



Johannesburg Summit:

World Summit on Sustainable Development

Recommended Areas for Action Promoting equitable and environmentally sustainable development

September 2001

Introduction

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) will mark the 10th anniversary of the Rio Earth Summit and 30 years since the Stockholm Conference. This event presents a unique opportunity to make progress to ensure the health and sustainability of our planet and the well-being of its people. The WSSD will be the first ever Multistakeholder Summit, giving all major sectors of society an opportunity to display leadership, action and accountability. WWF calls on governments, the private sector, regional and international institutions, and others to come to the Summit prepared to honour commitments already made, and to take on ambitious, new commitments where necessary in order to operationalize and mainstream sustainable development principles.

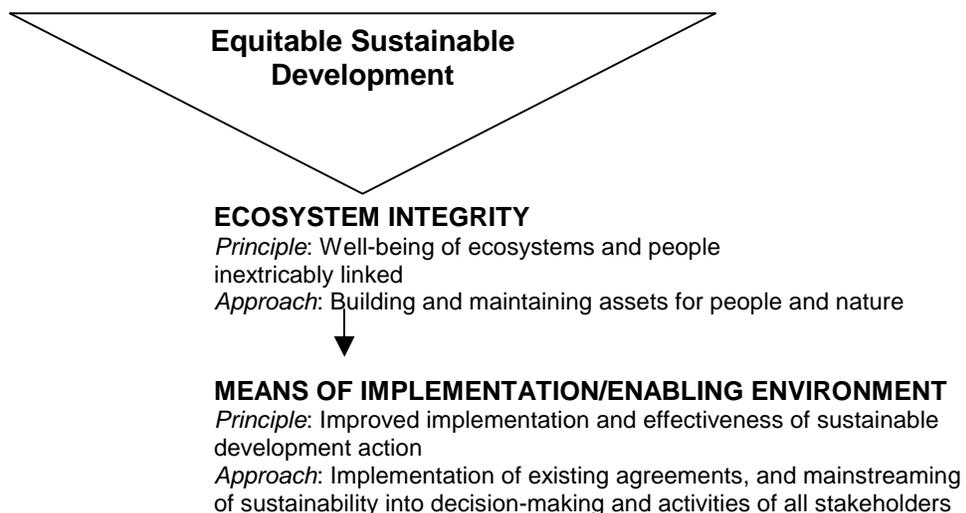
While the specific agenda for the WSSD is yet to be determined, a number of priority issues have begun to emerge out of recent discussions at the international and regional level. These relate broadly to three key themes: poverty eradication, sustainable consumption (reducing ecological footprint to within the earth's carrying capacity), and ensuring the integrity of the earth's ecosystems. The critical interconnections between these themes, as well as their means of implementation, can be represented as follows:

POVERTY ERADICATION

Principle: Eradication of poverty
Approach: Achieving value for conservation, stewardship of environmental functions and services, and creating sustainable livelihoods

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

Principle: Reduction of consumption
Approach: Consumption should be within Earth's carrying capacity. All actors, including individuals, have a footprint



WWF's expertise and experience is greatest in the third area – ensuring ecosystem integrity – and this will be reflected in WWF's input to the WSSD, but WWF recognizes that only limited progress is possible unless all three themes are addressed in a way that carefully balances and integrates economic, social and environmental issues. Furthermore, progress will not be made unless adequate attention is given to means of implementation and creation of an enabling environment for sustainable development.

On this basis, WWF offers some preliminary recommendations for informal consideration during national consultations, regional preparatory sessions and beyond.

The 2002 Challenge

The outcomes of the WSSD process should clearly demonstrate progress and provide a basis for further action beyond 2002. These could take the form of:

- ❑ *Addressing the Underpinning Challenges:* Agreement on ways to address critical challenges for achieving sustainable development, particularly related to poverty and consumption
- ❑ *Maintaining Ecosystem integrity:* Specific and measurable achievements by 2002 and targeted commitments beyond 2002 from governments and other stakeholders on key issues, e.g. climate change, forests, freshwater, toxics, oceans and coasts
- ❑ *Establishing Means of Implementation and an enabling environment:* New opportunities for, and agreement on, delivery mechanisms to support action, e.g. sustainable trade, partnerships with industry and multilateral institutions, resources for development, convention implementation and ratification, and investment in building capacities through training and education.

The following is a list of key issues and recommendations for action, based around the core WSSD themes. WWF calls on governments, businesses, and other stakeholders to work towards progress in these areas:

Poverty Eradication

Sustainable development cannot be achieved without tackling the critical issue of poverty. Some options include:

- ❑ Recognition that maintaining and restoring environmental assets (e.g.: forests, freshwater, coral reefs) is a cornerstone of a comprehensive sustainable development framework
- ❑ Renewed commitment to implementing national strategies for sustainable development (NSSDs) in order to integrate environment and development
- ❑ Strengthening the access of the rural poor to natural resources and enhance their capacity to manage those resources sustainably
- ❑ Acknowledging the role of rural people as stewards of ecosystem functions and services, and identify innovative sources of income to help compensate for this role
- ❑ Integrating the principles of social equity and environmental integrity into decision-making by governments and other stakeholders, including the private sector
- ❑ Promoting equitable laws, policies and programmes e.g.: land reform to support the poor, empowerment of women and other marginalized groups, participation of local communities in decision-making, and other aspects of good domestic governance

Sustainable Consumption

One of the essential means of achieving sustainable development is to ensure that consumption patterns do not exceed the earth's carrying capacity. The current overcapacity driven by industrialized country lifestyles and intensified by a globalising world cannot be sustained. The results can include: depleted natural resources, increased emission of toxic pollutants, dangerous global warming, substantial waste generation, and an increasing inequality between and within nations. Acknowledging that a majority of developed countries are key contributors to the unsustainability of the world's ecosystems, the Summit can stimulate action, for instance by:

- ❑ Setting specific targets for measuring and reducing the ecological and social footprint of industrialized countries
- ❑ Promoting environmentally sound market transformation, for instance in respect of independent voluntary certification and creation of markets for environmentally sound goods, like green electricity
- ❑ Providing individual consumers with the necessary information and tools to make decisions that support sustainable development (e.g.: energy efficiency, purchase of green products, etc.)
- ❑ Strengthening corporate environmental responsibility in terms of both consumption and production patterns, e.g.: improved transparency, accountability, implementation of life-cycle management
- ❑ Encouraging policy reform to ensure full cost pricing of environmental goods and services
- ❑ Agreement to phase-out harmful subsidies that encourage overproduction and consumption in favour of positive subsidies and other incentives

Ecosystem Integrity

It is clear that achieving equitable and ecologically sound sustainable development, including improved quality of life and environmental security, requires the maintenance of ecosystem integrity and a building up of the planet's natural capital. Ecoregional conservation – placing the security of ecosystems and ecological processes and the well-being of people at the heart of the development process – provides an important tool. Using stakeholder engagement as the key dynamic for action, interventions are needed at all levels to:

- ❑ Conserve and maintain the benefits of ecological services provided by natural systems to assist in human well-being
- ❑ Ensure representation of the full range of natural habitats and the resilience of ecosystems
- ❑ Maintain viable populations of flora and fauna
- ❑ Secure ecological and evolutionary processes.

Some strategies for building and maintaining assets and prospects for people are outlined below:

1. Climate Change

- ❑ Sufficient governments ratify the Kyoto Protocol for it to enter into force
- ❑ Individual governments, companies, major faiths, and other civil society representatives voluntarily commit to CO2 reductions beyond the Kyoto target
- ❑ Consumers, governments and utilities commit to an annual trend toward increasing reliance on renewable sources of energy, and reducing overall energy consumption
- ❑ Governments agree to carry out and support vulnerability assessments and to include climate change adaptation strategies in National Strategies for Sustainable Development

2. Freshwater

- ❑ Regional groupings of governments agree to protect mountains – Water Towers – on a catchment basis
- ❑ Governments and utilities announce plans and funding to restore specific freshwater ecosystems, including decommissioning dams which do not function satisfactorily from an economic, social or ecological standpoint
- ❑ Governments and companies commit to criteria and good practice guidelines from the report of the World Commission on Dams
- ❑ Commitment by governments and other stakeholders to invest in healthy river basin ecosystems to provide water for people and food production, supported by national agricultural policies that promote environmentally sustainable food production
- ❑ Governments and stakeholders commit to reduce water consumption, e.g.: by exploring opportunities for demand management, more efficient use of water supplies, full cost recovery in water pricing and trading, and best practices adhered to in water markets

3. Forests

- ❑ Governments, institutions, NGOs and other partners announce commitments to Forest Landscape Restoration initiatives
- ❑ Governments, institutions, donors and other relevant actors provide the necessary legal, administrative and financial framework to encourage the establishment and effective management of protected areas with social and economic benefits for local communities
- ❑ Governments and companies in producer countries establish producers' groups and adopt timetables to make progress toward credible certification, as steps towards sustainable forest management and halting of illegal logging
- ❑ Companies and official authorities in consumer countries commit to using, buying and procuring timber certified as harvested from sustainable managed sources

4. Oceans and Coasts

- ❑ Governments endorse the outcomes of the First Intergovernmental Review of the Global Plan of Action on Land-Based Activities (GPA), including actions and targets
- ❑ Companies join TBT-free buyers' groups aimed at ceasing production and use of organotin-based antifouling paint, and invest in the production and use of less environmentally impacting alternatives
- ❑ Governments agree to designate High-Seas Marine Protected Areas to help protect and restore vulnerable habitats, increase fisheries productivity and reduce adverse impacts of human activities
- ❑ Industry sector leaders announce their intention to not to undertake harmful operations in marine protected areas
- ❑ Governments and other stakeholders call for WTO rules disciplining fisheries subsidies to be agreed in the next round of WTO negotiations

5. Toxics and Health

- ❑ Sufficient governments ratify prior to the WSSD the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) to allow it to enter into force by the end of 2002, along with the Prior Informed Consent Rotterdam Convention, the Basel Convention and its 1995 Ban Amendment, and the 1996 Protocol to the London Convention on ocean dumping
- ❑ Governments, regions and companies agree to take action to reduce or avoid human or wildlife exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs), while also advancing efforts to secure internationally agreed EDC screening and testing procedures
- ❑ Governments agree that the Beijing Assembly of the Global Environment Facility needs to adopt a new focal area on POPs substances, through amendment of the Instrument for the Establishment of the Restructured GEF
- ❑ Governments, in collaboration with all interested parties, adopt strengthened national and international chemical management regulations addressing precaution and substitution, in combination with meaningful data development, disclosure and monitoring requirements

Means of Implementation and Enabling Environment

Operationalizing sustainable development will require a genuine commitment by all Heads of Government, the private sector, and other stakeholders. Eradicating poverty while maintaining ecological integrity and achieving sustainable consumption is a daunting task, requiring, among other things, reviewing the role of all actors in achieving good governance, seeking predictable and sustainable financing, facilitating capacity-building, education and awareness-raising schemes, and building effective and equitable institutions.

Globalisation, which is intimately linked to consumption patterns, ecosystem health, and poverty eradication, compounds the challenge. While economic globalisation – trade, foreign investment, capital market flows – can spur development, there are also substantial risks associated with this process, based on the scale and pace of change. The challenge is to find ways to moderate these risks, while at the same time harnessing the potential benefits of globalisation and

technological advancements in a way that promotes equitable and environmentally sustainable development, rather than increasing inequities. This will require the promotion of institutional reform to ensure a fair and inclusive global financial, monetary and trading system, the integration of environmental and social considerations into trade and investment decision-making, and increased transparency and accountability of key actors, including transnational corporations.

The following are some specific recommendations to help create an enabling environment and deliver implementation action.

1. Governance

- ❑ Reviewing the existing regime of multilateral environmental agreements to streamline approaches (e.g. on reporting requirements, information-sharing and lessons learned), ensure more predictable and sustainable financing, and explore ways to increase compliance
- ❑ Promoting more effective and efficient monitoring and reporting at all levels (domestic, regional and global) by governments and other stakeholders (including through the adoption of criteria and indicators) including a commitment from developed countries to enhance capacity-building and funding for this
- ❑ Securing convention ratification and early implementation (e.g.: Kyoto Protocol on climate change, Cartagena Protocol on biosafety, POPs treaty, Straddling Fish Stocks Agreement)
- ❑ Improving the accountability of transnational corporations (TNCs) through greater transparency and information-sharing, as well as encouragement of good corporate citizenship through voluntary and regulatory approaches
- ❑ Pledging global support for the principles of the Aarhus Convention (e.g.: promoting national systems for disclosure, participation and justice in environmental matters)

2. Sustainable Trade and Investment

- ❑ Governments agree to phase out environmentally harmful and trade distorting subsidies and redirect freed up resources toward environmentally friendly and socially viable activities
- ❑ Governments at the national and regional level agree to undertake stakeholder-oriented assessments of the economic, socio-developmental and environmental effects of any new trade agreement, taking into consideration existing “review and assessment” provisions at the multilateral level
- ❑ Governments commit to undertake concrete actions at the national, bilateral, regional and intergovernmental levels, to develop and establish appropriate mechanisms ensuring that investment supports sustainable development and social equity in both the home and host countries

3. Financial Resources and Technology Transfer

- ❑ Commitment by industrialized countries to reach the aid target of 0.7 per cent ODA
- ❑ Greater investment in multistakeholder initiatives that build natural capital for people and communities, e.g. forest landscape restoration, destruction of African toxic chemical stockpiles, certification and ecolabelling of sustainably managed and harvested natural resources
- ❑ Reorienting development assistance to create and strengthen environmentally sustainable livelihoods
- ❑ Increased capacity and greater access to the right technologies to build local livelihoods and thus make more effective use of development assistance
- ❑ Commitment for increased funding for the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in upcoming replenishments, as well as payment of outstanding arrears
- ❑ Reform of the GEF operating process to take a more programmatic and flexible approach, e.g.: by supporting integrated conservation and development action

4. Capacity-building and Education

- ❑ Identify education for sustainable development as a priority within formal domestic education processes, both as part of school curricula as well as teacher training
- ❑ Ensure that education and training for sustainable development is included in all work force development plans, and professional development training
- ❑ Include education for sustainable development as a key element of capacity-building programmes within local communities and rural/urban development programmes

Conclusion

The challenge for 2002 is a great one but one that can be fulfilled. It will be important for governments and major groups to be able to demonstrate the type of progress in 2002 which is easily communicable to the public and media. It will also be important for significant new commitments to be announced in 2002 by a wide range of stakeholders. These can act as a symbol of a broader and more fundamental set of decisions which will provide a basis for a reinvigorated effort on sustainable development in years to come.

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