

## **Meeting of ECOSOC and Scientific Community**

### **Contribution as Panel Discussant**

#### **Your Excellency, President, ladies and gentlemen**

I would like to focus my comments on the issues of the relationship between good governance and science – 2 of the 5 principles of Sustainable Development which have or should have guided much of the work on sustainable development in the UK over the last 9 years

- promoting good governance - actively promoting effective participative systems of governance in all levels of society – engaging people’s creativity , energy & diversity
- Using sound science responsibly – ensuring policy is developed and implemented on the basis of sound scientific evidence, while taking into account scientific uncertainty – through the precautionary principle as well as public attitudes and values

It is this relationship between governance and responsible use of sound science which is critical .It is ironic that at a time when scientists are able to assess the health of our planet to an unprecedented level , trust levels with institutions have reduced leading to the rejection of we know best top down interventions.

We have to recognise there needs to be a closer relationship between scientists and those communities who have close interactions with the environment - farmers and fisherman

We also need to invest in reconnecting those increasingly urbanised communities who have lost that connection between their environment and their lives, between actions and consequences. A growing separation which diminishes human concern about the environment, can be itself be emotionally debilitating and can be even more significant in issues such as climate change where the most dramatic impacts are either in the future or currently in locations which are themselves distant.

The blending of scientific and emotional intelligence – reinforcing attachment to place and the systems that support life on the planet – is essential

If I can give some examples of what this requires from actions that we are taking forward in Wales and that mirror the objectives being set out by Future Earth – a focus on how we:

- deliver education for sustainable development and global citizenship in our schools – a compulsory part of the curriculum in schools in Wales
- Build stakeholder structures – Climate Change Commission for Wales
- Collaborate across Universities and outreach partners Climate Change Consortium for Wales
- Set out the grand challenges in our case – advanced engineering and materials; life sciences and health; low carbon energy and put in place incentives for collaboration and research innovation partnerships between the science community and business
- Connect emotionally between sense of place and key issues at a local, regional or national level – injecting a sense of fun wherever possible – Size of Wales which has mobilised people to support the protection of tropical rain forests raising over £2 million pounds alongside an education programme across schools, while every new born child in Wales has a tree planted in Wales and in Africa – again perhaps a small but iconic emotional connection for every new born and their parents.

Your Excellency, Wales is small country but we have big ambitions to make a difference and look forward to working to support the objectives set out this morning by Future Earth

Peter Davies

Commissioner for Sustainable Futures Wales