The discussion focused on three sectors of international cooperation; namely post-secondary institutions, the environmental sector and international development NGOs.

**Presentation 1: International Engagement: Post-Secondary Education Perspective**  
*By Bill Chislett, Director, MI International, International Arm of the Fisheries and Marine Institute, Memorial University of Newfoundland*

In summary, Bill gave a quick background on the Marine Institute and how it has grown over the last 30 years. It is a 10-person unit with 150 projects in over 50 countries worldwide. In 2008, it sent 43 people overseas. Its major funding sources include CIDA, Asia Development Bank, African Development Bank, World Bank, UNDP, KFAED, HRSDC, Government of Newfoundland and foreign governments.

Bill’s presentation focused on issues related to trends, challenges and opportunities in post-secondary institutions relating to international cooperation. In particular, he highlighted 5 Areas of International Engagement for Colleges and Universities:

1) Internationalization of colleges and universities  
2) International Development and Research Projects  
3) International Student Recruitment and Services  
4) International Mobility/Internships  
5) International Program Brokering

Major trends, challenges and opportunities in these areas included:

- The importance of the internationalization of the campus both as institutions globalize themselves and as opportunities for graduates to work internationally increase.  
- International student recruitment and services, which are driven by demographic (i.e. the aging population of NL) and financial pressures (to which high international students fees respond).  
- Challenges of the multicultural campus - while regularly seen as great opportunity for all parties, Bill suggested the need for a deeper analysis of benefits and processes including training staff around cross-cultural sensitivities, as well as better orientation for students in order to have a holistic understanding of what it means to study in a multicultural environment.  
- Globalized programs and program brokering, i.e. delivery of programs on other international campuses, which was noted as a very lucrative process for universities.  
- Technology/ICT – distance delivery and the growing trend of studying online  
- Growing global interest in post-secondary education including foreign governments’ interest in building post-secondary systems and the rise of technical vocational and education training (TVET)  
- Funding challenges including fiscal budget constraints, corporatization of education, i.e. the role and influence of sponsors, and the ‘business of education’ including cash cow executive MBA programs versus other educational priorities.
- The changing face of CIDA including the reduced number of focus countries, changes afoot in CIDA especially within the partnership branch, and renegotiating relationships with ACCC/AUCC.
- With regard to international development projects, Bill highlighted issues such as new and more consultative models for engaging with countries, increasing collaboration between donors/joint funds (i.e. working with ADB is different than dealing with CIDA and there can be tension arising from new arrangements), increasing competition from/collaboration with local companies and the impact this has on not only winning bids but successful implementation, and concerns over the ‘lobster crawling out of the pot’ scenarios where competition with regard to funding is creating barriers to reaching full potential through partnership.
- MI is makes efforts to share its knowledge resources widely in order to strengthen regional cooperation.

**Presentation 2:**  
**By Gerry Barr,** President – CEO of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC)

In summary, firstly Gerry highlighted the present state of international cooperation including the potential “last best chance” role of the Copenhagen Climate Conference in December 2009 to ensure environmental sustainability, the financial crisis and how it has plunged the world into reflection about the need for accountability from global finance institutions, potential reform of the world food system, hopeful change in US policy on nuclear disarmament, and serious questions on the progress of the MDGs.

Gerry then aimed at challenging the group to see our role globally and the importance of a clear focus. In particular, he concentrated on the Official Development Assistance Accountability Act that received Royal Assent in Canada a year ago and the new law’s ability to put Canada’s aid program on a path to a human rights approach to development. He outlined that CSOs will be heavily involved in this process, as there is a statutory obligation for the Minister to consult with international agencies, affected countries, and Canadian civil society with regard to aid spending. He promoted an idea that active citizens and civil society are necessary conditions for development effectiveness and in turn this relationship links seamlessly with the link between poverty eradication and respect for human rights, which is highlighted in CCIC’s publication “The Global Challenge to End Poverty and Injustice: A 10- Point Agenda”.

Gerry’s discuss focused heavily on a justice approach and the moral imperative to challenge the conditions of poverty stemming from a commitment to justice. He outlined the human rights approach in development as having twin engines: 1) citizen action drives social change by claiming rights and provide meaning to those rights, and, 2) states role to ultimately act to fulfill human rights as duty bearers for rights. Gerry gave the example of rights relating to non-discrimination and that the ODA Act gives priority to non-discrimination in foreign public policy. He emphasized that the three broad areas of aid accountability and transparency, active citizens and civil society, and a human rights framework have been supported our sector for a long time and are bolstered by the Act. Finally he suggested that the human rights approach to developed that is strengthen through the ODA Act is “the adult story of the development story” and strengthens development work by requiring layered, nuanced analysis of cause and roots so that, as Martin Luther King Jr. said, “rights on paper [are] given life blood”.

**Presentation 3: Overview of Tar Sands Development, Canadian Indigenous Tar Sands Campaign, Indigenous Environment Network**
By Clayton Thomas-Muller, Activist for Indigenous Rights and Environment Justice, and Tar Sands Campaign Organizer for the Indigenous Environmental Network

A link to more information on the Tar Sands is available at www.ienearth.org/cits.html.

In summary, Clayton began his discussed by focusing on the "Global Triple Crisis," namely:

1) Catastrophic climate chaos and global warming which threatens the loss of productive lands, physical upheavals, massive dislocations and desertification of agricultural land with especially severe problems for the poorest nations and peoples.

2) End of the era of cheap energy which will bring dramatic shifts in all operating assumptions of society and may be more ecologically destructive to access especially with relation to human rights.

3) Global resource depletion which will bring extensive depletion of key resources basic to the industrial system as well as human welfare including fresh water, genetics resources, forests, fish and wildlife, fertile soils, coral reefs and most elements of the local, regional and global commons.

Clayton explained that biodiversity and cultural diversity are inextricably linked and that within indigenous cultural diversity exists sophisticated ecosystem management developed over millennia. He spoke about how local indigenous knowledge and practices have enabled Indigenous communities to achieve sustainability and food security. He also spoke about the legacy of exploitation by governments to which Indigenous peoples in Canada, the US and throughout the Americas have faced and how Indigenous peoples have suffered disproportionately due to the production and use of energy resources, i.e. coal mining, uranium mining, oil and gas extraction, coal bed methane, nuclear power and hydropower development. He discussed how areas where Indigenous peoples live are often resource rich and serve as the base from which governments and corporations extract wealth yet are areas where most severe forms of poverty exist. He spoke about the disproportionate impact of climate change on First Nations communities, communities of colour and low-income and working class communities in Canada. He spoke about how peoples of colour are disproportionately represented as workers exposed by toxic by-products of industrial processes and those of low-income. He argued that low-income of communities of all races have less insulation from the effects of climate change including protection from unpredictable and violent weather patterns including heat waves and prolonged cold snaps. Clayton noted that entire sub-populations of Canadians do not see themselves or their realities in the environmental movement, which is one reason they are not engaged.

Clayton spoke about climate justice as a grassroots movement aimed at realizing solutions to our climate problems. Climate justice envisions a just transition to a future free from fossil fuels that protects the most vulnerable from the effects of climate change. He discussed the urgent need for Canadian policy makers to understand the inextricable link between Indigenous rights, energy and climate change and as such argued for a moratorium on further tar sands expansion in Northern Alberta. He framed a strategy against big oil within the dimensions of aboriginal title and treaty rights noting that aboriginal law is growing body of law that is linked to environmental issues, and pushed for a collective response grounded in a human rights based approach and led by First Nations and Métis to the Tar Sands Development.

Clayton discussed the fragile state of the economy and noted that by 2016 one out of every four workers in Canada will be native and that three quarters of the native population in Canada is under 30 years old, which may result in shifts to the labour market, political and economic power. In turn, he spoke about a crisis in the manufacturing sector as well as the Green capitalist movement that is not focused on a radical redistribution of wealth but arguably a green economy situated in 'Green Wal-Mart jobs' versus community-controlled, well-paid jobs that allow wealth to stay in the community. Finally, Clayton emphasized a regional
economic model aimed putting ecology back into economy by understanding local environments and protecting the earth for future generations.

Plenary Questions:

Bill was asked about the role of Department of Defence and military recruitment at university. He responded that the MI has the largest navy contingent in the province. He was also asked about provincial government funding projects and Gov’t of NL doing matching funding, but while they were approach the response of essentially no.

Bill was asked if brokering programs are new form of tied aid with benefits primarily coming to Canada, i.e. systematically “dis-incentivizing” countries to build own programs and then stealing all best students to come back to Canada. Bill response was that CIDA is not funding these programs and thus is not tied aid, that in fact programs are providing credentialing to Chinese programs that are equivalent or superior to our own, and that there is a slowly growing recognition that locally responsive programs are better. Although there were concerns about intellectual property rights as an issue for Canadian professors who develop programs that are shipped abroad.

Gerry was asked about CIDA willingness to untie aid. He said that CIDA has committed to complete untying of aid programs by 2012, which has long been advocated Canadian CSO community. There was a question about the 67% of Canadian ODA that goes to multilaterals and that if it would be exempt from ODA legislation. Gerry responded by stating that this not the case and this not equivalent to unaccountable aid; that the test that applies to aid bilateral/NGOs etc is the same test for money that goes to the World Bank etc. He said the rule applies nevertheless, accountability happens in Parliament’s ability to grill the Minister; efforts which are bolstered by CSOs’ engagement in the process.

There was a question about human rights as exclusively focused on ‘humankind’ and what about the ecology to restore our planet. The answer was that human rights emphasize a human centric approach but this transitioning in the NGO world, especially within communities as people see their rights and responsibilities shift within the dimensions of the biosphere.

There was discussion about corporate responsibility and ecological responsibility. Gerry noted that within this present parliament there is a moment of engagement and that a set of recommendations from 2-year process has been developed into legislation that is now in play and creates of standard based on a human rights approach. It puts forth that companies that “cannot meet the public standard can’t come looking for the public dime” including not getting promotion from DFAIT etc abroad. Gerry saw this is an exciting process and there is a very interesting confrontation of interests going on in Ottawa. In addition, Clayton noted that 87% of all the mining companies on the planet are traded on the TSE and that Canada is driving destruction across the planet for mining etc. He noted that “up until last week, mining companies didn’t have to give report on releasing toxins into the environment just changed last week.” Development and Peace’s campaign which gathered 150, 000 signatures for corporate responsibility for mining operations was noted and resources including www.minewatchcanada.ca, and Dominion magazine’s exposé on the Canadian mining industry.

3 Questions for Breakout Groups:

1) In this era of corporate consolidation of power, how do we as a movement build the political will and people power to counter this threat? (Clayton)
2) How can human rights approach affect our development practice? (Gerry)

3) How can we overcome the barriers to collaboration between post-secondary education institutions so to engage more effectively in international cooperation and development? (Bill)

Summary from Breakout Groups:

Group 1: In this era of corporate consolidation of power, how do we as a movement build the political will and people power to counter this threat? (Clayton)

- Building political will
- Role of media and expressing community views
- Obstacles such as monopoly in NB of JD Irving owning all media and concerns about the loss of CBC – discussion about alternative media i.e. Dominion Media Cooperative
- Building critical mass; writing opinion pieces and letters to the editor
- Direct action is under attack, demonstrating is tough
- Solidarity within movements – great amnesia of social movements in Canada – policy will come forth through social movements (ie. US Southern civil rights movements)
- Critical look at historical movements – what about partners’ movement?
- Look at issues of race and gender and how that may keep movements divided
- First Nations’ history with political and legislative history with Government of Canada – very different and need to build awareness and working with movements to keep this in mind
- Need to be brave – and non-profit industrial complex not allow to dictate and conditionalize funding
- Point about history – history of cooperative movement here, i.e. StFx, and also about Afriville in NS.
- Community solidarity and issues about Atlantic gateway – ie. building super-ports; Canada as a resource colony
- NGOs pulling together and focusing on issues
- NGOs working with other groups – other organizations that maybe lead by minority groups/grassroots

Group 2: How can human rights approach affect our development practice? (Gerry)

- CCIC – how to get this law out to the masses and awareness of its potential to work positively
- Now that it has become law there is some backpedalling, so it is important for CSOs to claim their role in making it work
- There was an example of how threats of corporate accountability created real tension and how they brought in a top gun to lobby for them hard
- Policy change is really where the battle of this law with take place
- Political will amongst CSO and NGOs is vital
- Charities historically can only spend 10% of government funding on advocacy work but ODA Act advocacy is essentially exempt because we will be promoting a law
- This is very exciting shift in building a human rights approach in Canada’s ODA from the inside out and it is an exciting time

Group 3: How can we overcome the barriers to collaboration between post-secondary education institutions so to engage more effectively in international cooperation and development? (Bill)
- Universities are very happy to bring money into universities through development projects headed by academics but if project doesn’t create peer reviewed journal publications for tenure list then community based work is not an incentive within the university’s hierarchy process. Nevertheless, academics do work on projects and this involves trust building, relationship building and partnerships with other universities.
- Good entry point is WUSC for involvement with Southern partnership.
- Demographics of universities, i.e. big crowd of baby boomers who are near retirement, got tenure and coasting AND then you have the younger group of academics who just got in after a really competitive process, very focused on publishing and teaching and can’t do community work – it’s a real challenge.
- Corporatization of campuses can create more competition between universities and barriers in cooperation.
- In Atlantic Canada, SSHRC proportion is not in keeping with the number universities and high quality researchers and student support.
- Universities should join ACIC and adopt code of ethics, engage locally before engaging with Southern partnerships. We can’t expect academics to get all community based immediately, they need to engage with local community based organizations initially.
- Challenges – university members who are consultants for the so-called ‘powers of evil’ research and evaluation tools for World Bank etc.
- Students have a role – graduate student associations important role in engaging students, students also bring in NGO linkages and in turn gain automatic legitimacy/credibility by working with a university.
- Training and preparation for maladaptive academics going abroad.

**Plenary Question: How can we build cooperation across sectors?**

- How do we build solutions amongst many stakeholders?
- How to make that bond.
- Coming together on one issue.
- International knowledge silo – i.e. you have experience if you have “international” experience.
- Different working groups from various perspectives towards common goals.
- Recognize existing skill sets that are transferable across sector.
- Support opportunities for relationship building.
- Community calendars – ACIC could take on leadership role.
- Create new solutions.
- Continue to advocate for tax $.
- Increase collaboration amongst and community-based NGOs.
- We need to claim tax dollars for the direction programs need to take – need to ‘dare to speak’.
- Influence and education officials with input from ‘on the ground organization and Southern partners.
- Identify shared goals and path to get there.