

Question posed by Jack Moss of the Global Business Alliance during the second session of the Inter-sessional Meeting of the OWG

22/11/2013

In the previous session physiological "fundamentals" were mentioned and so was pollution.

Air, water, food, energy, and land are essential for all forms of life, not just humans. Using them creates waste and pollution that must be managed. Everyone pollutes, therefore managing pollution and re-using or recovering materials is essential. How are we going to work this dimension into the SDGs and at the same time give it a human rights dimension?

It is too simplistic to say that pollution is all the problem and responsibility of business. Individuals, cities and all centers of activity pollute. This is why in our section of business we are putting a great deal of effort into what we call the three Rs. This is an approach that starts with Reducing pollution, trying to prevent or limit pollution at source. It follows with Removing pollution from water and the environment to ensure that the life supporting capacities are maintained. Finally there are the activities of Recovering and Re-using the substances take out in the depollution processes so that these materials can be used again in beneficial ways.

In Human rights terms, how do we ensure that the exercise of the individual human rights of one person does not impact on the rights of others in the community? For example, exercising the right to access to safe water, if done irresponsibly, can have a negative effect on other water users. How can these positions be reconciled?