



## A critical analysis of sustainable development policies and trends

Dr. Balbhadra Prasad Dewangan

Principal & Head, Department of Economics, Ashoka College, Sarangarh, Chhattisgarh, India

### Abstract

The notion of sustainable development is a step to combine rising worries about a variety of environmental difficulties with socio-economic challenges, but it stimulates many alternative terms because it is a very broad word and idea. This article will outline the types and trends of sustainable development, their problems, and the future framework for change and its means in order to help readers comprehend these many policies. Sustainable development has the power to examine the core issues facing mankind today and in the future. More clarity and an emphasis on sustainable development are needed for this notion. Human equality will need a solid foundation in relation to social and environmental concepts, ideas, and ideals.

**Keywords:** Sustainable development, future generations, environment, economic sustainability, resource allocation, quality of life

### Introduction

#### Sustainable development

As is well known, the economics and environment are intertwined, meaning that everyone's fundamental requirements must be met while also pursuing everyone's dreams of a better life without sacrificing future demands. Development that disregards its effects on the environment that gives humans existence is the result. The reason for the necessity of the idea of sustainable development is that it will allow all future generations to live with a possible average quality of life that is at least as high as the one that the present generation is now enjoying. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) adopted the idea of sustainable development. Although the Brundt Land Report from 1987 is the source of the present notion of sustainable development, it was implemented for the purpose of managing forests sustainably and for twentieth-century concerns. It will be argued that the organizing concept of sustainable development is the preservation of the limited resources required to ensure the existence of life on Earth for future generations.

#### The sustainable development definition

##### According to uniced

"Development that meets the need of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs." As you can see, "Needs" and "Future Generation" are the two catchphrases in the definition. The term "need" is used to refer to the idea of resource allocation. Sustainable development is defined as "meeting the basic needs of and extending to all their aspirations for a better life" in the landmark report "Our Common Future," which provided the description above. According to Edward Barbier, sustainable development is directly focused on raising the material standard of living for the impoverished at the local level. This can be quantified in terms of increased income, real income, access to healthcare, education, sanitation, and water, among other things. It may also be characterized as any system, structure, or work that can be sustained over an extended period of time without endangering the environment or development, and that equalizes short-term interests while safeguarding those of

future generations. Three dimensions, or pillar domains, have been used to explain sustainable development.

1. **Economic**
2. **Environmental**
3. **Social**

These can be explained as:

1. **Economic:** The interaction between people and their natural, social, and constructed surroundings is the foundation of human economic sustainability. Another name for it is "human ecology," which emphasizes sustainable development that takes human health into account.
2. **Environmental:** How the natural environment continues to be productive is a key component of its sustainability. Its natural resources come from the environment; the climate, water, and air are very important.
3. **Social:** The goal of sustainable development is to reorganize our economy and way of life. Development, progress, and growth have been regarded in a variety of ways for many years. Therefore, implementing sustainable development strategies will guarantee the impoverished a higher standard of living.

As a result, sustainable development has been a top national objective since the beginning; it was never about seeking expansion or cleaning up later. We came to see that since the environment is an integral component of life, progress shouldn't come at the price of it. Therefore, long-term planning and strict policies are essential for sustainable development issues, and creative solutions are essential for new problems facing future generations. Global issues that are affecting our collective future generations are being addressed by the states of the future. Until the future becomes the present and economics and lawyers acknowledge the rights of future generations, we will not have anything for them. It is widely acknowledged that those who are living today should at the very least consider the interests of future generations and how current actions

will impact those interests, regardless of whether we believe that they constitute rights for future generations. For the benefit of future generations, the current generation should preserve the natural resources. Humans understood that it was the duty of the current generation to make sure that the interests and requirements of the next generation were securely protected.

#### **Following should be kept in mind for future sustainability welfare:**

1. **Use of non-conventional energy sources:** As is well known, India relies heavily on thermal hydro power plants to supply its electricity demands. The environmental effects of each of these are reciprocal.
2. **LPG, gobar gas in rural regions:** Wood, manure cake, or other biomass are typically used as fuel in rural regions for residential areas. This technique has a number of negative effects, including air pollution, livestock manure waste, deforestation, and a decrease in green cover.
3. **CNG in urban areas:** In recent years, India's public transportation system's usage of compressed natural gas as fuel has resulted in a major increase in air pollution and foul air.
4. **Solar power through photovoltaic cells:** India has an abundance of solar energy in the form of sunshine by nature. This technique is often employed in rural areas to provide low-cost grid and power lines. Solar energy technology is completely pollution-free.

The term "sustainable development" has gained popularity recently. It represents a paradigm change in development thinking for the future. As we can see, there are many different interpretations of sustainable development, which guarantees long-term growth and constant wellbeing for all. It seeks to exert pressure on the current generation while increasing the capacity of products and services to increase for future populations. Demand for environmental resources was lower than availability in the early phases of development. The rising demand for environmental resources in today's society leads to their overuse and misuse. Promoting development that avoids environmental issues and satisfies current demands without compromising those of future generations is known as sustainable development.

#### **Energy**

**Choices for Environment and Development:** A safe and sustainable energy pathway is crucial to sustainable development; we have not yet found it. Rates of increase in energy use have been declining. However, the industrialization, agricultural development, and rapidly growing populations of developing nations will need much more energy. Today, the average person in an industrial market economy uses more than 80 times as much energy as someone in sub-Saharan Africa. Thus any realistic global energy scenario must provide for substantially increased primary energy use by developing countries. Energy efficiency can only buy time for the world to develop 'low-energy paths' based on renewable sources, which should

form the foundation of the global energy structure during the 21st Century. Despite their current issues, the majority of these sources have the potential to provide the same quantity of primary energy as the earth now uses if they are developed creatively. A program of coordinated research, development, and demonstration programs that command the money required to assure the rapid development of renewable energy will be necessary to achieve these utilization levels. To shift their energy consumption habits in this manner, developing nations will need help. Fuel wood, the primary source of home energy for half of mankind, is in short supply for millions of people in the developing countries, and their numbers are only increasing. The agriculture sectors of the wood-poor countries must be set up to generate a lot of wood and other plant fuels. Given the importance of governments as consumers and their dominating position as energy providers, market pressures alone will not be sufficient to bring about the significant adjustments needed in the current global energy balance. Governments must explicitly include energy pricing for consumers in their policies if they hope to sustain and grow the current momentum behind yearly increases in energy efficiency. There are a number of ways to set rates that would incentivize customers to adopt energy-saving practices. The Commission does not have a preference, but "conservation pricing" forces governments to consider the long term when assessing the advantages and disadvantages of different policies. Given how crucial oil prices are to global energy policy, new avenues for promoting communication between producers and consumers ought to be investigated.

#### **Industry**

**Making More with Less:** Compared to 1950, the globe now produces seven times as many commodities. By the time population growth rates level out next century, manufacturing production will need to expand five to ten times only to bring the consumption of produced products in the developing world up to the level of the industrialized world. Experience in developed countries has demonstrated that anti-pollution technology has been cost-effective in preventing harm to people's health, property, and the environment. It has also increased the profitability of many enterprises by making them more resource-efficient. Raw material usage has remained constant or even decreased while economic expansion has persisted, and new technologies provide even more efficiency. Any improper industrialization has costs, and many emerging nations are learning that they lack the time and resources to harm their surroundings now and clean up later due to the speed at which technology is evolving. To make the most of technology, however, they also require information and support from developed countries. It is particularly the duty of transnational firms to facilitate industrialization in the countries where they do business. Although emerging technologies promise more production, efficiency, and less pollution, they also carry the possibility of severe mishaps of a magnitude and nature that is beyond current coping methods, as well as the potential for new harmful compounds and wastes. Tighter regulations on the export of dangerous industrial and agricultural chemicals are desperately needed. The current regulations governing the disposal of hazardous waste have to be strengthened.

### **The urban challenge**

Nearly half of all people will reside in cities by the turn of the century, making the 21st century mostly an urban one. From about 100 million in 1920 to 1 billion now, the urban population of the developing world has grown tenfold in just 65 years. By 1980, one in ten people lived in a metropolis with one million or more residents, compared to one in 100 in 1940. An additional 3.5 billion people might live in Third World cities between 1985 and 2000. This implies that in order to preserve the sometimes woefully insufficient circumstances of today, the developing world will need to boost its ability to create and manage its urban infrastructure, services, and housing by 65% over the course of the next several years.

Few city governments in developing nations possess the authority, funds, and skilled workforce necessary to give their quickly expanding populations the land, services, and infrastructure—such as clean water, sanitary facilities, schools, and transportation—necessary for a decent quality of life. The outcome is an increase in congestion, a proliferation of illegal settlements with subpar amenities, and a high rate of sickness associated with an unhealthy environment. Deteriorating infrastructure, environmental degradation, inner-city decline, and community breakdown are issues that many cities in industrialized nations confront. For the majority of industrialized nations, however, the problem is ultimately one of social and political choice, even with the tools and resources to address this decline. The situation is different in developing nations. They are dealing with a serious urban catastrophe. To ease the strain on the biggest urban centers and build up smaller towns and cities while better integrating them with their rural hinterlands, governments will need to create clear settlement programs. This will entail looking at and altering other laws that conflict with settlement techniques, such as those pertaining to taxes, food prices, transportation, health, and industrialization. Decentralizing resources, political authority, and staff to local authorities is necessary for effective city administration since they are best suited to understand and handle local issues. The majority of urban poor people are the real city builders, and their talents, energy, and resources, as well as those of neighborhood groups and the "informal sector," will need to be better used if cities are to develop sustainably. 'Site and service' programs that give households basic services and enable them to continue building more secure homes around them may accomplish a lot.

### **The international economy's role in international cooperation & institutional reform**

Before international economic interactions become advantageous for all parties, two requirements must be met. Ecosystems that support the world economy must be ensured to be sustainable. Additionally, the economic partners need to be convinced that the exchange foundation is fair. Neither condition is predetermined for many emerging nations. Reduced commodity prices, protectionism, unmanageable debt loads, and dwindling development funding flows are all impeding growth in many developing nations. These tendencies need to be reversed if living standards are to rise and poverty is to be reduced. As the primary source of international funding for poor nations, the World Bank and the International Development Association bear a special duty. The World

Bank may assist ecologically sustainable projects and policies in the context of steadily rising financial flows. Growth, social aims, and environmental implications are more expansive and long-term development goals than the International Monetary Fund currently supports when it comes to funding structural adjustment. Many nations' current debt servicing levels, particularly in Latin America and Africa, are incompatible with sustainable growth. In order to meet the requirement to use trade surpluses for debt service, debtors are largely relying on non-renewable resources. To reduce debt loads in a way that reflects a more equitable distribution of obligations and liabilities between borrowers and lenders, immediate action is required.

### **Managing the commons**

The 'global commons' and their shared ecosystems, such as the seas, space, and Antarctica, provide unique management challenges for traditional forms of state sovereignty. All three categories have seen some development, but much more needs to be done. The most comprehensive attempt to establish a globally accepted framework for ocean management was the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. The Law of the Sea Treaty need to be ratified by every country as soon as feasible. Conventions to govern and regulate the disposal of hazardous wastes at sea should be reinforced, as should accords pertaining to fisheries to prevent present overexploitation. Concerns about orbital space management are becoming more prevalent, with a focus on minimizing space trash, optimizing the use of geosynchronous orbit's limited capacity for communications satellites, and employing satellite technology for planetary system monitoring. This debris would significantly rise with the circling and testing of weapons in space. To guarantee that space stays a peaceful environment for everyone's benefit, the international community should work to create and execute a space regime. Environment, Development, Peace, and Security The threat of nuclear war is without a doubt the most serious environmental hazard. The idea of sustainable development is directly impacted by several facets of the peace and security concerns. It is necessary to broaden the definition of security to encompass the increasing effects of environmental stress on a local, national, regional, and international level. Traditionally, security has been defined in terms of military and political challenges to national sovereignty. 'Environmental insecurity' cannot be solved militarily. Governments and international organizations should evaluate the cost-effectiveness of spending money on weapons against poverty alleviation or environmental restoration in terms of attaining security. The most important thing, though, is to improve ties amongst the big nations that have the ability to use WMDs. This is necessary to reach a consensus on stricter regulation of the development and testing of both nuclear and non-nuclear weapons of mass destruction, including those that affect the environment.

### **Managing the impact**

The functions and capabilities of resource management and environmental protection organizations should also be strengthened by governments. While many developed nations require this, developing nations require it more urgently since they will require support in fortifying their institutions. As the primary source of environmental data,

assessments, and reporting, as well as the main force behind change and international collaboration on important environmental and natural resource protection concerns, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) should be reinforced.

### Evaluating worldwide hazards

It is urgently necessary to strengthen and expand the ability to recognize, evaluate, and report on threats to the survival, security, and well-being of the global community as well as dangers of irreparable harm to natural systems. It is primarily the duty of governments, both individually and collectively. The UN system's leadership in risk assessment should be centered on UNEP's Earthwatch program. However, there is also a need for an independent but complementary ability to evaluate and report on major global risks, considering that many of the most important threats are politically sensitive. For this reason, a new worldwide program for collaboration between primarily non-governmental organizations, scientific associations, and business associations should be created. Making Informed Decisions: The broad backing and participation of NGOs, the scientific community, industry, and an informed public will be necessary to make the challenging decisions required to achieve sustainable development. It is necessary to increase their rights, responsibilities, and involvement in project execution, decision-making, and development planning.

### Providing the lawful methods

Impacts on the ecological foundation of development are growing in scope and speed, quickly surpassing national and international legislation. Governments must now close significant gaps in current national and international environmental law, identify strategies to acknowledge and defend the rights of current and future generations to a healthy and safe environment, draft a universal declaration on environmental protection and sustainable development and a subsequent convention under UN auspices, and fortify processes for preventing or resolving disputes pertaining to the environment and resource management.

### Making an investment in the future

The total cost-effectiveness of expenditures in reducing pollution has been proven over the last ten years. The increasing costs of ecological and economic harm resulting from a failure to engage in environmental development and protection have also been shown time and time again, frequently in the sobering statistics of hunger and floods. However, there are significant financial ramifications for the advancement of renewable energy, pollution prevention, and the realization of less resource-intensive agricultural practices. The involvement of multilateral financial organizations is vital. At the moment, the World Bank is shifting its initiatives to focus more on environmental issues. Alongside this, the Bank should make a strong commitment to sustainable development. Similar goals must be included into the policies and programs of the International Monetary Fund and the Regional Development Banks. Bilateral aid organizations also require a fresh emphasis and priority. Given the constraints on expanding current foreign assistance flows, countries should now give serious consideration to suggestions for obtaining extra revenue from the use of natural resources and international commons.

### Conclusion

The current commodity arrangements may be much enhanced: additional aid could be provided through diversification programs, and producers would be encouraged to have a long-term perspective and refrain from overproducing commodities if they received more compensating finance to mitigate economic shocks. One of the few agreements that explicitly addresses ecological issues is the International Tropical Timber Agreement, which can serve as a model for commodity-specific agreements. Particularly as developing nations increasingly depend on foreign equity capital, multinational corporations can have a significant impact on sustainable development. The ability of developing nations and transnational corporations to negotiate conditions that take into account their environmental concerns, however, must be improved if these corporations are to have a beneficial impact on development. To create an international economic system focused on growth and the eradication of global poverty, these particular actions must be placed within a larger framework of productive collaboration. The transition to sustainable development must be driven by an ongoing flow of revenue from industry, as many basic human needs can only be met by the commodities and services offered by this sector.

### References

1. Sharma S. Research in corporate sustainability: What really matters? In *Research in Corporate Sustainability: The Evolving Theory and Practice of Organisations in the Natural Environment*. S. Sharma and M. Starik (ed.), Edward Elgar, Cheltenham, 2002, 1-22.
2. Suzuki D, A McConnell. *The sacred balance: Rediscovering our place in nature*. David Suzuki Foundation and Greystone Books, Vancouver, 1997.
3. Wackernagel M, WE Rees. *Our ecological footprint: reducing human impact on the earth*. New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, BC. Philadelphia, 1996, PA. ISBN 086571312X.
4. World Bank. *World Development Report. Sustainable development in a dynamic world: Transforming institutions, growth, and quality of life*. World Bank, Washington, DC, 2003, 250.
5. Government of India. *Towards faster and more inclusive growth: An approach to the 11th Five Year Plan*. Planning Commission, Government of India, 2006
6. Adger WN, N Brooks, M Kelly, S Bentham, S Eriksen (eds.). *New indicators of vulnerability and adaptive capacity*. Centre for Climate Research, 2004.
7. Agrawala S, A Moehner, A Hemp, M van Aalst, S Hitz, J Smith, *et al*. *Development and Climate Change in Tanzania: focus on Mount Kilimanjaro*. OECD, Paris, 2003a.
8. IUCN. *World conservation strategy: Living resources conservation for sustainable development*. International Union for the Conservation of Nature, United Nations Environment Programme, Worldwide Fund for Nature, Switzerland, 1980.