

Retired & Replaced: World Moves On

Environmental Sustainability for the World We Want: Moving From the MDGs to Post-2015

The world is currently debating over a new post 2015 sustainable development goal to replace the millennium development goals (MDGs) to give high prominence to greener growth. The exercise is a follow up to Rio+20 which called for establishing a new sustainable development global order built around economic growth, the environment and social inclusion.

The 53-page outcome document, The Future We Want, adopted at Rio+20 aims to lay the groundwork for a green economy and replace the MDGs which expire in 2015. UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon called the outcome document a blueprint for making the world a brighter, safer place.

Of late there is a lag and several factors have been attributed to the shortfall in achievements. These include lack of data, monitoring capacity, weak linkages between MDG7 and other MDGs, insufficient participation of stakeholders at all levels, lack of political will, pressure on environmental resources from high use, natural hazards and other external shocks, insufficient governance and planning policies, a lack of science, education, media and culture for environmental sustainability. There is also the concern that the MDG 7 fails to address the migration of impoverished populations from the countryside into cities. The failure to reach global targets in relation to halting biodiversity loss has added further stresses to vulnerable peoples and communities.



Dr. Ram Boojh
Programme Specialist, UNESCO

Biodiversity, ecosystems and the services they provide are the foundations on which all people rely. A future development

framework needs to be more comprehensive regarding environmental sustainability and address priority areas, such as the ocean, for example, which were absent from the MDGs.

Let us all join this important debate which is going to shape the future of the humanity, the biosphere and the global order. The new sustainable development goals must strive for green and inclusive growth with due respect to cultural and biological diversity.

It has to tread a new pathway of resource-efficient, low carbon and climate-resilient economies which will imply profound changes in the development patterns. Sustainable development rests on a balanced consideration of its three pillars the social, economic and environmental goals in decision making.

The creation of sustainable livelihoods and green jobs can contribute to preserving and restoring the quality of the environment, by reducing consumption of energy and raw materials, limiting greenhouse gas emissions, minimizing waste and pollution and protecting ecosystems. Socially inclusive development requires decent jobs, which provide adequate incomes, social protection and respect for the rights of workers. The real solution lies in the internationally agreed principles of sustainability and creating a fair and equitable world order.

United Nations system is now busy in making post-2015 resolutions called SDGs i.e. Sustainable Development Goals. While MDGs were top-down model, hope SDGs set up bottom-up framework.



Rajendra Shende
Chairman TERRE
former Director UNEP

Dust is settling on 2013, which has retired. It is replaced by brand new 2014 with winds of change that will take the world by number surprises. Some of them are already visible. Three examples should suffice to characterize the change at this transition phase. First, USA's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is ready to unveil historic standards controlling carbon emissions from the nation's fleet of nearly 600 coal-fired powered plants, the greatest driver of energy emissions. Such change, further fuelled by shale-gas boom, will surely reduce USA's appetite for the coal as source of energy, but it is likely to increase somewhere else. 1,200 new coal plants being built around the world have led to record levels of U.S. exports in coal power plant machinery and technology meaning that USA's emissions are being transferred overseas. Zero some game for the world, indeed! Second example is of renewable energy. Even in financial crisis that engulfed the world, the investment in renewable energy, surprisingly, continued to grow since 2005. This continued positive change(except for brief adjustment in 2009), that defied the westerly crisis-winds saw its first major drop in 2012, largely due to the low price of natural gas resulting from relatively easy availability of shale gas in USA. But this westerly wind did not change the

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direction in the developing countries, where investment in renewable energy continued to grow even in 2012. More than 100 countries have renewable energy targets (the United States is notably absent from this list), and countries from Saudi Arabia to South Africa are making big bets on renewables. Global investment in renewable energy in 2013 is likely to rebound mainly due to persistent and bold policies. Finally, the real big story of 2013 is about how bike-sharing growth has been accelerating, even in USA and around the world, making this healthy and green system for getting around cities more popular than ever. It will soon be 1 million bikes on the city sharing projects globally. But the developing countries where the huge potential exists for bike sharing, particularly in India, are yet to catch up with this relatively low-investment mobility trend.



Global Environment Management through Indian Wisdom



Dr. Vinitaa Apte
President, TERRE

Globalization as a new goal of economic interests may take some time to become a reality but there is no denying the fact that the environment we all cherish is but one; more than global it is related to the whole cosmic system. In the name of conquering nature and milking its resources for narrow greed we should not forget the power of nature which once agitated can destroy the whole globe and life source in no time.

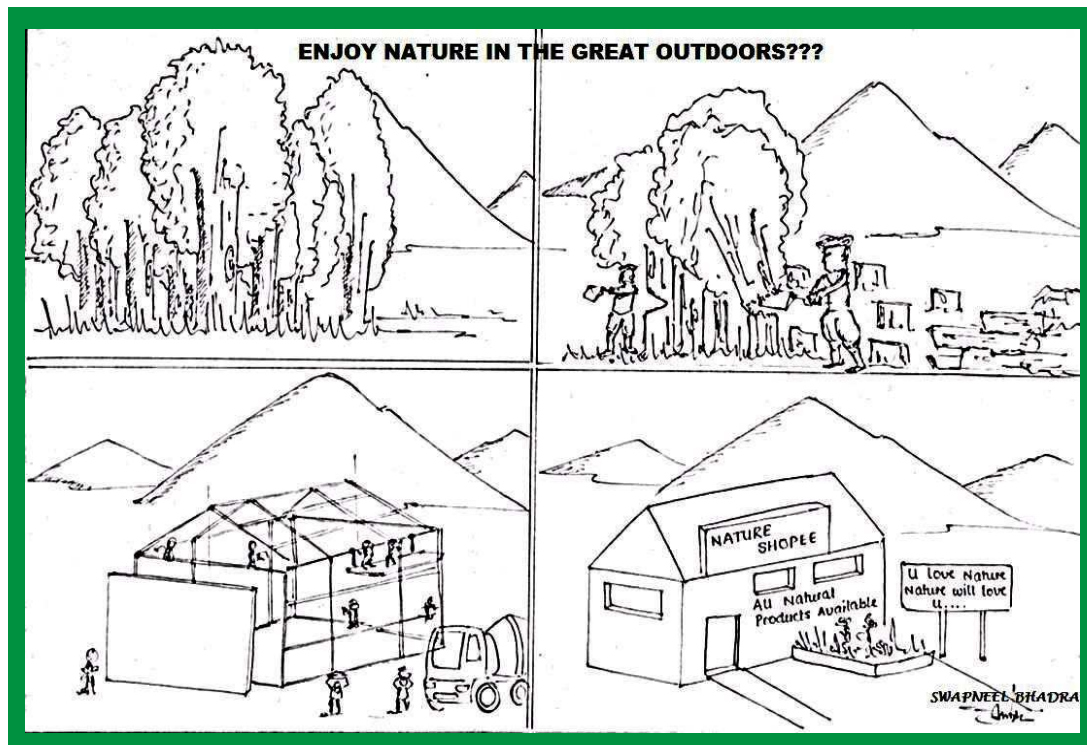
The issue of environment has become synonymous with whether we wish to survive or not? The real tragedy of the situation is that the efforts in the name of environment protection mostly fall prey to the path of present growth. They simply think in terms of minimizing the damage already done or try to react on some action already performed.

In this context, Ancient Indian approaches to environment present a deep humane attitude towards nature and environment. This attitude was developed after centuries of observation and study of nature and its functions. This was ultimately given a spiritual meaning and status not to be violated at any cost.

It is surprising that ancient Indian religious books, philosophy, literature and practical life recordings in the form of mythology, rituals and folk memory, all have detailed and elaborate description on these questions. This approach can guide us with the correct attitudes in present grim scenario, and if assimilated can become a new base for the relationship between man and nature.

Today we have become quite careless to these basic premises. An attitude of plunder and one sided exploitation is taking deep roots and a kind of heroic and egoistic satisfaction of conquering the nature is becoming prominent. We need to revisit history and assimilate the good things to lead a 'sustainable' living.

If you are interested in reading this thesis, please drop a mail at aptevh@gmail.com



Quick Question

According to EU Directive 2002/95/EC on the restriction of hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS Directive), mercury content in CFLs should not exceed how much 'mg' per lamp?

- 01mg
- 05mg
- 10mg
- 12mg



If you know the answer, send in your entry to us at : terrepolicycentre@gmail.com





Sustainability - A required diet for our ever-increasing appetite!

What is Sustainability?

Sustainability - A sister-term of sustainable development that has been defined in numerous ways, but the most frequently quoted definition is from 'Our Common Future', also known as the Brundtland Report where it is defined as:

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”

Although there has been a long-lasting ambiguity in a clear definition of the concept of sustainability, the triple bottom line approach of sustainability including environmental, social and economic arches to it has been the primary basis of the interpretation made by researchers, economists, ecologists including both public and private sector entities. Here, the environmental sphere stands for natural resources including other segments of environmental management like waste or by-products generated as an end result of processes. The social sphere represents our society and factors influencing its well-being. For example: Human health, Education etc. And the economic sphere encompasses factors like economic growth, cost-saving etc.

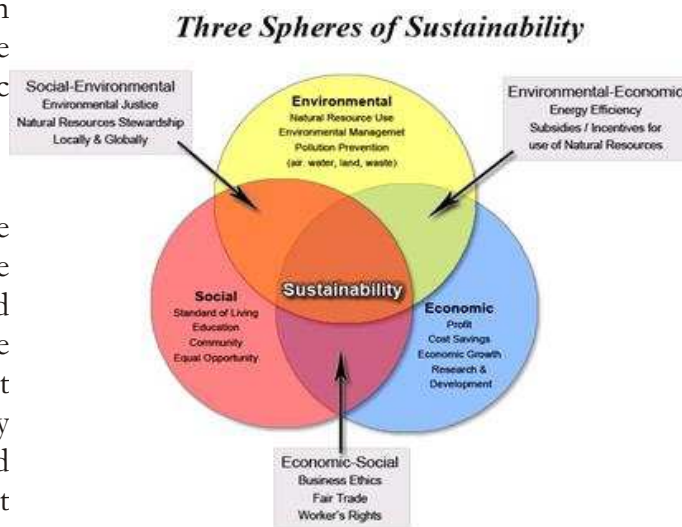
Is sustainability a new concept?

Although the term “Sustainable development” was first coined in the year 1987 through the Brundtland report, sustainability had its roots in the human system from the era of great grandparents! Conserving electricity and water, eating pesticide-free food and using plastic free items etc., were in-built in the human system and this may be due to the lifestyle people lived in those decades. However, the progressing human lifestyle has drawn our attention to less environment-friendly practices and hence the need to look at sustainability with a new angle. Yes! Sustainability isn't a new concept but an old theory with new pathways that needs to be followed by the existing and newer generations!

Over the years, there has been an incredible progress in varied arenas across the world. In addition, the

industrial revolution resulted in a major global change, not only in terms of socio-economic aspects but also in the acuity of man-kind. Unflinching growth in research, science and technology including the urge for globalization resulted in the need to explore and use the existing natural resources to its fullest capacity. The ongoing need across the globe exceeded demand over supply resulting in the overuse & finally the miss-use of these resources. This issue was further backed-up by the needs of the ever increasing population! Regrettably, the over exploitation of natural resources is not only happening at national or an organizational level but also at an individual level. And, this all has cumulatively resulted in the need to iterate the term “Sustainability”.

At this point, it is indeed a required diet for our ever-increasing appetite, especially, if we want our grandchildren to experience at least half the beauty of nature as what we have or our parents had experienced!



Source: Sustainability Assessment, University of Michigan, 2002

What can one do to march towards sustainable development?

1. Conserve and manage water use: Closing taps when found open or leaking has now become an old and common measure to conserve water. However, we now need to go beyond that. Using buckets for bathing over showers, storing and using rainwater whenever and wherever possible, not

watering plants during excess sunlight are some easy-to-adopt measures that will not only help in preserving water but also managing it.



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2. Manage waste: Today, many local communities and authorities have realized the importance of segregating waste for efficient waste management. You would also notice separate bins in public places like malls, schools, colleges and offices etc. All you need to do is support them by dumping the waste items in the right bins! Your little help can make a huge difference.

3. Conserve electricity: Gone are those days when electricity was just used to light our homes. Today's tech-savy world has convinced us to own atleast a minimum of two-to-three gadgets per person including our laptops, smartphones, etc. It is imperative that we become cautious about our individual electricity use.

4. Optimize use of goods: With our existing lifestyle, we often fail to differentiate between our need and our greed. It is important that we optimize our use or purchase of items including clothing, stationary, electronics and other miscellaneous goods that we buy and then easily trash in our daily lives. Optimizing the use of goods will in turn help us in minimizing and thus managing our waste.

5. ReThink, Reflect and ReAct!: At this point, the most important thing is to rethink what we are doing, reflect whether or not it is correct and react accordingly.

Let's diet together to lead a healthy life for ourselves and generations to come!

Exercise for readers:

Write to us and tell us what are you doing to lead a sustainable lifestyle?

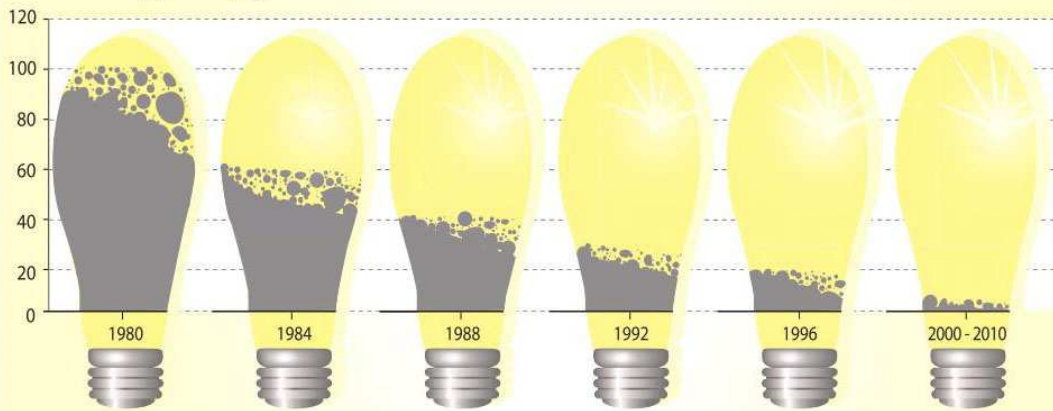


Mercury - Time to act: Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs)

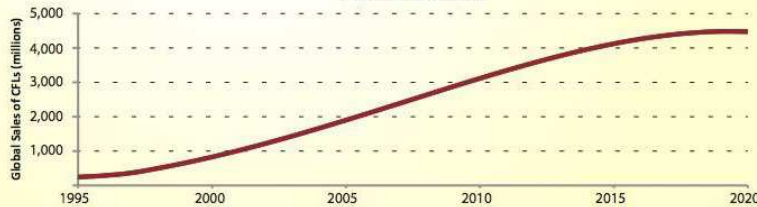
Mercury is widely used in compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) and the demand for them is increasing in the quest for energy efficiency. These lamps reduce electricity consumption so that in countries that generate electricity largely from coal, there could be less electricity required for lighting, thereby saving about 10 per cent of emissions into the environment (EU, 2010). However, despite continuing industry efforts to reduce the mercury content of each CFL and proven recycling techniques allowing effective recovery of mercury at the end of a lamp's life cycle, the high global demand for CFLs might present a challenge to achieving the goal of effective reduction of mercury use.

Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs)

Level of mercury per bulb (mg)



Global CFL Sales



Source:
Adopted from European Lamp Companies Federation
—<http://www.elcled.org>
UNEP en.lighten, December 2012
Designed by Zoi Environment Network / GRID-Arendal

Credit: GRID-Arendal

Further read- http://www.grida.no/graphicslib/detail/compact-fluorescent-lamps-clfs_2bce

Electronics Waste Will Soon Weigh as Much as 8 Egyptian Pyramids



By 2017, the UN estimates, world volumes of end-of-life e-products is expected to be 33% higher than 2012 and weigh the equivalent of eight Great Egyptian Pyramids.

<http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/e-waste-per-resident-1312>

Plants 'could stop being brake on global warming'



A 4C rise in global temperature, predicted by 2100, marks the threshold point after which terrestrial trees and plants will be unable to soak up any more carbon from the atmosphere.

[Http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change/plants-could-stop-being-brake-on-global-warming-9009067.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change/plants-could-stop-being-brake-on-global-warming-9009067.html)

Ugandans fear curse of oil wealth as it threatens to blight 'pearl of Africa'



It is just a matter of time before oil extraction in Uganda starts in earnest and tourism revenue, contributing 4% of GDP, becomes a drop in the sea of oil dollars.

[Http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/29/ugandans-oil-blight-pearl-africa](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/29/ugandans-oil-blight-pearl-africa)

Feedback letter from reader

Congratulations!

You are doing excellent job at least for the next generations. I am proud of you and your team. All the best for future plans!

-Dr. Satish Desai

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