

EARTH SUMMIT 2002 Explained

Develop vt. 1. Bring to maturity 2. Elaborate 3. Improve value or change use of 4. Evolve 5. Bring forth, bring out 7. Grow to a maturer state **Development** vt. Stage of growth or advancement **Sustain** vt 1. Keep, hold up 2. Endure 3. Keep alive 4. Confirm 5. Nourish 6. Encourage, Stand

Where did it all start?

Sustainable development lies at the heart of the Earth Summit process. The journey toward sustainable development has not been straightforward and is far from being fully achieved. In the last thirty years a whole series of events have brought us to the wide-ranging interpretation of sustainable development that we see today.

The concept of sustainable development dates back a long way but it was at the UN Conference on Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972) that the international community met for the first time to consider global environment and development needs (Figure 1). The Conference led to the formation of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). The Stockholm Declaration and Action Plan, which were also produced, defined principles for the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, and highlighted the need to support people in this process. The Conference indicated that "industrialised" environmental problems, such as habitat degradation, toxicity and acid rain, were not necessarily relevant issues for all countries. In particular, development strategies were not meeting the needs of the poorest countries and communities. However, it was the pending environmental problems that dominated the meeting and led to wider public environmental awareness. Books such as *"The Silent Spring"* by Rachel Carson gave a foretaste of the current view that, if international modes of development continue along their present paths, the world is rapidly heading for a major breakdown.

In the 1980's the UN set up the World Commission on Environment and Development, also called the Brundtland Commission. They produced *"Our Common Future"*, otherwise known as the Brundtland Report, which framed much of what would become the 40 chapters of Agenda 21 and the 27 principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. It defined sustainable development as development which;

"meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"

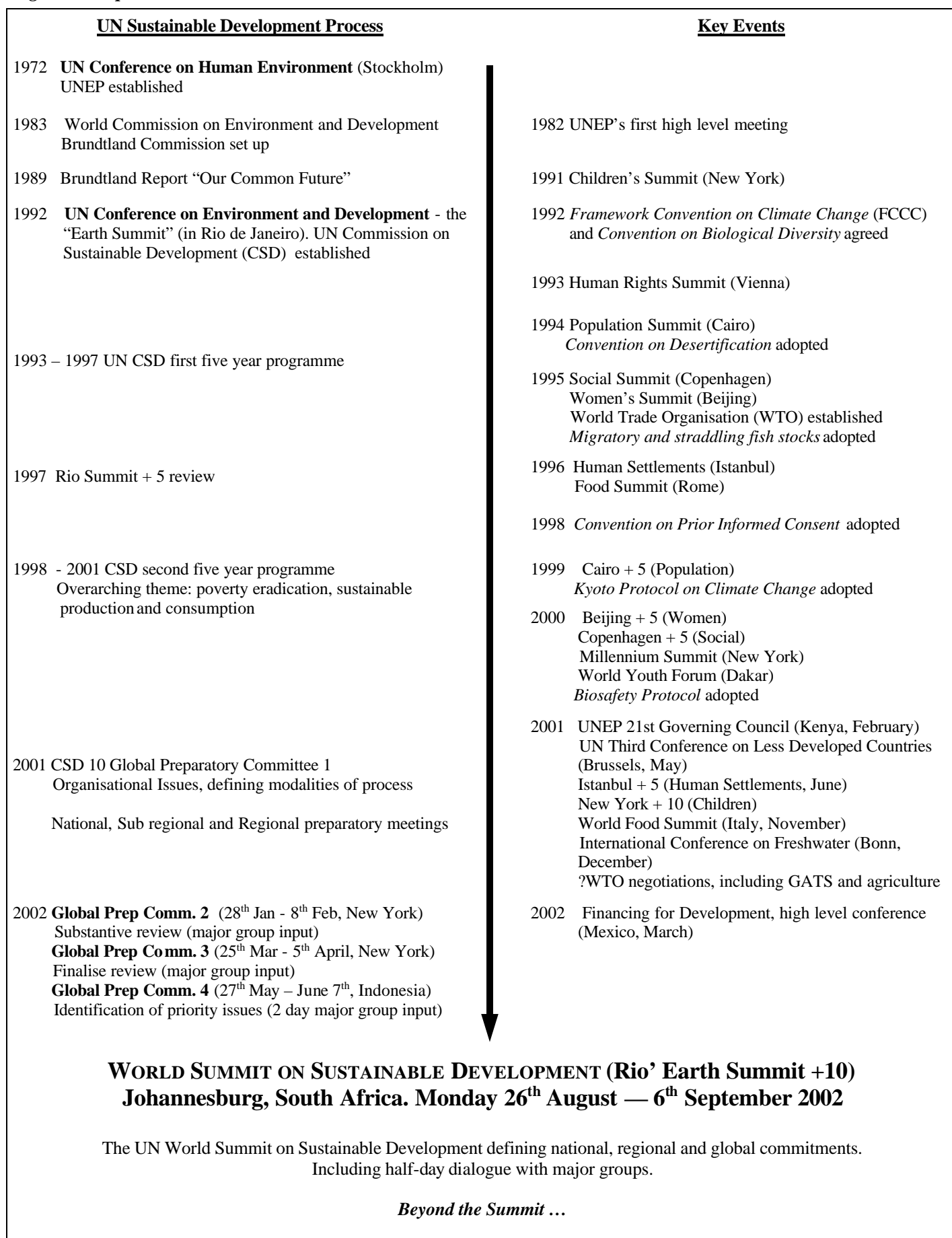
The 20th anniversary of Stockholm took place in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. The UN Conference on Environment and Development, the *"Earth Summit"*, agreed Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration. These documents outlined key policies for achieving sustainable development that meets the needs of the poor and recognises the limits of development to meet global needs. "Needs" was therefore interpreted not solely in terms of economic interests but also to be those of a fully functional, *harmonious*, global system that incorporates both people and ecosystems. Figure 2. outlines the four broad areas of action within Agenda 21.

Redressing the Balance

The Summit brought environment and development issues firmly into the public arena. Along with the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 it led to agreement on two legally binding conventions: Biological Diversity and the Framework Convention on Climate Change. It also produced a Statement of Forest Principles. The Earth Summit gave rise to a number of

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Figure 1. Steps to Earth Summit 2002



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positive responses including the emergence of thousands of Local Agenda 21 initiatives and an enhanced political profile of environmental issues. It led to the formation of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) and many countries set up sustainable development commissions and national strategies for sustainable development. However, the description of sustainable development in Agenda 21 called for total shift in the status quo of prevalent value systems and institutional processes. Such global change could never have occurred over night. When progress was assessed at Rio + 5 (New York, 1997) a number of gaps were identified, particularly with regard to social equity and poverty. This was largely reflected by falling levels of official development assistance (ODA) and growing international debt, along with failures to improve: technology transfer; capacity building for participation and development; institutional coordination; and reduce excessive levels of production and consumption. The review meeting called for the ratification, reinforcement and stronger implementation of the growing number of international agreements and conventions which refer to environment and development.

Figure 2. Elements of Agenda 21

Elements	Issues
Social and Economic dimensions to development	Poverty, Production and Consumption, Health, Human Settlement, Integrated Decision - Making
Conservation and management of natural resources	Atmosphere, Oceans and Seas, Land, Forests, Mountains, Biological Diversity, Ecosystems, Biotechnology, Freshwater resources, Toxic Chemicals, Hazardous Radioactive and Solid Wastes
Strengthening role of Major Groups	Youth, Women, Indigenous Peoples, Non-Government Organisations, Local Authorities, Trade Unions, Business, Scientific and Technical Communities, Farmers
Means of Implementation	Finance, Technology transfer, Information, Public Awareness, Capacity Building, Education, Legal Instruments, Institutional Frameworks

Building Momentum

Between 2nd– 5th May 2001, proceeding the ninth session of the CSD, the first global preparatory committee (Prep Comm. 1.) for the Summit took place to begin to define the modalities of the various processes in the run up to the summit, as well as for the Summit itself. The date for Earth Summit 2002 has now been set for 26th August - 6th of September 2002, to take place in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Preparations for the Summit will take place at local, national, sub-regional, regional and global levels, with the official UN platforms at national, regional and global levels (Figures 3 and 4). Unlike the 1997 review, the Earth Summit 2002 process is undertaking a review of progress in advance of the Summit. This is with the hope that people will arrive at the Summit ready to identify steps to take critical and more problematic areas forward. Donor governments have been requested to further support developing country participation in the process. Numerous reports from different UN bodies are underway to supplement the review process, including UNEP's Global Environment Outlook, UNDP's Human Development Report, WHO's World Health Report, World Bank's World Development Report, IFAD's Rural Poverty Report, UNESCO's World Water Development Report. Also governments have agreed to take account of the outcomes of relevant international processes, including the third Conference for Least Developed Countries, Financing for Development Conference, Conference of the Parties for the various UN global conventions.

Possible Outcomes

A minimal outcome of the Summit is that it will provide an opportunity to strengthen the global commitments on sustainable development. This includes ratification of agreements, such as the Kyoto and Biosafety Protocols, along with other outstanding agreements, such as Persistent Organic Pollutants and on Migratory and Straddling Fish Stocks. In addition governments could make specific commitments towards progressing the Millennium Development Goals e.g. health, gender, children, water, poverty, health and education targets. Johannesburg creates the opportunity to define integrated and time bound plans and strategies to meeting these agreements over the next five, ten and fifteen years.

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Figure 3. Dates and locations of preparatory meetings

Area	Meeting	Location & Date
Latin America and Caribbean	Eminent Persons Round Table	Bridgeport, Barbados, 18-20 June 2001
	Sub-regional Preparatory Meetings	Southern Cone, Santiago Chile, 14-15 June 2001 Caribbean, Havana, Cuba, 28-29 June 2001 Andean Zone, Quito, Ecuador 2-3 July 2001 Meso-American (Central America, Mexico), San Salvador, El Salvador 17-18 July 2001
	Regional Prep Comm.	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 23-24 October 2001
Europe and North America	Eminent Persons Round Table	Vail, Colorado, USA 6-8 June 2001
	Sub-regional Preparatory Meetings	European Prep Comm. ECE member Geneva, 12-13 July 2001 Central and Eastern Europe, Bucharest, Romania, 27-28 June 2001
	Regional Prep Comm.	Geneva, Switzerland, 24-25 September 2001
Africa	Eminent Persons Round Table	Cairo, Egypt 25-27 June 2001
	Sub-regional Preparatory Meetings	South Africa: Port Louis, Mauritius, 17 –19 September 2001 Northern Africa: Tunis, Tunisia, 5-7 September 2001 East Africa: Nairobi, Kenya, 10-12 September 2001 Central Africa: Libreville, Gabon, 17-19 September 2001 West Africa: Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, 1– 3 October 2001
	Regional Prep Comm.	Nairobi, Kenya, 6-9 November 2001
Asia and Pacific	Eminent Persons Round Tables	West Asia: Lebanon 9-11 April 2001 East Asia and the Pacific: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 9-11 July 2001 Central and South Asia: Bishkek, Kyrgystan, 30 July-1 August 2001 Western Asia: Bahrain, 23-25 September 2001
	Sub-regional Preparatory Meetings	Northeast Asia: Beijing, China, 26-28 July 2001 Southeast Asia: Manila, Philippines, 17-19 October 2001 Central Asia: Almaty, Kazakhstan, 19-21 September 2001 South Asia: Colombo, Sri Lanka, 27-29 September 2001 Pacific: Apia, Samoa, 5-7 September 2001
	Regional Prep Comm.	West Asia: Cairo, Egypt, 24-25 October 2001 Asia and Pacific: Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 27-29 November 2001
Global	Prep Comm. 2	New York, 28 th Jan - 8 th Feb 2002
	Prep Comm. 3	New York, 25 th March – 5 th April 2002
	Prep Comm. 4	Bali, Indonesia, 27 th May - 7 th June 2002
	Earth Summit 2002	Jo' burg, South Africa, 26 th August—6 th September 2002

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Figure 4. Activities during preparatory meetings

Activities	
<p>National</p> <p>2000 - Summer 2001</p>	<p>National preparations will be coordinated by national multi-stakeholder committees for sustainable development - to begin to define national agendas and undertake a review of progress. Public consultations and meetings, previous National Reports to the CSD and National Strategies for Sustainable Development will all help to inform this process. The UN CSD has suggested 4 national activities, also countries are asked to define 4- 5 national targets to take domestic sustainable development forward.</p>
<p>Regional</p> <p>Summer - Winter 2001</p>	<p>Regional meetings of governments and other major groups will seek to build consensus over critical issues for progressing regional sustainable development - identifying areas of priority action and highlighting examples of best practice. The processes will be informed by roundtables of regional experts, which will seek to highlight problems, solutions and priorities, as well as to set targets. Sub-regional processes may also contribute to this process, where they are being arranged in advance of the regional meeting. Regional meetings will take place in: Latin America & Caribbean (Rio de Janeiro, October), Africa (Nairobi, November), Europe & North America (Geneva, September), West Asia (Egypt, October), Asia & Pacific (Cambodia, November)</p>
<p>Global</p> <p>2001 - Summer 2002</p>	<p>The first Global Preparatory Committee (Prep Comm. I, May 2nd—5th 2001) on summit modalities. Prep Comm. 2 (28th Jan - 8th Feb, New York) is the substantive review and includes major group input, as well as financial institutions and GEF. The UN Secretary General will produce a global report on progress as well as reports on the outcomes of the regional and national review processes. Prep Comm. 3 (25th Mar - 5th April, New York) will finalise review, defining lessons learnt & existing constraints to implementation. It will set a provisional agenda for the summit. Prep Comm. 4 (27th May - June 7th, Indonesia) will be a high level ministerial event to identify the priority issues for the summit. It includes two days of multi-stakeholder dialogues. Johannesburg Summit (26th August- 6th September, South Africa) The plenary is proposed to have two halves. In the first half delegates and civil society participants will address organisational issues and undertake partnership events. In the second, Heads of State will debate and a multi-stakeholder event will be convened. The Main Committee will meet in parallel to negotiate outstanding elements of a draft text for the Johannesburg Declaration.</p>

The Summit also creates an opportunity to address critical questions facing international institutions, such as the UN family, Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank/International Monetary Fund) and World Trade Organisation, as regards their role in meeting globally sustainable development, as well as to address the cross-over and complementarity between different international, regional, national and local bodies. The Summit will not only address Agenda 21 but also tackle new, critical issues that are facing the world in a new century of wholesale globalisation. Key issues will include aspects relating to greater accountability, equity and justice for sustainable ends. Similarly it is crucial that the present lack of public awareness and engagement in Agenda 21 is tackled with renewed vigour. Johannesburg creates a massive opportunity to form new and positive partnerships between different stakeholder groups for tackling some of these critical global issues that require an international response. And in order to mobilise implementation, the Summit will have to secure innovative and increased funds for sustainable development. This will include additional aid, further debt relief and enhanced access to Foreign Direct Investment.

Beyond the Summit

Time is short. As individuals, we each have a right, a role and a responsibility to contribute to sustainable development. Clearly the more people and organizations who are willing to contribute to the Earth Summit process, and willing to encourage others to do so, the more likely that the process will begin to build momentum and that the summit can be a starting point for a new level of implementation. Before Rio it was said that;

"while the Earth Summit will constitute a test of nations willingness to institute fundamental changes in economic behaviour, the challenges ahead will be far more daunting. Change is seldom easy"

Sustainable development is a dynamic process, and it's one that will continue to evolve and grow as lessons are learnt and ideas re-examined. By reinvigorating the spirit of Rio we can begin to move to a deeper and broader level of sustainability.

This paper was written by Rosalie Gardiner as part of Stakeholder Forum 's
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