

Minutes
WRI Board of Directors Meeting
December 11, 2007
Washington, DC

Attendees: James Harmon–Chair, Tish Emerson, Roberto Artavia, Hattie Babbitt, Jessica Catto, Leslie Dach, Jamshyd Godrej, Denis Hayes, Jonathan Lash, Gretchen Long, Jeff Miller, Ted Roosevelt, IV, Stephen Ross, Alison Sander, Gus Speth, Ralph Taylor, Todd Thomson, Diana Wall

Staff: Manish Bapna, Steve Barker, Liz Cook, Robin Murphy, Jonathan Pershing, Allison Sobel

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. EST by the Chair.

Chairman’s Welcome

Jim Harmon wished everyone happy holidays. He welcomed Roberto Artavia who was attending his first meeting. Mr. Harmon congratulated Vice President Gore for his inspiring Nobel Prize acceptance speech. He thanked Steve Ross who will host a WRI fundraising event in NYC in January. Mr. Harmon asked the Board to contribute to WRI’s Annual Appeal.

The Board approved the Minutes from the September 2007 Board Meeting and Retreat.

Strategic Planning Roadmap

Manish Bapna spoke about the developments in WRI’s strategic planning process since the September Board Retreat. He asked for the Board’s advice on three main areas: the strategic intent statement, the issue of focus and alignment of WRI’s goals and objectives, and WRI’s office expansion to China, India, and Brazil. He noted that WRI intends to have an in-country presence in China in 2008. He also asked the Board for any comments on the sections of the Strategic Plan especially the pieces focused on encouraging synergies across programs, communications, innovation, staffing, the role of the board, and fundraising.

Jim Harmon invited Board members to make comments and suggestions. The Board discussed the Strategic Intent Statements offered in the Plan and agreed on the following: Vision for the Planet, Sustainable Solutions for its People.

Mr. Bapna asked for reactions on the Funnel concept described in the Strategic Plan. Gretchen Long thought the Funnel makes sense and that it was a good way to review programs. The Board discussed whether WRI should have two goals instead of four and focus more closely on CEP and PEP. Mr. Bapna noted that MEP and IGP are

closely aligned with the other two goals. Jonathan Lash noted that MEP and IGP are the tools which we refer to as “sustainable solutions” highlighted in the Strategic Intent Statement.

The Board discussed the role of the Board in the Plan, highlighting the nominating committee, and agreed that the committee should consider skill sets needed not just geographical location. Ted Roosevelt noted that the Nominating Committee already does this and especially looks for Board members who can help with development. The board Leslie Dach said that technology and communications were not highlighted enough in the Roadmap. Jessica Catto said the plan should emphasize the way WRI is striving to improve communications and more effectively tell our story. Roberto Artavia said that industry was moving very quickly into WRI’s fields, especially climate change, and that WRI would be competing for resources. He stressed the need to map industry overlaps and determine what we bring to the table, particularly with regards to China and India. The Board agreed that it was critical for WRI to determine its unique role. The board was pleased that the plan addressed staff retention.

Update from COP-13 in Bali

Jonathan Lash reported on the COP-13 conference from Bali. He noted that there were many representatives from NGO’s, the media, and the business community along with the diplomats in Bali for the event. He said that the role of business had changed since the last COP he attended and that the business community was now advocating for action, which he attributed at least in part to USCAP and the work of the WBCSD. Mr. Lash said that the delegates were aiming to have an agreement in place for 2009, when the U.S would have a new administration.

Mr. Lash thought that both the U.S. and China would need to act on climate before an international agreement could be effective and that China would agree to participate in multilateral treaty commitments only when the U.S. commits to reduce its own emissions. Europe has emerged as a clear leader of these negotiations. The main questions confronting the Conference were: “When will the U.S. act?” and “What will China do?” He believes that India and Brazil will take climate action once China does. Mr. Lash also noted that 15 staff from WRI were involved in the negotiations in Bali and that he was energized by and proud of their role.

Jonathan Pershing spoke about the COP negotiation process. He noted that many issues were on the table, but suggested that successful outcomes would require substantially scaled up commitments – and action. Dr. Pershing described evidence of progress: developing countries were increasingly willing to discuss their own actions to reduce emissions (a point ultimately agreed in the final negotiated agreement from Bali). Developed countries increasingly spoke of their willingness to provide technical and financial assistance, including for adaptation – and engaged in additional discussions (to which the US was a very reluctant party) on their own future commitments to emissions reductions. In spite of the progress, Dr. Pershing suggested that reaching consensus by

the 2009 COP session (to be held in Copenhagen) on how and to what extent to reduce global emissions remains a daunting task.

The Board discussed the COP process, the role of other institutions in the negotiations, and the possibility of U.S. Congressional action. Jim Harmon thanked everyone for participating.

The Conference Call disbanded at 1:30 p.m. EST.

Steve Barker
Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Administration