



### **JACQUELINE CRAMER, 1992 NETHERLANDS**

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Jacqueline Cramer completed her fellowship five years after the publication of the Brundtland report, “Our Common Future”, in which the concept of sustainable development was coined a crucial challenge for society. This was a vital step forward for Cramer, who decided at the age of 18 to devote her professional life to contributing to solutions that addressed environmental problems. The goal of her fellowship was to gain insight into how government, industry and societal groups in the United States aim to achieve sustainable development.



During her program, Cramer was fascinated to learn how the various stakeholders in the United States put the abstract concept of sustainable development into practice and how stakeholders related to one another. The more antagonistic style of interaction was quite different from the Dutch negotiation approach she was used to. Moreover, Cramer learned how the political culture in the different states and at the federal level influenced the outcome of government policies, which was quite comparable with the setup of the European Union and its Member States.

Upon returning to the Netherlands, Cramer copied some of the U.S. initiatives she learned about during her fellowship. She became involved in pollution prevention initiatives within the environmental industry and began working on sustainable development issues abroad. After her fellowship, Cramer worked for many years as a part-time professor and consultant in environmental management, and later in corporate social responsibility. In 2007, she was appointed Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment in the Dutch ministry. Cramer used the knowledge gained on her fellowship in effective sustainable procurement policies to draft similar regulations in the Netherlands.

Cramer believes the biggest impact of her fellowship is the understanding of the culture and politics of other countries in the world. She gained a better understanding of how nations cope with world problems, particularly within her specific field of expertise. This learning experience was particularly helpful when she became a governmental minister. As a Dutch minister, Cramer became heavily involved in the international climate change negotiations, and belonged to the core group of ministers that aimed at an international agreement in Copenhagen in 2009. She was aware of the fact that each country had its own stake in the ‘climate change’ debate, depending on its specific political and economic context. Sealing a deal with 193 countries in Copenhagen was therefore an almost impossible task, but she negotiated with ministers from all over the world to build bridges and gain confidence in the outcome.

Since her fellowship, Cramer has met various former Eisenhower alumni while visiting their countries or during their visits to the Netherlands. She receives great support from the Dutch Eisenhower Fellows, with whom she meets regularly. She recognizes that this experience gave her the feeling that she belongs to a club of friends all over the world.

Of her fellowship, Cramer firmly believes that, “this attitude of reaching out to other people and establishing an atmosphere of openness and trust is a result of the Eisenhower Fellowship. I believe that this attitude can bring people together and make planet earth an even better place to live”.

**Leaders bettering the world around them.**