see their interests well served by the political system are difficult to motivate to participate. They are, however, indispensable to a sustainable process.

As far as the **implementation structure of LA 21 network** is concerned, there are difficulties with the basic conditions of the dialogue process, the relationship between representative structures and LA 21 network and the

implementation of LA 21 programs and projects. The lacking integration of responsibilities in the local administrative organization and lack of strategic agreements in the initial LA 21 resolutions impede effective discussions. In addition, long planning sessions and discussions before action is taken contribute to a decrease in participant interest. The constant, frequent changes of membership in the action groups is a problem affecting effectiveness as well. Finally, the requirement of consensus as the mode of communication and decision-making in LA 21 processes is often not met during the discussions.

Assuming that a discussion leads to results in the LA 21 network, a new problem arises: How should the results of the LA 21 network be treated in the representative democratic system? The members of LA 21 action groups are not elected representatives of the population. Positions in the network are filled as well as possible – everyone who wants to participate is allowed to do so. This is not an exercise in representative democracy. The LA 21 network is confronted with the difficulties shared by all participatory models: widespread disillusionment over the inability of the political system to solve social problems.

Some of the implementation difficulties are rooted in the **characteristics of (Local) Agenda 21 policies, politics and polities**: The sustainability approach is at the same time a problem for implementation. With regard to the situation at the local level, the limitations of time and space built into a LA 21 process organization are incompatible with the long-term significance of “sustainable

change”. Real change is not achievable in a few years. In addition, environmental policies are often seen as identical with sustainability, and this reduces the political force of sustainability.

Furthermore, there are some specific characteristics of (Local) Agenda 21 policies which are difficult to implement though they are at the same time at the heart of the sustainability concept. One of these ambivalent points is the open character of sustainability: Strategic decision-making can be fairly unproblematic, but still, unperceived or unconsidered conflicts of interest resurface during (local) implementation. The complexity of sustainability - each and every issue is ‘sustainable’ – makes it very difficult to do justice to a “sustainable changing impulse”. Finally, the increasing length of time from the date of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992 has a disadvantageous effect on the public’s interest in sustainable development issues today.

The question of participation is open to general criticism with respect to (Local) Agenda 21. Is it realistic to expect a large group of people to participate in a never-ending, albeit far-sighted, process and make decisions on a future way of life? Many people say that it is not. And some others are convinced that the trend-setting approach of sustainability is wrong. Those who are convinced of a necessary change fear that the never-ending reflections about the aims of change have a depoliticizing effect: At the center of discussion is always what has to be achieved, and impacts and outcomes are not given due consideration.

All in all, these different problems analyzed by various empirical studies give an impression of what LA 21 is confronted with when it is being implemented at the local level. What conclusions can be drawn?

7 Conclusions

As regards the different roles of local administration and the implementation of LA 21, the following conclusions may serve to indicate the general trend.

Local administrations are very active as **leading players in initiating, organizing and implementing the consensual dialogue process of LA 21**. Even if participation is not as far-reaching as the LA 21 coordinators wish, the topics debated do cover important aspects of sustainability. Future efforts have to be directed towards development policies at the local level as well as at the social dimension of LA 21 processes. The initial trend should be reinforced. Equally, cooperation with the local economy and powerful interest groups has to be intensified.

The number of activities and projects is impressive, but there is a danger that they become stuck in political niches. This is evidenced by the superficial integration of sustainability into the administrative organization and the insufficient transfer of decision-making competences to civil society. Sometimes the LA 21 processes seem to be a pleasant political coffee-drinking session, and no one knows whether communication is the first step to well-grounded change or whether it will remain just a pleasant chat. To solve the problem, sustainability has to become part of organizational

change and bureaucratic reforms – although a connection with the New Public Management reform agenda is questionable (Pamme, 2000). Without a doubt, the success of the LA 21 process has to be transferred from committed individuals to organizational structures and procedures.

These questions also have an effect on **local government as the main player concerned with sustainable change in local policies**. Perhaps the five years of intensive LA 21 initiatives are too short a period for any trickle-down effect of sustainable ideas. But in order to promote “sustainable change,” the organizational conditions have to be improved in the direction of strategic management planning and integrative policy-making. Even if local government is constrained by financial austerity, it does have the option of supporting innovative sustainability projects and programs. Even the implementation of federal or *Länder* laws opens up such opportunities.

The role of local administration as a **public consumer taking account of “sustainable rules” in its own consumption** behavior cannot be evaluated on the basis of the surveys presented. The only indicator is low public procurement as an activity of LA 21 processes. This is exactly the same with **the sponsoring role** of local government. Lack of money is part of the problem, but it is not clear to what extent local governments are making financial resources available.

What may be concluded from the arguments presented is the important role of organizational change for the

success of LA 21 processes and, at the same time, the need for support of LA 21 by the European Union, by the German federal government, and by the *Länder*. A new organizational culture and "sustainable inputs" from the supralocal levels of the political-administrative system, innovative structures and management procedures as well as sufficient financial resources are necessary prerequisites.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES AND LOCAL AGENDA 21 PROCESS IN THE CASE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Kern Soo Yoon

1 Introduction

The Republic of Korea has experienced a dramatic economic transformation over the past three decades despite its relatively unfavourable initial conditions. Its astonishingly high sustained economic growth has been recently characterised in the development literature as a “Miracle”(Worldbank 1993). If one seeks to measure the country’s past development mainly relying on economic performance data, Korea seems to be a remarkable model for later developing countries, since it has succeeded in alleviating poverty through rapid industrialisation and now finds itself on the road to becoming an advanced industrialised country. But in appraising this rush industrialisation since the 1960s on a somewhat broader socio-economic basis, it is rather difficult to speak of a “Model Korea” in spite of the World Bank’s favourite representation of Korea as a model country marked by “growth with equity.” It becomes far more difficult and complicated to judge this issue, if one tries to overview the Korean development process from the perspective of quality of life or sustainable development. The experience of Korea can be more objectively described as “con-

densed growth”²¹, which abridged the normal development process as experienced in the western developed society by omitting or delaying the adjustments that accompany economic growth. As a matter of fact, Korea has lagged far behind in its recognition of environmental problems, and it is only very recently that the government has begun to respond to public demand for a cleaner environment.

As an introductory chapter to the following contributions on the Local Agenda 21 in Korea, I will try first to give a brief overview of the environmental consequences of rapid industrialisation in Korea in relation to economic strategies and industrial structures and then describe how citizens in Korea have responded to environmental challenges since the later 1980s. After this brief review of the development of citizen’s environmental movement, it will be concluded with some remarks on the possibility of sustainable development in

²¹ This description is very widely used in reform discussions since the later 1980s in Korea. It implies a verification of A. Gerschenkron’s hypothesis (1962) that the speed of industrialization in an underdeveloped country is usually much faster than that of advanced countries. In Japan K. Ohkawa used the expression *compressed growth* in the same context (Cho 1994, p.5). Recently this was also used by a social scientist in describing the situation in Korea faced by the financial crisis as follows, “There seems to be a sober awakening about their own miracle of achieving over a few decades what took Westerners two or three centuries. Such *compressed modernity* now turns out full of unexpected costs and risks that threatens the sheer sustainability, not to mention the further development, of current social and economic conditions.”(Chang, p 31)

relation to the current process of Local Agenda 21 in Korea.

2 Environmental Consequences of Rapid Industrialisation in Korea

The process of industrialisation in Korea was, unlike the case of the Western countries, planned and tightly controlled by the government. In the early stages of industrialisation, a highly authoritarian and repressive government, which had power that went far beyond that wielded by Western democratic governments, guided the direction of the industrialisation process to the extent that it virtually chose the industries to be created as well as the participants in such industries. And the ambitions, preferences, and even prejudices of the government were crucial in determining the trajectory of the country's rapid development.

When Korea embarked on the industrialisation process with the first five-year economic development plan in 1962, maximising the economic growth rate was given the highest priority as "the" national goal (You 1995). So the stage was set for a path of high economic growth at high social and environmental costs. In the following two decades, the attitude of the government towards the environment remained basically the same. Under an authoritarian regime wholly bent on economic growth, it was virtually impossible to disseminate information on the environmental degradation and its long-term effects on the quality of life of the population. It was even dangerous to engage in some political action aimed at changing the course of development towards an envi-

ronmentally friendly path. Although no reliable data exist on the state of the environment during this period, it is quite obvious that excessive environmental damage occurred. It was only after the beginning of the democratisation process in the later 1980s that the government undertook efforts to put into place environmental policy which deserves a mention.

Korea is one of the world's most densely populated countries. Its population grew rapidly after liberation from Japanese colonial rule, from 15 million in 1945 to nearly 47 million by the year 2000. And it is highly urbanised and regionally concentrated. More than half of the population lives in the six major cities and more than half of the whole population live around the capital city Seoul. But the economy expanded very rapidly, so in spite of growing population, GNP per capita grew very rapidly from \$67 in 1953 to \$1000 in 1977, \$2,000 in 1983, \$5,000 in 1989, and then in 1995, just before Korea became a new member of OECD, the figure went beyond a nominal \$10,000.

Korea's rapid industrialisation during the past 30 years has been astonishing by any standard. An export-oriented growth strategy, tremendous investment in heavy industries in the late 1960s and 1970s, and policies fostering the growth of Korean companies into large conglomerates combined to make South Korea into an advanced industrialising country within three decades (Cho 1994).

During these years the Korean economy experienced a major structural change. After a period of relatively la-

bor-intensive growth (1962-1971), basic industries like iron and steel, nonferrous metals and some chemicals grew rapidly from the beginning of the 1970s, and the drive into heavy and chemical industries accelerated up to the early 1980s. In the first half of the 1980s machinery, electrical machines, shipbuilding and the automobile industry were among the major rapidly growing industries, whereas the less pollution-intensive industries such as beverages, tobacco, and textiles grew slowly. In the second half of the 1980s and early 1990s, the former industries grew continuously and their share in industrial production already surpassed 30 % in 1989.

The rapid growth achieved in Korea with this industrial transformation was purchased at great environmental costs, which became visible in the early 1980s. The drive to "rush to industrialisation" has polluted air unbearably in major cities and industrial areas. And streams, rivers, and soils were badly polluted by acid rain, chemicals and chemical fertilisers. Since for 20 years environmental concerns were never considered in its economic development plans, Korea experienced the *classical* degradation of the environment through industrialisation. It is very difficult to show the environmental trends since the beginning of industrial take-off owing to lacking data in the earlier period and still existing vast discrepancy between official environmental statistics and perceived real situation²². As there is no alternative

information other than the official one, we can only identify some recent environmental trends based on the officially published information²³. So it may be asserted that Korea was no exception to the East Asian pattern of rapid industrialization without any environment concerns (O'Connor 1996), and did without the latecomer's advantage.

3 The Peoples' Response to Environmental Challenges in Korea: The Development of Korean Environmental Movements

Numerous polls conducted around the year 1990 show that clean water and air have become the most important public concern in Korea today (Koo 1996). Since their material well-being, especially that of the middle class has improved, people in Korea became more conscious of the environmental issues and took more active part in the environmental movements, especially since the beginning of the democratisation process in 1987.

Korean environmental movements have grown out of collective action by local environmental victims in the earlier phase of industrialisation since the mid-

lished with the recommendation words of Korean Archbishop Suwhan Kim. Time-series of some major environmental statistics are available from 1980 onwards. Environmental statistics in Korea are still very incomplete in scope, not to mention its quality. They cover less than 50% of the OECD standards for the present.

²² There exists only one critical report the „Pollution Map of Korea“ (1986) on the environmental situation in the 1970s. It was prepared by a dissident's group and pub-

²³ For the detailed official statistical information, see MOE 1998, MOE 2000 and OECD 1997.

dle of the 1960s²⁴. This was later combined with an organised effort through the establishment of the Pollution Research Institute (1982). Only after 1987, the movements has expanded to encompass civic movements²⁵.

While the industrial complex had grown rapidly, the environmental movement was still led by scattered groups of local residents suffering from industrial pollution. The government's policies at this period were simply to ignore calls for environmental protection, referring to the economic growth. The government in this period completely favoured industry by quashing local residents' complaints, denying compensation, and the simple use of police force and blockades. Industrial complexes recklessly spread air pollution, water contamination and industrial waste, ultimately to levels endangering the health and lives of both employees and residents. But there was virtually no citizens' environmental organisation, except "official" ones. This was the dark period of the environmental movement, harshly suppressed by government and not receiving broad social support.

Only after the assassination of President Park in October 1979 (the "1980 Spring of Seoul") environmental protection was for the first time constitutionally guaranteed, and the Admini-

stration of the Environment was established. This new agency began to address the accumulated environmental problems and to respond to public demands, which led to an improved social atmosphere for the activities of the environmental movement. Actually, during the period between 1980 and 1987, the environmental movement gained some momentum, but at that period the movement was mainly led by social activists. Environmental organisations were still unable to transcend local conditions and each group concentrated their activities on their own immediate interests. Though citizens' movements during this period had not much effect on the government policy, there were some successful cases. The Ulsan and Onsan residents' environment movements had forced the government to involve itself in the investigation of polluted areas, and this at last resulted in a relocation of inhabitants. The "Protect the Youngsan River" campaign in 1983 was a partial success and led to abandon the plan to establish the Jin Ro Wine Company in this area.

1987 was a milestone for Korean democracy. Thanks to the success of the democratisation movement, freedom of speech was bolstered in June 1987 and further accelerated by the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games. The environmental-movement activists took full advantage of this atmosphere to enhance public environmental awareness and to attract numerous professionals. Many citizens joined the movement, and the government's suspicion about environmental activism began to fade. Also, professional environmentalists and scientists

²⁴ The first Korean environmental action was recorded in 1966, an anti-air pollution protest against a thermoelectric plant in Pusan.

²⁵ On the development of democratization and civil society in Korea, see the special issue on that topic in *Korea Journal*, Autumn 2000, issued by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO.

brought new authority and credibility to environmental activism, and the press stepped up its coverage of environmental issues.

The environmental movement had grown rapidly by the end of the 1980s. This rapid growth was invoked also by the big environmental incidents. In 1989 water-quality analysis showed heavy metal and water contamination in four large rivers. And again in 1990 several incidents of drinking water contamination were discovered. The activities of environmental organisations and the media coverage on these very visible pollution incidents awakened public awareness and drew nation-wide attention and condemnation.

In this period the environmental movement began to influence public policy and the movement had proceeded increasingly from fighting for victim compensation after incidents to fighting for prevention of potential dangers. In the beginning of this period, the government merely responded to environmentalism, without offering support or even much attention. Since the government still viewed environmental activism negatively, it simply sought to ignore the movement. The mass media also tended to limit the scope of environmental exposés, reducing them to shocking but short-lived feature articles without any productive in-depth analysis. But ever-stronger green voices and ever-increasing media attention eventually led the government to respond to public opinion and alter its policies. Professionals worked to reduce dangers and to guide public participation in policy-making. Thus numerous development

plans for nuclear and solid waste disposal sites and golf courses were postponed and some were cancelled. The environmental movement made the government realise the importance of citizens' participation in the environmental-policy arena.

With the partial implementation of local autonomy in 1991 and the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio, the citizens' environmental movement in Korea expanded strongly. From their early protests against water pollution and nuclear waste disposal, the movements changed their focus to international and global issues and began considering a greening of capitalism in Korea.

The UNCED (1992) had a great impact on the Korean Green movement. First, Green activism moved on to a larger scale, no longer limited to Seoul now but expanding rapidly into a nationwide network of organisations²⁶. Renaming of the organisations, expanded interests in global issues, and emphasis on public education issues characterise this period. As Korean environmental organisations shared common interests

²⁶ According to the recent annual report "2000 Environmental White Book" published by the Ministry of the Environment (MOE), there were 454 environmental NGOs in Korea at the end of December 1999. They are classified in three categories, depending on whether the organisations were legally registered with or permitted by the responsible ministry for certain activities. Only 136 of them are environmental NGOs registered with the MOE. Others are unregistered environmental groups, about 50 of them originated from other social movements, which are now active also in environmental issues.

with foreign environmental activists, they have tried to build networks to ad-

making and their organisations often collaborate with the government to fur-

Table 1: Characterization of Korean Green Movements

	I. Period (61-80)	2. Period (80-87)	3. Period (87-92)	4. Period (92-)
Participants	Victims	victims and third parties	victims and third parties	general public
Timing of action	after incident	after incident	after/before incident	after/before incident
Sphere of activity	Local	local	regional	national and global
Target of activity	Polluter	polluter and government	government and polluter	public and government
Major activity	Ulsan area protest	Onsan area protest	Anti-nuclear movement	education, monitoring and participation
Impact on government policy	None	Little	A little on implementation	Much on formulation and implementation

Source: Jeong/Lee 1996 and Koo 1996

dress global issues as well as domestic ones. Second, the environmental movement was able to gain public support by releasing environmental information and blocking further business and government development plans that might endanger the environment. The loss of valuable natural resources caused by the destruction of the environment led people to coalesce together with environmental activists to form their own eco-plans, rejecting the government's technocratic, short-sighted solutions. The Korean government's attitude shifted positively, embracing the citizens' movement. Gradually, the Korean government's intransigence and suspicion gave way to free exchange of information and it adopted an environmental policy-making process that allows the opinions of its citizen stakeholders to be involved. It is remarkable that environmental activists are now beginning to participate in the government's policy

ther greater public interest (Lee 2000). Table 1 summarises the main characteristics of the environmental movement in Korea.

4 Concluding Remarks

Growing out of earlier victim's protest movements under the repressive conditions of an authoritarian regime that gave its highest priority to a rapid economic growth that paid almost no heed to the environmental consequences, the environmental organisations were recruited mostly from democratisation or anti-government activists who showed a tendency to utilise the movement to achieve their own political aims. But it did not take long for the Korean environmental movement to rouse public awareness and begin to alter government policy processes. The movement has only been able gradually to gain public credence and bring about the participation of environ-

mental scientists, doctors and lawyers, as well as their professional organisations.

Though the NGOs have expanded greatly and gained much popularity and creditworthiness in the 1990s, the Korean environmental movement still has numerous shortfalls (See the following contribution) Most of the organisations are financially weak, geographically centralised in Seoul and lacking the professional staff to support their activities. In spite of these, the Korean environmental movement will continue to expand its activities through the dedicated activists and thus Korean citizens will have more opportunities to speak out, participate actively in the public policy-making and implementation processes as in the case of Local Agenda 21²⁷. But in order to influence government policies effectively by means of an alternative strategy and workable solutions, expertise in the latest scientific knowledge and policy menus are badly needed. As repeatedly pointed out, Local Agenda 21 in Korea was not based on serious discussions about a sustainable development process and was rapidly prepared by too few experts and bureaucrats. The remarkable numbers of formally prepared agendas mask the absence of stakeholder participation as well as the integration of indigenous knowledge. More close links and networking with international environmental organisations will be helpful for the actors in the Local Agenda 21 in Korea to deepen

their understanding of sustainable development and to design more realistic action plans appropriate to their own local conditions.

Since 1992, increasing public demand for a better environment and global environmental discussions have led the Korean government to change some of its policy objectives towards a harmony between economic growth and the preservation of the environment. The government has established necessary regulatory and institutional mechanisms and is pursuing more effective enforcement. But there still remains much to be done for the country's sustainable development (Eder, 1996). Even though public awareness of and policy response to the environmental challenges in Korea has been improved, it is still at the infant stage in terms of becoming part of the daily way of consumption and production. Most problematical and difficult to solve is the reality that the strategic priority of the environment is still far behind the level required in all sectors of the government and businesses.

More participatory processes in the context of Local Agenda 21 will make the people think twice about the consequences of rapid industrialisation as "poisoned prosperity" (Eder 1996), and to pay more attention to the environment, and the necessity of balancing the economy with the environment.

²⁷ They could even fight for political reforms successfully by forming "the Citizens' Alliance for the 2000 General Elections" in order to prevent the political parties from nominating "unfit" candidates.

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**THE PROCESS OF LOCAL
AGENDA
21 INITIATIVES IN KOREA
AND
THE ROLE OF NGOS**

Myong-Jae Cha

1 Outline

The 2nd National Congress of Local Agenda 21 was held in Incheon in late September, 2000. As a result of the 1st National Congress of Local Agenda 21, which was held in Cheju Island in September, 1999, the National Council of Local Agenda 21 was constituted and a general meeting was held. The constitution of a council at the national level will provide an opportunity to actively conduct the Local Agenda 21 initiatives in Korea. By establishing close ties with overseas initiatives, the future of the Agenda process in Korea looks bright.

In addition, the government has established the Council of Sustainable Development in Korea in September 2000, which was a long cherished ambition of environmental groups, and has laid down the basis for Korea to implement environmental policies at an international level. Currently, all 16 major cities have finished the preparation of Local Agenda 21, and of the 232 smaller towns, 112 entities have finished preparations and 61 are in the process of doing so. Thus, 71.6% are actively participating in this movement. Moreover, the remaining 59 towns are positively considering their participation. In this sense, Korea may be one of the leading countries in the Local Agenda process along with several Scandinavian countries and the UK.

There are various explanations for the success of Local Agenda 21 in Korea, which has been established with the participation of local governments, enterprises, and citizens supported by regional environmentally sound development plans.

First of all, the worsening environmental crisis in Korea should be mentioned. Among Koreans the concern about environmental issues, e.g. natural disasters such as climate change, is growing. Therefore, Korea's awareness of the need to cope with environmental issues is increasing, and also, throughout society, the importance of environmental issues is expanding.

The second important factor is that democracy as a system has been consolidated. Since the 1990s, democratization has spread throughout our society. As military dictatorship came to an end in the late 1980s and the civilian government came into office, the democratic movement has articulated the public's desire for freedom and democracy, which was suppressed for a long time, and through this the civil society showed rapid growth. Moreover, as democratic elections were held, democracy as an institution grew rapidly and along with the re-distribution of power, the broad participation of citizens in politics increased. The government now needs to satisfy the citizens' desires and to carefully listen to their requests and take action as well.

Thirdly, even in the 1990s when Korea faced an economic crisis, the economy continued to grow and the middle class broadly started to form. This middle class rejects uniformity,

vertical thinking and traditional values of the past, and makes an effort to find a way of life that corresponds to their intellectual, cultural, economical and political aspirations. The efforts of the middle class have not been limited to pursuing economic wealth, but include diverse social and cultural desires as well as political and have become an important reason for the development of a civil society. In addition, economic development has brought out specialization and differentiation of society, and has provided the opportunity for a pluralistic democracy to develop and mature.

Finally, the expansion of civil society and the development of the civil movement should be mentioned. The civil movement that followed the tradition of the opposition movement and the democratic movement experienced a remarkable development during a short period of ten years. Before the 90s there were not that many NGOs. However, according to a recent report in 1999 there were over 20,000 NGOs (nation-wide). During the general elections in April 2000, the increased social influence through the activities of the General Elections Solidarity Civil Movement (in which more than 981 NGOs participated) was remarkable.

The development of the environment movement in Korea is one aspect of the active civil movement. Similar to other civil movements, the environment movement also experienced rapid growth and expanded social influence. In addition, being aware of the international trends in environmental issues, the expanding environment movement not

only has great interest in domestic environmental issues, but in global issues as well. In particular, during the Rio Conference for global environmental issues, more than 10 people from Korea's non-governmental groups participated and actively exchanged views with their foreign counterparts. In addition, by accepting Agenda 21 and Local Agenda 21, which are the result of the Rio Conference, these documents were introduced to the domestic environmental movement. The success of Local Agenda 21 in Korea is due to the endeavors of these environmental NGOs.

In this article the role that environmental NGOs in Korea have played in the Local Agenda 21 process will be analyzed. To do this, the activities of the General Election Solidarity Civil Movement will be briefly explained as an example of the concrete activities of NGOs in Korea. In addition I will focus on the formation of the Korean civil society, characteristics of the state, and social influence of the civil movement. By discussing the overall civil movement, it is possible to provide an insight into the differences of Korea's civil movement compared to other countries, the internal structure of the new social movement, and through this on how Korea's civil society will develop in the future. In this context, differences in the Local Agenda 21 process between the regions where civil groups and NGOs actively participated and the regions without this participation may have a very important meaning.

2 Status of the Local Agenda 21 Process in Korea

As mentioned above, almost all of Korea's Local Agenda 21 initiatives are promoted by the local government. As of June 2000, all major cities and 71% of the smaller towns have already prepared a Local Agenda or are in the process of preparation. The number of Korea's Local Agenda 21 initiatives increased by 9% compared to 1999 and many other towns are expected to participate in this endeavor. Even though the Local Agenda 21 process can show noticeable achievements in quantitative terms, serious problems still remain due to the lack of quality. Most of the local governments place too much emphasis on the formal results, not on accepting the spirit and contents of Local Agenda 21. There are 9 major cities and merely 23 smaller towns that have established secretariats that systematically prepare Agendas. In the case of major cities this amounts to more than half, and for smaller towns, it amounts to 11%, out of the total of 232. This implies that the main objective lies in preparing the Agenda, not in making an effort to solve Agenda issues or to achieve the goals, which indicates the lack of the local governments' political will.

3 The Characteristics of Korea's Local Agenda 21

In Korea, the Local Agenda 21 Preparation Project, which started in 1993, is continuing its activities to the present day. In this process, even the proposal of a National Council on Sustainable Development (NCSD), which had not at-

tracted much support from the central government before, was created and directly placed under the President. A result of the endless efforts of civil groups. In the process of promoting Local Agenda 21 in Korea, NCSD²⁸ and the Local Agenda 21 National Congress were established. In spite of these achievements, LA 21 in Korea has the problem that it is dominantly government-led. In the following sections the characteristics of Korea's Local Agenda 21 Preparation Project will be elaborated.

3.1 Strong Tendency of Being Government-led

The Local Agenda 21, in joint participation of the government, enterprises, and the non-governmental organizations, deals with the issues concerning the region and devises alternative ways for environment-friendly and sustainable development. However, Korea's Local Agenda initiatives have the tendency to be led by the local government. The reasons for this are: first, it is important for the local governments to demonstrate progress in the field of environment and development. There are cases where smaller towns have initiated a Local Agenda due to the pressure of superior organizations, such as the central government or major cities. Second, as the system of local elections has been established, the head of each local govern-

²⁸ The NCSD in Korea was established on September 20th, 2000, and called Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development (PCSD). The members of PCSD are 12 ministers of the central government, one secretary of the presidential office and 20 leaders of civil society.

ment now needs publicity to show visible achievements such as the Local Agenda 21. Third, after initiating the local government system, relations with their foreign counterparts grew rapidly.

3.2 Formality and Uniform Agendas

Currently almost all of the local governments in Korea are involved in the Local Agenda 21 Preparation Project. However, excluding a few, there is a lack of a realistic set-up and efforts remain below expectations. There are several reasons for this. First, there are numerous cases where the regional entities that are trying to prepare the Local Agenda 21 do not fully understand the meaning of it. Therefore, in order to solve this issue the central government produced and distributed the Local Agenda 21 Preparation Handbook in April 1997, and also recommended the use of this handbook. As a result, Agendas of the local governments show much similarity in form and content. There were too many cases where each region's Agenda setting was similar. And also the Agenda does not fully reflect the regional characteristics. Second, the Local Agenda 21 Project is often constituted by the will and decision of the head of the town administration. Therefore, there are many cases where the Local Agenda project is discontinued by the successor, when the head is replaced by an election or replaced during the tenure of office.

3.3 Budget Shortage

In order to promote a Local Agenda 21, a minimum budget is needed for the op-

eration of projects and the agenda office. However, most of the local governments do not allocate funds at all or very little due to financial constraints. In 2000, the budget for about 120 local governments amounted to approximately USD 550.000 in total, which means around USD 46.000 for each local government. With this amount it is difficult to even keep Local Agenda 21 alive and furthermore to maintain an office. However, financial support for Local Agenda 21 is not a decisive factor. The project can be conducted in the form of citizens' voluntary participation and enterprises providing part of the necessary financing.

3.4 Mainly limited to environmental and domestic issues

If Local Agenda 21's goal is sustainable regional development, the focus should be extended to social and economic issues rather than being limited to the environment. Local Agendas 21 for advanced countries are prepared and implemented mainly from this integrative perspective. But in Korea, they are mostly limited to environmental issues. This is attributable to the fact that Local Agenda 21 processes were initiated by environmental NGOs, but on the other hand, it can be said that this reflects the present competence of Korea's civil society. Other NGO sectors do not have accurate knowledge of LA 21 and thus show little interest in it. In addition, the fact that the LA 21 movement in Korea is limited to domestic issues, indicates that Korea as an emerging economy finds it difficult to develop an interest in other countries. The current situation seems to be that NGOs in Korea are not

affluent enough to help other countries and but also not poor enough to receive support from the outside.

3.5 Various Names for the Local Agenda 21

In order to gain easier access to citizens, the Local Agenda 21 in Korea uses other expressions than Agenda 21 or Local Agenda 21. Of these names, the most commonly used are always blue, green, beautiful or wonderful, and clean. For example, in the case of Cheju Island, it is called "Always Blue Cheju 21" instead of Local Agenda Cheju Island. Green Seoul 21, Clean Incheon 21, Blue Kyonggi 21 are other examples.

4 The Role of NGOs in the Local Agenda 21

Korea's Local Agenda 21 was started by the demand of NGOs that attended the Rio Conference. The discussion on LA 21 by environmental NGOs in 1993 first materialized in Ansan City of Kyonggi Province in 1994. The project had many problems from the start. As there was no prior knowledge of the contents, significance, and processes of the project, foreign cases were referred to. However, failing to draw up the Agenda, due to the lack of government participation, businesses and local civilians, they had to be satisfied with publicizing the Agenda and foreign cases to those three parties. In spreading Local Agenda 21 since 1995, civilian groups have played a critical role. They have tried to inform local governments and businesses of the significance and goals of the Agenda and encouraged the public to participate in environment protection campaigns, dis-

tributing related brochures and guidelines. They encouraged the participation of businesses and governments to establish the implementation council for Local Agenda 21 composed of those three parties. The council discusses various subjects and establishes secretariats as a task force. Affairs decided in the council are referred to the related authorities or secretariats. The secretariats, financed by the local government, are operated by citizens. The council and its working groups on subjects such as transportation, air, water, waste, ecology are mostly composed of NGOs, officials from the related departments of local governments, businesses, experts and scholars from the related fields, but with rare participation of citizens. The council invites citizens to submit projects related to sustainable development every year and the projects are fully financed by the local government. The projects then are allotted to NGOs acting in the related regions. NGOs solve their financial problems with this kind of support and lay the foundation for enabling sustainable development through various projects implemented in line with Local Agenda 21.

The implementation council, where more than one third of members are NGO activists, seeks the cooperation of the two separate parties, business and local authorities, under the leadership of the civil society membership. This kind of relation is not familiar to Korean civil movements, and thus it leads to conflicts due to different interests, but the basic framework has been maintained and is expected to be strengthened. 130 out of 177 local entities that have prepared or

are preparing their Local Agenda have councils composed of those three parties. While those regions that have such councils are active in implementing the agenda, those that are without have not seen any result. The role of environmental NGOs in Local Agenda 21 can be described as follows.

4.1 NGOs as Initiator of Local Agenda 21

Without the demand and publicity of environmental NGOs, Local Agenda 21 could not have been activated to such a degree. That can be demonstrated, if one looks at the regions, where NGOs have not participated in the implementation councils.

4.2 Checking Irrational Regional Development Projects through Council Activities

Ever since local governments obtained autonomy in Korea, they have been actively pursuing local development projects to secure their financing. We can find an example of conflicts between citizens and the government, involving that kind of project in the city of Seoul. Seoul City seeks to create an ecological park around Nanjido, the waste disposal area, constructing a game field for the 2002 soccer world cup. When civil groups found out that the city is planning to construct a golf course inside the park, they articulated strong resistance. In particular, the resignation of all the representatives of the green council has obstructed the construction plan. As the example shows, local governments could misuse Local Agenda 21 without participation of NGOs. Local governments, pretending to be environmentally sound

according to the publicized LA 21, might still get involved in environmentally destructive activities. In that context, NGOs will be able to exercise checks and balances on governments and businesses that go against environmentally sound development, encouraging sustainable development in the region.

4.3 Establishing Cooperative Partnership with Government and Enterprises

Through the Local Agenda 21 process Korea's NGOs and civil society have become equal partners to enterprises and government. Moreover, as the process of promoting Local Agenda 21 corresponds to NGOs' tasks and goals, Korea's NGOs are actively participating and socially acknowledged. Until now, NGOs had a negative attitude towards enterprises and government. However, through Local Agenda 21 processes, they established a critical partnership. Therefore, through this opportunity, the three parties are able to communicate and have a better understanding of each other.

4.4 Forcing Local Autonomous Entities to Actively Pursue the Agenda

In the beginning of Local Agenda 21, which was initiated by the environmental NGOs in 1994, local governments' participation was forced by NGOs' demands. However, as those regions that have carried out the project were recognized as more environmentally friendly than those that have not, local governments started to participate in the project on their own initiative, even urging par-

ticipation of NGOs. This is also the result achieved by NGO activities.

4.5 Legitimizing Local Agenda 21 through NGOs Participation

While widely spread distrust of politicians and public officials exists, citizens trust NGOs. Accordingly, a project without NGOs participation would be meaningless and hard to get support from the general public. An Agenda project without a mechanism of NGO participation to check and balance the government and business cannot be trusted nor will it attract public interest.

In that sense, NGO participation is required not only for the success of a project but also for getting public trust, which is recognized by local governments.

Considering that, a serious discussion is being made to establish an organization, composed of the three parties, for the already existing projects drawn up without NGO participation, in order to review them.

Public distrust of the existing power block and their trust in NGOs in Korea explain why NGO participation is required in almost every social aspect, including drawing up a Local Agenda. With that in mind, President Kim Dae-Jung, when determining policies related to the daily life of the general public, has ordered to organize a commission composed of those three parties, for democratic decision-making.

Now let's turn to the question why NGOs in Korea attract so much public trust currently.

5 An Analysis of NGOs' Social Influence in Korea

A 1994 survey conducted by a domestic weekly magazine revealed that the group that attained the highest degree of trust from the general public were civil society organizations and the one with the lowest score in that regard were political groups. That might be a natural result for a country with a short history of democracy. The process of democratization from the past dictatorial regime has made people critical of the established system. The critical spirit has strengthened the checks and balances of the existing political system and it has become a driving force for the development of civil society.

Continuous civilian demonstrations for democracy forced the militaristic authoritarian regime down and the public desire for freedom and the democratic system has materialized. It is natural that the public shows high trust in the group that has led the demonstrations for democratization and deeply distrusts the existing political groups. The economic crisis in 1997 again justified public distrust of the political elite. The crisis was caused by the inability and ignorance of politicians and public officials, who were not able to adapt to the rapidly changing environment of globalization, sitting back and only busy with maintaining their status. This fairly well explains public distrust of those groups.

NGOs have gained trust as an alternative to the ruling power and they have benefited from the political crisis of the existing power structure.

NGOs in Korea have special features. The concept of NGOs differs according to different cultures and they are interpreted differently. The concept as understood in Korea is similar to that of new social movements, which were popular during the 1980s in Europe. The new social movements that have sought alternative directions in such matters as the environment, anti-proliferation of nuclear weapons, peace, women, and culture were reformative rather than subversive or revolutionary. They were distinct from traditional social movements such as labor or farmers' movements. Similarly, Korean civilian movements and NGOs have reformative characteristics, interested in checks and balances to the political system and the market, protecting and expanding the rights of the people, and pursuing participatory democratic values. While discussions have begun on transforming the civilian movements into political power like the green party in Europe, the realization of this is still very unclear.

NGOs in Korea are seen as organizations for civilian movements and are characterized as political and reformative. Even though they don't include such groups as labor unions, schools, religious groups, political parties, welfare organizations, or social clubs, their concerns are quite diverse. NGOs in Korea deal with various subjects such as the environment, peace, women, human rights, education, consumers rights, anti-proliferation of nuclear weapons, civilian autonomy, juvenile problems, economic justice, famine, and anti-globalization.

5.1 In line with Oppositional and Democratic Movements

Democratic movements in Korea, that rapidly developed since the late 1980s, have recently declined. As the democratic system has matured in Korea, the direction of the movements has become obscured in a changed environment. The movements have shifted their interests from subverting existing political power to solving daily problems. As Korea's civilian movements have grown from the democratization movements of the past, the movements would not have come in existence without the success of democratization. In that sense, democratization movements that are traditional social movements and civilian movements, that are new social movements are closely related. Looking at the past of activists or leaders of NGOs also demonstrates this. Most of them have participated in the past democratization movements and many activists of civilian movements are from student demonstration groups.

Therefore, it's natural that the public has a favorable sentiment toward civilian movements that have their origin in the democratization movements. In Korean history, the public has been supportive of groups or individuals that have resisted and demonstrated against the ruling power, and especially those that have fought against the authoritarian regime. The democratic spirit has now been transferred to the current NGOs.

5.2 Dedication of NGO Activists

Korean NGOs suffer from financial weaknesses. Most NGOs are in financial difficulties, not even being able to pay salaries. However, contrary to politicians

and public officials who are accustomed to high salaries or businessmen who indulge in profit-making, NGO activists are passionately devoted to their work, therefore drawing spiritual support from the general public. The devotion shown by NGOs is a factor that attracts trust from the general public. As political supporters of NGOs do not necessarily all contribute in financial terms, they are not giving direct aid for NGOs to attain financial independence. The largest NGO commands around 60,000 members. Nation-wide and small-sized regional NGOs having one hundred up to thousand members, respectively. And only 20 to 70% of them pay their fees.

Most activists work more than 10 hours a day on a monthly salary of 500 to 700 US-dollars. That is the minimum wage guaranteed by the government.

5.3 Discovering Timely and Relevant Issues

As suppressed desires explode in the process of democratization, traditional community values have collapsed and utmost individualism and egoism have been entrenched as dominant values. As the interests of different parties came in conflict with each other, the society went into a severe crisis. Korea's image has changed from the past authoritative rule to being seen as uncontrollable and incapable without accepted authorities. Externally, its scope of sovereignty has been continuously eroded, as the trends of globalization and neo-liberalism have developed, and internally, it has become unable to manage the conflicts among parties with different interests or to satisfy various demands of the general

public. Therefore, contrary to the distrust of and disappointment towards the government, the general public has become supportive of NGOs, that are rather precise in pointing out problems, even though not being able to come up with solutions.

5.4 Political Parties' Loss of Legitimization

One other element that has brought the general public to support NGOs was that the political parties were not performing their functions appropriately as representatives of the general public. Political parties in Korea are not for policy-making and they are not ideology-oriented. They are rather parties for an individual who is a charismatic leader and composed of adventurous politicians as his followers. These characteristics still remain even though those people have aged and their social influence has faded away. The decision-making is influenced by one individual rather than following a democratic procedure, which weakens the representative democratic system and is subject to criticism by the general public. Unless those political parties implement efforts to overcome the inherent defects and the structural hypocrisies, NGOs will perform functions corresponding to those of political parties, expanding their political influence and coming up with solutions for social problems.

5.5 Corruption and Incompetence of Public Officials

In a survey conducted by Transparency International among 80 countries, Korea came out in the middle range for com-

mitting irregularities and corruption. The statistics proved how much Korean politicians and public officials are corrupted and the general public accepted the result. Korean bureaucrats' typical characteristics are lack of professionalism and idleness. They lack expertise as they are rotated mostly every 5 years and they are idle as they get promoted based on seniority without any efforts and achievements. As they are even willing to take unjust means to attain wealth and power, various irregularities are committed by them, raising public criticism.

5.6 Overall Distrust of the Power Elite Group

As discussed above, while the general public's distrust of the power elite has reached a very serious stage, efforts to change that are very meager. Those in power would have to be willing to give up their power giving in to public distrust. Instead, they are endeavoring to extend their power. As a result, the public distrust of the political ruling power has gone overboard and people have chosen to become disinterested and unresponsive to political affairs. Public disinterest was proved again in the last election for congressmen conducted in April 2000, where merely a voting rate of 54% and between 20% to 30% were normally registered for the communal election and by-election, respectively.

As NGOs are showing efforts to detect problems and to provide solutions, they are supported by the public. However, they have not been able to grow to become a strong organization, satisfying public demands, due to abundant structural problems such as financial weak-

ness, lack of expertise, disturbance by the governments and businesses, weak internal structure, etc. In addition, small mistakes and errors made by NGOs or manipulations by governments, business, and the press can negatively affect the public's favorable sentiment at any time. Therefore, NGOs should strive to strengthen their capacities and develop their structures, not satisfied with their current status of getting support from the public as a reflection of public dissatisfaction and distrust of governments and business. They also have to prove their competence by participating in such joint projects as Local Agenda 21.

6 Conclusion

Local Agenda 21 has been progressing well in spite of the problems mentioned above and it is expected to go forward well in the future as well. In order to see more effective results, the following steps are required.

First, more active participation of the general public should be encouraged. Most citizens do not have knowledge about the Agenda. Therefore, the Agenda needs to be publicized to attract interest of the general public and to improve their understanding of it. And NGOs should develop various programs to be shared with their members using the Agenda.

Second, concrete research should be done on sustainable development. The discussion so far in Korea with regard to the subject has been very limited and abstract. To draw up environmental policies relevant to different regions, the subject should be studied more closely.

Third, the formal character of LA 21 in Korea should be overcome. The format and guidelines recommended by the Rio Conference and ICLEI (International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives) should be diversified to be made relevant to circumstances of different regions. As the case of Greenpeace in the Sidney Olympics proved, a model of top-down formality can be created under the leadership of a gigantic organization. The formalities of top-down or bottom-up can be chosen according to the circumstances of a region.

Forth, a close organic relation should be established between the KCSD and the National Congress of LA 21. As the functions of KCSD, which is composed of the heads of each ministry, representatives of the business sector, senior representatives of community bodies, consist of designing and consulting on programs aimed at sustainable development, it seems to lack a driving force for implementation. Therefore, the KCSD will be able to perform its function more effectively if supplemented by a nationwide council composed of working officials as its driving force.

Fifth, comprehensive and global understanding and recognition of Local Agenda 21 are required. The scope of LA 21 in Korea is still limited to environmental problems of regions. While the matter is important, focusing only on this might neglect global problems. Therefore, networks should be formed with foreign groups to broaden the understanding of global problems and to communicate our concerns to them.

Finally, financing should be secured to implement the project. To generate a more active participation from NGOs, the project should not imply further financial burdens. The matter should be taken care of in close relationship with the KCSD.

If the above mentioned problems are resolved, Korea's Local Agenda 21 will see a very impressive result, and NGOs will be able to strengthen their position at the same time.

Appendix

The following survey was conducted on September 29, 2000 during the Second National Congress of Local Agenda 21 in Incheon. Of the total 227 participants 40% were public officials, 50% representatives of civil groups, 5% businessmen, and 5% others.

1. To what extent are you satisfied with the achievements of Local 21 Agenda?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	very satisfied	0	0
2)	satisfied	9	10.3
3)	average	52	59.8
4)	unsatisfied	19	21.8
5)	very unsatisfied	7	8
	total	87	100

2. What went wrong in preparing or implementing the Agenda (multiple response possible)?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	unbalanced composition of implementation committee	7	6.8
2)	unrealistic improvement goal	18	17.5
3)	unspecific action plan	27	26.2
4)	no research for basic information on the region	24	23.3
5)	no monitoring and assessment	21	20.1
6)	other elements	6	5.8
	total	103	100

3. What is the main method for publicizing the Agenda?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	local newspapers and broadcasting	18	18
2)	communication through computers	6	6
3)	brochures	15	15
4)	education programs	14	14
5)	local meetings	15	15
6)	action projects or related events	31	31
7)	others	1	1
	total	100	100

4. How much are local governments active in preparing or implementing the Agenda?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	very active	3	3.5
2)	active	14	16.3
3)	average	41	47.7
4)	not active	22	25.6
5)	disengaged	6	7.0
	total	86	100

5. What is the biggest problem in implementing the Agenda?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	lack of cooperation with the local government or problems	9	7.8
2)	lack of resources from the central government	13	11.3
3)	problems with businesses or lack of their cooperation	4	3.5
4)	not enough participation of civilians	38	33.0
5)	legal support	8	7.0
6)	education and publicizing	8	7.0
7)	budget and financial support	26	22.6
8)	lack of cooperation of experts	8	7.0
9)	others	1	0.9
	total	115	100

6. What is the most critical factor in continued implementation of the Agenda?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	legal measures	16	13.3
2)	financial support	31	25.8
3)	more publicizing	12	10.0
4)	civilian participation	36	30.0
5)	businesses participation	5	4.2
6)	regular review and assessment	2	1.7
7)	revision of its structure	5	4.2
8)	supplementing its acting body	12	10.0
9)	others	1	0.8
	total	120	127

7. Are there regular assessments on achievements and implementation of the Agenda?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	yes	26	31.3
2)	no	50	60.2
3)	don't know	7	8.4
	total	83	100

8. What assessment method is used if the answer is yes to Q7?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	monitoring by civil groups	10	11.2
2)	through the assessment index	8	9.0
3)	separate assessment body	1	1.1
4)	self assessment	25	28.1
5)	other	3	3.4
6)	no answer	42	47.2
	total	89	109

9. Is the Agenda supplemented and revised?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	yes	23	26.4
2)	no	43	49.4
3)	don't know	10	11.5
4)	no answer	11	12.6
	total	87	100

10. After implementation of the Agenda, how much change do you think has been made in the policies of the administration?

		Frequency	Percent
1)	a lot	2	2.3
2)	a little bit	49	56.3
3)	no change	22	25.3
4)	don't know	5	5.7
5)	no answer	9	10.3
	total	87	100

**PRESENT STATE OF LOCAL
AGENDA 21 INITIATIVES
AND THEIR FUTURE
DIRECTIONS IN THE
REPUBLIC OF KOREA
-WITH PARTICULAR
EMPHASIS ON KYONGGI
PROVINCIAL EXPERIENCES-**

Kwi-Gon Kim

1 Introduction

1.1 What is "Local Agenda 21"?

At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, the representatives of 179 nations and NGOs discussed ways to resolve global environmental problems. As a result, significant achievements were attained, including the "Rio Declaration on Environment and Development," the "Agenda 21," the "Convention on Climate Change," the "Convention on Biodiversity," and the "Declaration of Principles" on forests. Among these, "Agenda 21" represented a milestone for setting global goals and an action platform to realize Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development. "Agenda 21" covers agendas and action plans required to analyze environment and development issues existing in today's world and to address challenges encountered in the 21st century. It also encourages governments at all levels and every sector of society to make efforts to implement the "Agenda 21."

1.2 Rationale and Nature of "Local Agenda 21"

Rationale of "Local Agenda 21"

While stressing the importance of local governments in conserving global environment, Chapter 28 of "Agenda 21" calls on each local government to develop a "Local Agenda 21" which includes action plans for the sustainable development of the local community, and to do so by 1996 via consensus with local residents. Although "Agenda 21" offers various issues and solutions, participation and cooperation by local governments are essential in order to achieve these targets rooted in local problems.

Nature of "Local Agenda 21"

- **"Local Agenda 21" has the nature of an environment and development plan of a local community.**
- **"Local Agenda 21" is an action plan for environmental improvement by citizens; for those who take actions to improve the environment of the local area through cooperation between authorities and citizens.**
- **"Local Agenda 21" has the nature of a social movement and is a local-level environmental conservation movement led by citizens.**
- **The discussions and agreements of a local community for a "Local Agenda 21" are presented in a report form. Sector-specific visions and action guidelines to achieve sustainable development of the local area are recorded for easy reference.**

1.3 Three Basic Factors of "Local Agenda 21"

Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development is still very controversial. Even among those advocating sustainable development, people have different stances in valuing different things: natural conditions, fairness between generations or within generations, or society/culture/tradition. Their definitions also stress different aspects. Nevertheless, one feature marking a concept usually accepted as sustainable development is, unlike traditional environment protection, its very proactive and aggressive nature. Sustainable development is a dynamic process that improves the potential of today and the future in meeting people's desire and wishes while harmonizing efficient use of resources, reasonable and constructive investment, human-oriented technology development, and development of a social structure.

Sustainable development represents two aspects. First, economic development is a matter of course to meet the basic needs of the poor. Second, however, such a development should not destroy the carrying capacity of ecosystems or the environment. To be more specific, in order to stop the abuse of resources and the destruction of the environment, to protect cultural heritages, and to resolve social uncertainty, absolute poverty needs to be eradicated and the desire of present generations should be met. At the same time, sustainable development may be pursued when population increase and growth is harmonized within the limits of the carrying capacity of an ecosystem. Its limit may

be changed depending on resource exploration, technology development direction, investment readjustment, changes of regulation, and changes of awareness.

Partnership

In developing a Local Agenda 21, participation of the entire local community is a must. This may be a great challenge for local governments that need to recommend and promote rather than to control or govern in developing a Local Agenda 21. The entire local community must be a part of developing the Local Agenda 21. The groups mentioned in Chapter 3 of the Agenda 21 have greater significance in such a process.

Every Local Agenda 21 will be different, reflecting the demand and priority of a local community as well as environmental and economic circumstances. Such a process provides a local community with an opportunity to participate in a development proposal phase from the beginning rather than expressing its opinion on or opposition to the development.

Process

The objective of initiating a Local Agenda 21 is to generate an implementable environment improvement action plan through a process of citizen participation. Therefore, although outcome is important, process is more critical. Moreover, as a process for social learning as well as citizen participation, it is a process of maturing to realize a desirable urban environment in a given situation.

2 "Local Agenda 21" Initiatives in the Republic of Korea

2.1 Nationwide Initiatives

The Republic of Korea (ROK) was a late starter compared to advanced nations in Local Agenda 21 initiatives. Some local authorities began formulating plans in 1994. However, full-scale initiatives got underway only in 1997. As of June 2000, of 248 local governments, 123 were developing their Local Agenda 21 and 65 are still in progress. Another 57 governments have plans to develop a Local Agenda 21. About half of the local governments have developed a Local Agenda. Adding those being in a process of developing one, 76 % of all local governments now have a Local Agenda. Figures let alone, the ROK is not lagging behind other nations in the world.

However, Korean local governments are more focused on developing and declaring Local Agenda 21 than they are on taking action. Some governments review progress annually and hold implementation events. In a large number of local governments, the development of a Local Agenda was undertaken solely by government officials or outsourced to some experts, often ending up with no follow-up actions.

Local Agenda 21 Initiatives by Metropolitan/Provincial Governments

In the case of metropolitan/provincial governments, including Seoul City, 14 local governments have developed a Local Agenda 21 so far. Since developing and declaring the Seoul Agenda 21 in June 1997, Seoul city government has legislated the Environment Basic Ordi-

nance and the Seoul Environment Charter and enhanced the spirit and direction of the Seoul Agenda 21. A "Seoul Agenda 21 Implementation Council" has recently been set up within the "Green Seoul Citizens' Council" carrying out implementation programs. The metropolitan or provincial governments in towns like Pusan, Incheon, Ulsan and provinces like North Kyongsang, South Cholla and Cheju also have developed an Agenda 21 between 1995 and 1998.

Local Agenda 21 Initiatives by Municipal Governments

"Evergreen Ansan 21," which was launched in July 1995, is one of the earliest Local Agendas 21 found in the ROK. It is based on the "Ansan City Environment Action Program" that had been developed by the "21st Century Ansan Citizen Environment Council," "Evergreen Ansan 21" was presented at the Habitat II Conference held in Istanbul in June 1996.

Soonchon City is also one of the forerunners in municipal government Local Agenda 21 initiatives. The municipal government of Soochon organized the "Green Soonchon 21 Implementation Council" formed of 280 members from every part of its society and announced the "Green Soonchon 21 Master Plan" and the "Soonchon City Environment Declaration." Chinju City in the south of Kyongsang province set up the "Green Chinju Citizens' Council" and developed an operational ordinance. Suwon City organized the "21st Century Suwon Creation Council". Such developments indicate that movements at the

municipal-government level have become active in the ROK recently.

2.2 Activities by The Green Kyonggi 21 Initiative Council

2.2.1. Preparation of the Agenda

Kyonggi province is located in the northwestern part of the ROK and embraces Seoul. The province has a population of nine million and varies greatly in terms of lifestyle and environment between urban and rural areas and between coasts and inland. Naturally, there were limitations in developing an agenda that reflects all these different features of Kyonggi province. Therefore, the Kyonggi Agenda focused on eight areas that were derived from the most representative pending issues in the environment. The eight areas selected cover the issues air, transportation and energy; rivers, lakes and wetlands; eco-city and wastes, as well as Kyonggi-specific environmental issues: Paldang water sources and organic farming; Siwha Lake and oceanic ecosystem; DMZ (demilitarized zone) and Kwangreung forest, and social welfare for youth as the future generation (Table 1).

In line with the selected pending environmental issues in the Kyonggi province, respective organizations were selected to accord to local private groups responsibility for developing action plans or an agenda draft. For this reason for each of the eight areas, partnerships were formed and action plans developed by a respective organization, resident organizations, environment groups, experts, business firms, and government

authorities. Drafts of pilot projects were also presented.

In order to make sure that the proposed action plans are developed into a draft implementation agenda, preliminary field pilot projects and workshops were held for each area. The Kyonggi Agenda presented not only the proposed Agenda but also pilot projects, which are a valuable first step in realizing the Agenda for each area. After going through issue-specific workshops held for each area, the action plans proposed were verified once again through multi-level discussions by the Agenda Preparation Council, expert group seminars and review procedures by relevant units of municipal and metropolitan/provincial governments. Finally, "Green Kyonggi 21" was finalized by gathering the opinions of various sectors at a hearing of provincial residents.

2.2.2. Legislative Support for the "Agenda 21 Action Council in Kyonggi Province"

On June 3rd 1999, the Kyonggi Agenda was developed and "Green Kyonggi 21" was announced. This was the 13th metropolitan/provincial government in the ROK to do so. After announcing the Agenda, the existing "Kyonggi Agenda 21 Preparation Council" was reorganized into the "Agenda 21 Action Council for Kyonggi Province," which has stronger initiative power focusing on the implementation of the Agenda.

The organization features subcommittees which were newly re-organized into three units covering natural ecology, living environment, and civil society in order to practically manage and support

the Agenda implementation projects. Also, the members of key private groups in the province participated in the steering committee. This allowed the implementation organization to secure representativeness and to specify its role. Moreover, the organization formed the "Exchange & Cooperation Special Committee" for smooth cooperation among the "Agenda 21 Action Council" of the province and the city/county and for network build-up. In order to evaluate and monitor the Agenda pilot projects, a new Advisory Committee consisting of the relevant experts was set up.

The Kyonggi Agenda was the first agenda implementation organization in the ROK to legislate an ordinance supporting Local Agenda 21 activities (25 October, 1999). It has been recognized that one of the bottlenecks for the activities of the agenda implementation organizations of local authorities was the lack of legal support for the stable operation of the organizations.

Recognizing that bilateral citizen-government cooperation is the most critical factor in improving the local environment, Kyonggi province adopted the Local Agenda projects as the highest priority projects among environmental policy projects. In order to really support this, legal and institutional improvement mechanisms were set up. The supporting ordinance stipulates that the operational and project expenses as well as other expenses of the Council may be provided from the provincial budget before implementation of projects and that some environmental policy projects may be commissioned to the Council. This is a significant result based on the trust of

three parties: provincial legislators that put forth and passed the supporting ordinance, Kyonggi government officials who formulated the partnership on their own, and citizen groups that linked the Agenda implementation projects into important local environmental movements and implemented them.

2.2.3. Implementation of Projects Initiated by Private Environmental Groups

Shortly after the announcement of the Kyonggi Agenda, applications for agenda implementation projects to be initiated in the second half of 1999 were received and 17 projects were selected. Accordingly, implementation project support worth about 150 million won²⁹ was provided to relevant private environmental organizations. With the presence of relevant authorities, legislators, residents, relevant experts, civil groups, and press, field workshops were carried out at least once. This served as an opportunity to attract the interest of the local community and to build cooperative relationships. Once the implementation projects for 1999 had been completed, the effects of the project initiatives and the adequacy of budget expenditures were reviewed. Based on the results, high-performing and low-performing organizations were selected. Since the participating organizations were given incentives or penalties when screening implementation projects for 2000, the completeness of projects in the following year was assured. Moreover, an organization selected as high-

²⁹ Approximately 0.3 Million DM

performing was given the chance to introduce its experiences as "best practice" at the annual general meeting/presentation session held in January 2000.

As for implementation projects for the year 2000, applications for 43 projects from 39 organizations were received by February. Among them, 25 projects were selected and 180 million won in financial support was provided. The projects will be implemented during the nine months from March till November 2000. They include two projects run by companies. The companies are provided with a small amount of implementation project support. They themselves finance most of the project and run environmental implementation programs. This has the effect of returning profits generated by the companies to society through the implementation of projects.

One interesting aspect is that a religious organization is also participating in the implementation project for 2000. A religious organization tends to have firm organizational roots and considerable initiative power. Through voluntary implementation activities, religious people are taking a lead in disseminating implementation activities to provincial residents. As in 1999, the 25 organizations will present progress reports and final reports and hold on-site workshops. Toward the end of this year, an independent evaluation committee will be set up and high-performing and low-performing organizations will be selected through a fair and objective re-

view process. Then the continuance of each projects will be decided.

Apart from this, the Kyonggi provincial government has launched a provincial government agenda project - the "eco-office campaign" - together with the "Agenda 21 Action Council" for Kyonggi Province. Efforts to make an environment-friendly government office building include environmental initiatives that may be practiced easily such as turning off power for lighting and computers when not in use, preventing food waste at the cafeteria, and recycling paper. After practicing the campaigns at office and division levels, high-performing offices and divisions will be awarded based on the evaluation by the provincial government and the assessment by citizen monitors.

In addition, the "Agenda 21 Action Council" for Kyonggi Province is extending implementation projects currently led by private organizations to school implementation projects covering elementary, middle, and high school students. It aims at reaching more provincial residents to participate in the Agenda 21 process by proceeding environmental implementation projects targeting youth, the future generation. The Council received 18 applications from schools or environmental clubs this year for the Agenda implementation programs addressing youth. 11 projects were selected and provided with two million won each.

Table 1: "Green Kyonggi 21" Implementation Projects by Private Organizations for 2000

2.3 Area	Implementation Project Name	Lead Agency
1. Air and Energy	Citizens' action movement to improve air in Siwha and Banwol industrial complex	Siheung KFEM
	Sustainable guidelines developed by a citizens' panel (common energy indicator)	Kwachon KFEM
2. River and Wetlands	Identifying forgotten and deserted small streams and creating nature learning courses and eco-maps through citizens' participation	3 Kwangmyong CCEJ
	Running Pyongtaik Lake Changrae-ri nature learning center and training guides	Pyongtaik KFEM
	Balan stream and Namyang Lake environmental monitoring projects through residents' participation	Hwasung County Environment Problem Study Association
	Creating residents' water-friendly space (Kwangkyo stream, Hwangku tributary, Woldong upper stream) and running citizens program	Suwon Environment Movement Center
	River conservation project through pollution and ecological surveys on the tributaries of Namhan River and Sum River (Buk stream, Chongmi stream, Bupyong stream, Yonan stream, Kajong stream)	E-chon & Yeojoo KFEM
	Planting persimmons trees along riverside	Saemaoul Movement Hanam City Division
	Creating nature-friendly eco-pond	Samsung Electronics Kiheung Operations Christian Association
3. Eco-city	Creating eco-city through citizens' participation	Bundang Environment Citizen's Group
	Developing and running a citizens' participation program to create Mt. Kahak eco-learning center	Kwangmyong YMCA
	Creating Hanareum village playground eco-park	Buchon YMCA
	Running eco-program "Sky Garden 21" nature eco-park on the rooftop of Kyongdong Energy office building	Kyongdong Energy, Bundang Operations "Sky Garden 21" Planning Group
	Movement to create Green Home in Anyang area	Anyang Citizen's College
4. Waste	Youth Green Consumption Movement to save and recycle resources	Kuri YMCA
	Citizens' action programs to use recycled bags and reduce packing	Kunpo Environment autonomous citizen's association
5. Paldang water source and organic farming	Implementation movement within household for clean water and life loving	Catholic Suwon Chapter, Environment Center
	Provincial residents' education and implementation activity to practice water saving	Kyonggi KFEM
	Running-water demand control program by students, citizens, and companies	Ansan CCEJ

	Supplementary application of water-saving environmental education program and implementation program of youth environmental monitoring group	Buchon CCEJ
6. Oceanic ecosystem and Siwah Lake	Kyonggi coastal area eco-culture recording group to develop coastal conservation citizens' action program	Western Coast Conservation Network
	Developing guidelines for citizens' monitoring and eco-exploration to create a Biotope around Siwha Lake	Ansan YMCA Grassroots Environment Center
7. DMZ and Kwangreung forest	Environment exploration and survey of Dongdoochon US base for unification in the new millenium	Dongdoochon Democratic Citizens' Association
8. Social welfare	Lifestyle survey of residents living in apartments in Euijongbu city to create green apartment community and a movement to legislate standard maintenance expense and best practice management regulations	Euijongbu Participation Coalition "Citizens' Square"
	Building a desirable local community environment education system by training housewife environmental teachers	Citizens' Group to Rescue Ansung stream

3.1.1. Stimulating Education & Promotion Programs and Information Exchange

Among municipal local governments in Kyonggi province, only six governments - Ansan, Suwon, Sungnam, Kwangmyong, Kuri, and Anyang - have developed and declared a Local Agenda. Moreover, it is only Sungnam that launched implementation programs through open public announcements similar to the Kyonggi Agenda. Various education and promotional programs are required to boost Agenda projects by municipal governments. Workshops for government officials in charge of the Local Agenda in the city or county governments and for officials of private organization were held and the "Green Kyonggi 21" educational CD-ROMs and videotapes were produced and distributed to the municipal governments. The "Green Kyonggi 21" that had been developed in animated form to enable chil-

dren to understand the Kyonggi Agenda easily was distributed to children. The "Green Kyonggi 21 and Eco-Calendar 2000" was given out to provincial residents and institutions at various levels. A quarterly newsletter serves as an important tool for exchanging information on the Agenda within Kyonggi.

Keeping in line with such education and PR programs for the Kyonggi Agenda, implementation organizations for Local Agenda 21 within municipal governments in Kyonggi and their activities are also growing significantly. Governments that have already developed and announced a Local Agenda include Suwon, Sungnam, Kwangmyong, and Kuri. Anyang recently had the Agenda Declaration ceremony and Buchon, Pyongtaik, Kwachon, Euijongbu, Koyang, Euiwang, Kunpo, Siheung, Yongin, Hwasung, and Kimpo have either set up or are in course of

setting up initiating organizations to develop a municipal Local Agenda.

As the initiating organizations of the municipal governments in Kyonggi have a plan to attract the private sector and to provide budget support continuously after developing the Agenda, they are likely to initiate various implementation programs. Therefore, competitive and active initiatives for the Agenda implementation projects by municipal agenda initiative organizations are expected to result in a new type of public-private environmental movements in the Kyonggi province and to generate a response in society.

As a special project, an environmental exploration of the aspiration toward unification, which takes advantage of the geographical features of Kyonggi province's shared boundary with North Korea, is planned and underway. This is a project to seek exchange and cooperation preparing for unification at the South-North local government level and to promote joint environmental conservation to coincide with the South-North Summit, when discussions on unification are active. The environmental exploration is targeted at youth and university students in Kyonggi. It plans to explore major environmental sites in Kyonggi including Siwha Lake, Ansung stream, Pyongtaik Lake, Paldang water source, Kwangreung forest, and the DMZ.

As another effort to stimulate agenda programs by municipal governments in Kyonggi, an information project is underway. The Council plans to create its homepage by June this year and to update various materials including manuals on Local Agenda, Local

Agenda best practice, Kyonggi Agenda activities, and Kyonggi environmental policy to allow those interested to refer to the Kyonggi Agenda homepage (<http://www.kgag21.co.kr>). The homepage will be linked to the homepages of organizations initiating Agendas within their cities and counties. This is likely to serve as an information window covering the whole of the Local Agenda 21 programs in Kyonggi province.

4 Problems and Future Directions of the Local Agenda 21 Initiatives in the ROK

4.1 Problems within the Initiatives

If the Local Agenda 21 is developed by forming a partnership among local governments, local councils, companies, and relevant experts as well as residents, it will contribute to environmental conservation and the sustainable development of the area. However, local governments in Korea still lack resident participation in developing and implementing the Local Agenda 21. Local governments do not fully recognize the Local Agenda 21 process and lack motivation, which results in poor implementation. Although the development and implementation of a Local Agenda 21 is easily justified, actual implementation is unlikely. One common problem of Local Agenda 21 processes - occurring within all local governments - is that they are declaration-focused. They lack regional features and serve as research reports instead of driving actions by residents. This is because the Agenda was not developed on the basis of partnership. Instead, it was

developed through outsourcing or solely by government officials.

Once a Local Agenda 21 has been developed in the ROK, and there is a commitment to implementing it, no progress is made due to a poor foundation in terms of organization and budget. Although regulations allow local governments to provide for a budget, the legal ground still is weak.

Support from the central government is also insufficient. Although the Ministry of Administration and Local Governments as well as the Ministry of Environment may get involved, support in terms of finance, information, and technology is poor under the pretext that a Local Agenda 21 should be adopted and implemented by a local area itself and that there is no basis for providing any support.

At the local government level, the mindset of government heads is critical. However, except for a few government heads, their commitment to initiating a Local Agenda 21 appears to be weak. This results in initiative organizations always having an insufficient budget, the sine qua non of initiatives.

An environment that varies from area to area and a significant lack of private environmental groups that could play a leading role are also cited as problems. There is a need to develop private environmental organizations that may serve as partners in each area. In particular, encouraging the participation of the private sector may be a stepping stone for continuing Local Agenda 21 projects.

4.2 Future Directions for the Local Agenda 21

There are still a number of problems impeding the proper settlement of the Local Agenda 21 in the ROK. However, we cannot just sit back and watch. No one particular has to take the entire blame. Only the proactive participation of every member who is the main body of a local area would stimulate the Local Agenda 21 programs.

The central government should increase administrative and financial support to facilitate the initiation by local governments of Local Agenda 21 processes as initially envisioned. To improve support for Local Agenda 21 initiatives, preparation guidelines and information, education and training, and international cooperation should be provided.

Considering that the main cause of poor activities by the initiative councils is due to the lack of project and operating budgets, plans for central government and local governments to finance funds should be developed.

Evaluation of local governments with regard to environmental management, periodic reports on Local Agenda 21 progress, and analysis and presentation of best practices should also be introduced.

In nations advanced in Agenda 21, there have been campaigns to present things that need to be done by residents, by local communities and local governments in order to support the process. In the ROK there is also a need for community movements based on citizen-government partnership. In order to exchange experiences and information with

advanced nations, external activities including the participation within the International Council for Local Environment Initiatives (ICLEI) should be enhanced. Building an international network and linking relevant data through Internet may be a good way to start. In addition, cooperation for Local Agenda 21 should be sought through proactive

international exchange between local governments. International exchanges may be spurred at the initiative organizational level of each local government and advanced information on Local Agenda 21 should be obtained. In this context, the Local Agenda 21 program exchanges between Germany and the ROK are expected to serve as a starting point.

Autors:

Myong-Jae Cha, born 1953, studied sociology and political science at University of Muenster Germany, and work as Director of Korea Institute for Sustainable Societies. Present fields of Work: Agenda 21 at global, national and local level, environmental problems, social movements, NGOs, Civil Society.

e-mail: ecopeace@hotmail.com

Thomas Fues, born 1952, staff economist at INEF, previous jobs at the German Development Institute and the Parliamentary Group of the Green Party in the Bundestag. Present fields of work: North-South dimensions of sustainability strategies; indicators for sustainable development; Agenda 21 at national, regional and local levels; world conferences of the 90s.

e-mail: fues@uni-duisburg.de

Uwe Hoering, freelance journalist and author, working on various aspects of development and environment for german and english media, living in Bonn, Germany.

Kwi-Gon Kim, Ph. D. at the Bartlett School of Architecture and Planning, University College, University of London, England; Professor of Environmental Planning, Department of Land-

scape Architecture, Seoul National University; Standing President of the Korea Association for Local Agenda 21; Standing President of Kyonggi Implementation Council for Local Agenda 21; President of the Korean Society of Environmental Policy; Member of President's Commission on Sustainable Development.

e-mail: Kwigon@snu.ac.kr

Ulrich Nitschke, born 1965; studied Theology, Philosophy and Social Sciences; since 1994 serving as member of the board Network of One World initiatives in NRW; since 1996 member of the One-World Advisory Committee of the NRW Government; working at CAF/Agenda-Transfer since March 1997; area of work: specialist promotor „Local Agenda 21 and global challenges“; research, lectures, publications and consultancy in good practise and sustainability strategies.

e-mail: Nitschke@agenda-transfer.de

Hildegard Pamme, Political Scientist M.A. is working as a lecturer in Public Administration/Political Science at the Gerhard-Mercator-University Duisburg. Her research and teaching focus is the German Political-Administrative System, German Environmental Politics, Local authorities and Local Sustainability.

e-mail: pamme@uni-duisburg.de

Petra Stephan, born 1960, studied Social Science, Biology and Ecology, from 1993 – 2000 staff ecologist at INEF, freelance consultant; areas of work: international environmental politics and Rio follow-up in North and South, resources management and biodiversity conservation, tourism and sustainability.

e-mail: petra.stephan@web.de

Kern Soo Yoon, born 1949, Meso-NRW project member at INEF, previously research fellow at Seoul Institute of Economic and Social Studies and Korea Cultural Policy Institute. Present fields of work: structural change and sustainable development, regionalisation and innovation, socio-economic aspects of globalisation.

e-mail: yoons@uni-duisburg.de

Translation:

Christina Kamp