

EDITORIAL

Now that Monterrey is behind us, and the "Monterrey Consensus" has been agreed by 58 Heads of State and Government, we are firmly – as our streamer text says – on the road towards Johannesburg. This was the first Summit-level meeting to address key financial issues relating to development, and was the latest link in a series of international conferences aimed at addressing the downside of globalisation, namely the lack of resources available to fight poverty and disease and to promote sustainable development for all. The new commitments from the United States and Europe will now add an extra \$30 billion for development, starting in 2004.

However, in spite of the positive signal from Monterrey, one can see from the report (page 60) of the second and third sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), that the road is still fraught with difficulties. A lot now depends on the next round of the PrepCom in Bali.

Another step in the WSSD process was taken by the Second Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF-2), held at the beginning of March. The outcome included a ministerial declaration and – as an important input to the WSSD – a message to be tabled before the Summit emphasising the multi-functional role of forests.

We have heard that the Sixth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP-6) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), scheduled to end today, has adopted a compromise text on forests, including a revised forest work programme. A High-Level segment on the WSSD, including a ministerial round table, were convened during the second week. We shall report on the results of COP-6 in the next issue.

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In the last Editorial, we noted our concern about the US administration's energy policy, in particular the controversial plan to open a portion of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling for gas and oil. We have just heard that President Bush has suffered a crucial defeat in the Senate, which has killed off the controversial plan.

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- Wolfgang R. S. -