

Rob Wheeler has represented several organizations at the United Nations for the past 16 years including Commons Action for the United Nations, Planetafilia, and the Global Ecovillage Network, and the World Alliance to Transform the UN. He has participated actively in the UN's Commission on Sustainable Development during this time.

Mr. Wheeler developed and organized a Sustainable Community Campaign in Santa Cruz, California for five years in the 1990s; was the primary civil society representative on the UN's Initiative on Access to Basic Services for All; and served on the Executive Committee for the UN's Millennium NGO Forum.

Rob taught environmental education for more than ten years in Outdoor Education Schools, UC Berkeley's Summer Science Camp, and Youth Conservation Corps programs.

He is a foremost advocate for an integrated, multi-sectoral community based approach to rural and impoverished urban development; and often claims that we need to plan to make a complete transition to full sustainability as rapidly as possible.

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### **Rob's Presentation:**

I have participated actively in the meetings of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development and its associated world summit conferences for the past 16 years, representing the Global Ecovillage Network, Commons Action for the United Nations and other such organizations. I have attended most of the sessions of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals and have been a strong supporter of the Peoples Sustainability Treaties from the beginning.

We started to develop a Peoples Treaty on the Commons that is about 2/3rds done now, before we got too busy with the UN's Post 2015 process to complete it. But we plan to complete it over the next couple of months. Everyone is welcome to help us and can get involved by writing to me at [RobWheeler22@gmail.com](mailto:RobWheeler22@gmail.com). Helene will talk about the principles that we are including in the treaty in her presentation.

Commons Action for the UN and the Commons Cluster have been suggesting that the UN ought to develop a Commons Based Approach to Sustainable Development. We have drafted many advocacy papers on this that we have submitted and distributed at the UN.

The Commons Approach can be thought of as the collective planning, management or stewardship, and equitable sharing of the benefits that can come from shared or common resources. These Commons or common resources can include such things as community forests, rivers, minerals, the atmosphere, oceans, electro-magnetic system,

the internet, wikipedia, cooperatives, trusts, intentional communities -- or really the earth system is a whole.

We have been focusing on and calling for:

- The establishment of participatory planning, decision making, assessment and review processes and means of implementation at all levels of government at and through the UN;
  - The fostering of Education for Sustainable Development and the application of ethical principles and considerations;
  - Tax policies that encourage the protection and limited use of scarce resources, along with shifting taxes off of wages and the things that we produce and onto land and natural resources;
  - The placement of resource caps on scarce resources coupled with the means for the equitable sharing of limited and shared resources;
  - Measuring and limiting our individual and collective impacts on planetary resources and ecosystems with measurements at the local, regional and country level.

We have been helping to organize an annual conference convened by the Earth Condominium initiative in Portugal; and are calling with them for the UN and its Member States to recognize and respect the Natural or Common Heritage of the Earth. We would like the UN's member states to agree to measure their ecological footprint and then those that use more than their fair share of the earth's resources would be required to pay a fee that could be used to help us all transition to a sustainable future.

Finally, we have called for the UN to establish a High Level or Experts Panel to look into and make recommendations for how a Commons Approach to Sustainable Development could be put in place in practice. We have suggested that the UN Trusteeship Council could be used for coordinating and overseeing the management of our Global Commons.

A Global Resource Agency could be set up to handle such matters; and the Trusteeship Council could be used to consider and develop ethical principles and Common Trust Law for the management, protection and restoration of both our shared and Global Commons. Again we would like to invite everyone to join us in developing the Peoples Sustainability Treaty on the Commons and/or to join us in our advocacy efforts at the UN or in your country or local community.