

Wednesday Earth Wisdom

Wednesday, November 23

Politics and Government



- **Key Terms:**
 - *Politics*: “who gets what, when, and how”
 - *Institution*: an ongoing organization that performs certain functions for society
 - *Government*: institution in which decisions are made that resolve conflicts or allocate benefits and privileges

Message From Reclaiming Earth Committee – Wednesday Earth Wisdom:

Leida Rijnhout, of [Friends of the Earth Europe](#), located in Brussels (formerly employed at the UN working with NGO's), wrote recently of sustainable development in Europe. Leida wrote: "Achieving sustainable development is not a matter of doing more of the same. This means no 'business-as-usual' or 'policy-as-usual,' but also no 'governance-as-usual.' The European Union (EU), as well as national governments, need to develop different ways of governance, where the priorities are set right, and where the decision making is done in a more holistic and coherent way and with full participation of civil society organizations. (Think of this statement in terms of the United States as well as state governments.) Sustainable development means a paradigm shift in thinking and acting."

Source: *Is Europe ready for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?*, written for the [Development and Peace Foundation](#).

From Francis we hear: "What happens with politics? Let us keep in mind the principle of subsidiarity, which grants freedom to develop the capabilities present at every level of society, while also demanding a greater sense of responsibility for the common good from those who wield greater power. Today, it is the case that some economic sectors exercise more power than states themselves" (Par. 196)

... "What is needed is a politics which is far-sighted and capable of a new, integral, and interdisciplinary approach to handling different aspects of the crisis. Often, politics itself is responsible for the disrepute in which it is held, on account of corruption and the failure to enact sound public policies." (Par. 197)