



# A Solution to Break the Status Quo: OMBUDSPERSONS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

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“We act as we do because we can get away with it: future generations do not vote, they have no political or financial power; they cannot challenge our decisions. But the results of the present profligacy are rapidly closing the options for future generations.”

Brundtland, 1987

## Existing Challenges (1)

- Currently, cycles of both business and governance are primarily focused on the short-term, be it quarterly results or terms in office. How can we look beyond these toward the longer-term?
- Core policy formulation, economic thinking and motivations remain consistently detached from broader sustainability concerns and often remains stubbornly centred around single issue silos.

## Existing Challenges (2)

- The continued approach of single issue thinking presents a false dichotomy and counter productive interpretations of trade offs.
- Poor means and mechanisms allow little accountability, access and monitoring of decisions made and of their implementation.
- Meanwhile....citizens and civil society appear disconnected and disempowered from the core of policy making, left without a voice or legitimate means to present their concerns.



## A Solution (1)



- Brings the long term view right to the heart of the decision making process. The position provides intra-governmental and multi-disciplinary expertise with an integrated perspective.
- Independent, impartial office with a specific mandate to focus on the long-term effects of policies, an Ombudsperson for Future Generations does not suffer the pressure of submitting to short-term interests.

## A Solution (2)

- An Ombudsperson for Future Generations has a mandate to respond and engage with citizens concerns and thus can increase trust accountability in policy-making.
- As an example of good governance the role allows people to decide, make their own future and plan for their children's future, and it makes sure people have the opportunity to participate at all levels of decision-making

## Critical Proposals from Member States

- Move it out of Part IV C ('UNEP, specialized agency on environmental proposals, IFIs, United nations operational activities at country level') and place it within Part IV B of the outcome document ('GA, ECOSOC, CSD, SDC proposal') (EU, Montenegro)
- High Commissioner or Ombudsperson?
- A position or an institution? (Liechtenstein)
- International solidarity (Holy See)
- For Future Generations, not just for sustainable development
- More committal text, with a proposal for a time bound process after Rio to agree the details
- Just at the international level? (Montenegro – at the national levels, Bangladesh to promote sustainable development at the global, regional and national level)
- G77 & Japan propose to delete

## Key Responses

- This is not about more bureaucracy or intended to drain from existing limited resources.
- This does not represent a trade off between future and present generations.
- Long standing institution and approach.
- No political veto
- Not confined to the environment or even sustainable development.



# Ombudspersons At International (1) and National (2) Levels

1

Mandate to ensure that policy is future proof

Role to help set the agenda & manage outcomes

Advocate for the interests of future generations across the family of UN organisations

Function with civil society

Reporting to:

The General Assembly

Or

ECOSOC

Or

UNCSD

Or

Proposed UNSDC

2

Independent from the executive

Legal powers and duties to report, monitor and examine progress by government and public bodies

Participate in the development of law and policy formulation

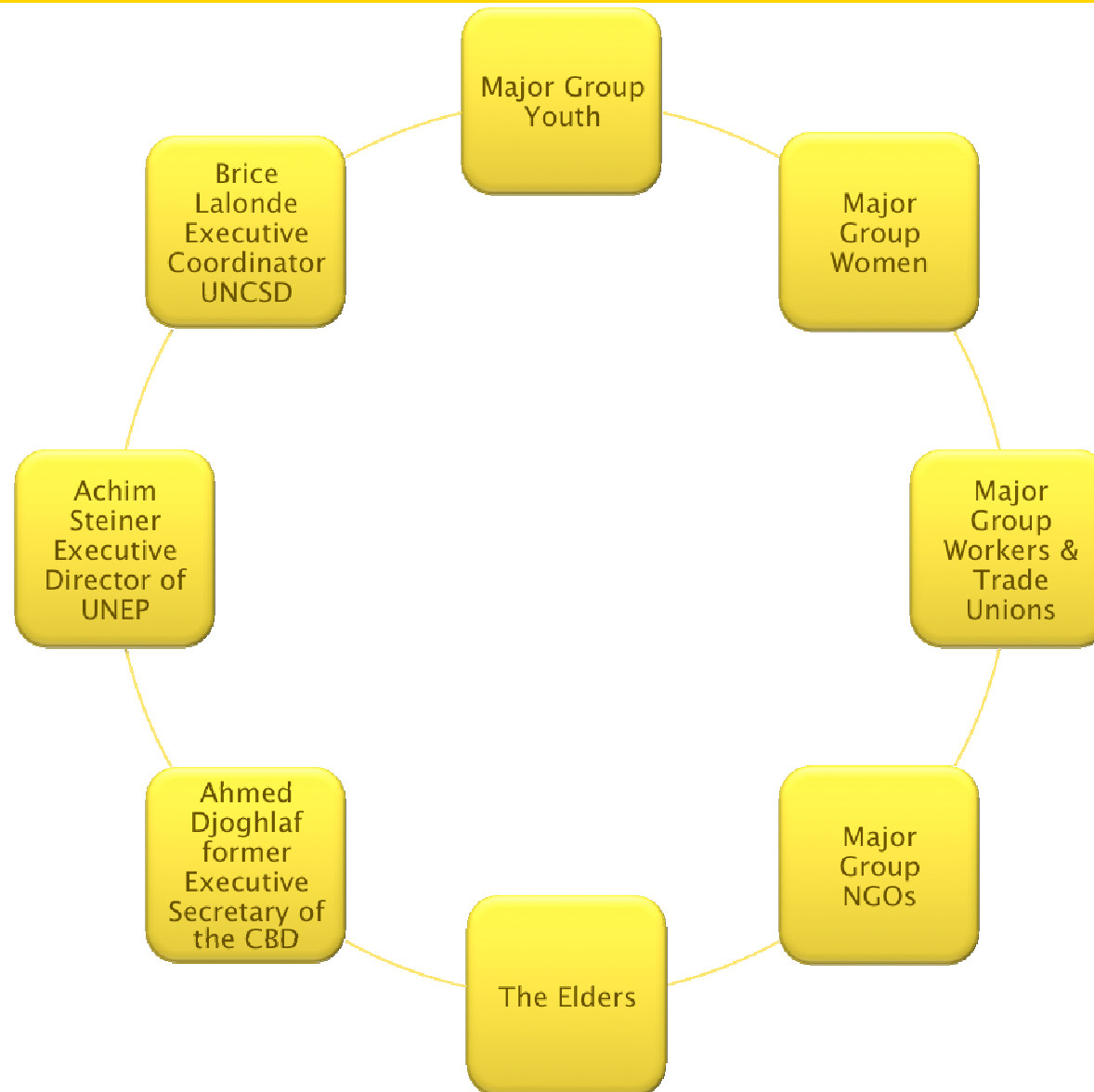
Consider citizens complaints and concerns

Reporting to:

National Parliament

Facilitating international policy through to national implementation

## Supporters of the Ombudsperson proposal include:



The image features a light yellow background with a faint world map. A dark yellow horizontal bar is at the top. In the center, the text "World Future Council" is displayed in a bold, dark yellow font. A graphic of a branching arrow, also in dark yellow, is positioned behind the word "Future".

# World Future Council