

Element of Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection : An Overview



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Abstract

The Development for Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection has the aim to identify and find solution for Environmental Problems with which communication are confronting especially through the exploitation and maximization of technological innovation potential, supporting in this way, to help the development oriented to words the continuous improvement of people' lives and there relation with the Environmental to be harmonious. Fortunately, there has been a radical change in our perception during the last four decades. Two days most of our rivers are polluted. Deforestation is increasing day by day. The problem of niose pollution, Particularly in big cities is at alarming stage. Land erosion thorough winds and water has become the common feature.

Keywords: Development, Sustainable development, Environmental Protection, Technological Innovation, Deforestation.

Introduction

The general principle that States should ensure the development and use of their natural resources in a manner which is sustainable has emerged only recently, Although the ideas underlying the concept of sustainable development have a long history in international instruments, and the term itself began to appear in treaties in the 1980. The general "Principle of Sustainable Development" appears to have been first referred, to in a treaty in the Preamble of the 1992 European Economics: Area Agreement'.¹ The term "sustainable development" is generally considered to have been coined by the 1987 Brundtland Report. This Report is commonly viewed as the point at which sustainable development becomes a broad global policy objective and sets the international community on a path which led to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the body of rules referred to as "International Law in the Field of Sustainable Development" but distinguished from International Environmental Law². Sustainable development formed the cornerstone underlying the Earth Summit (1992) and dominated the Rio Declaration on Environmental Development (1992); World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) and Conference of the Parties (COP-8), 2002. Most importantly, the Earth Summit (1992) adopted Agenda-21. It is a 500 page blue print detailing the "new global partnership" for sustainable development in the 21st century. The Earth summit not only affirmed the goal of sustainable development, but, through Rio Declaration and Agenda-21, it added meaning and substance to the concept. State practice suggests that the idea of "sustainability" has been a feature in international legal relations since atleast 1893,' when United States asserted a right to ensure the legitimate and proper use of seals and to protect them from wanton destruction" for the benefit of mankind. Since then many treaties and other international acts have supported, directly or indirectly, The concept of sustainable development and the principle that states have the responsibility to ensure the sustainable use of natural ' resources.³

Two of the most pressing problems confronting the international community at the present are those of development and protection and improvement of the natural and human environment. Both the problems have been given priority within the UN framework and other international bodies.

Objective of the Study

1. To Analyze the Relationship between Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection.

2. To study the principle based approach of sustainable development in Environmental Protection.
3. To analyze the element of the Concept of Sustainable development.

In 1950s and 1960s development was regarded as the concept of growth in an economic framework and confined to economic aspects only. Development was treated as a branch of the science of Economics. The 1970s gave rise to a new concept of development where the environmental issue is not seen in a separate sector but as an inherent aspect of development. Now it is fully realized in national governments, and multilateral institutions that it is impossible to separate-economic development issues from environmental issues as many . forms of development erode the environmental resources upon which they must be based and environmental degradation can undermine economic development.

In the light of the forgoing the present study elaborates the concept and element of sustainable development” Lastly it gives conclusion drawn from present work. The planet is passing through a period of dramatic growth and fundamental change. For instance:

1. Rapid population growth which both strangles the infrastructure and damages the resource-base of a country;
2. Rapid consumption of finite resources which generates wastes difficult and costly to dispose off safely;
3. Multiplication of economic activities and manifold industrial growth which creates profound impact upon the biosphere;
4. Growth of new technologies which entail high environmental risks such as new forms of pollution and introduction of new life forms that could change evolutionary pathways;
5. Rural-to-urban migration which results in huge shanty towns and slums in cities and creates a vast array of social, economic and environmental problems; and
6. Over-exploitation and indiscriminate use of renewable and non-renewable natural resources, which in due course of time, result in irreversible environmental degradation and cause serious adverse effects on the life style of human beings, plants, animals and other living organisms. In the long run, over exploitation also impairs country's very development capacity.³

In the oft-quoted words of the 1987 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), sustainable development is that which "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"⁴. Two key concepts are contained within it: the concept of the essential needs of the present generation and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs. Sustainable development means an integration of developmental and environmental needs.' To be sustainable, development must pass both economical and

ecological sustainability. The Brundtland Report also identified the critical objectives for environment and development policies reflected in the concept, of sustainable development. These are stated as below':

1. Reviving growth and changing quality;
2. Meeting essential needs of job, food, energy, water and sanitation;
3. Ensuring sustainable level of population;
4. Ensuring and enhancing the resource base;
5. Re-orienting technology and managing risks; and
6. Merging environment and economics in decision-making.

The definition sheds light on the short-falls of our past "unsustainable" development patterns, namely, global environmental threats-depletion of the ozone layer, risks of climate change, loss of biodiversity and degradation of water that clearly compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own development needs. However, the achievement of sustainable development requires radical changes in our attitudes and behavior, which begins with a recognition that we live in an interdependent world where the biggest threat to our security is the destruction of the planet which we all share. "Sustainable development, therefore, depends upon accepting a duty to seek harmony with other people and with nature", according to *Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living*.⁹ And, the guiding rules are:

1. People must share with each other and care for the earth;
2. Humanity must take no more from nature than man can replenish; and
3. People must adopt life styles and development paths that respect and work within nature's limits.¹⁰

Elements of the Concept of Sustainable Development

The principle of sustainable development consists of many elements. Sands has identified the following four elements of the concept of sustainable development as reflected in international agreements.⁶

Principle of Inter-Generation Equity

It emphasizes the need to preserve natural resource for the benefit of future generation. The idea that as "members of present generation we hold the earth in trust for future generation"⁷ is well known to international law. It was relied upon as early as 1893 by the United State in the Pacific Fur Seals Arbitration.⁸ It is also, expressly or implicitly, referred to in many early environmental treaties as well as recent treaties.⁹ International declaration often makes reference to inter generational equity as an aspect of the concept of sustainable development.

Principles of Sustainable use of Natural Resources

The second element is reflected in treaties adopting a "sustainable" approach. It focuses on adoption of standards governing the rate of use or exploitation of specific natural resources rather than on their preservation for future generations. A standard approach has emerged, particularly for marine living resources, requiring exploitation to be

conducted at levels which are "sustainable" or "optimal". Commitments to limit catches or productivity to "maximum sustained" levels have also been agreed for marine resources, such as tuna¹⁰ North Pacific Fish¹¹, Pacific Seals¹² and living resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone.¹³ Other treaties limit catches to "optimum sustainable yields" or subject them to required standard of "optimum utilization". This applies, e.g., in relation to Antarctic seals¹⁴ high seas fisheries¹⁵ and some highly migratory species.¹⁶

The concept of sustainable use applies to non-marine resources, e.g., the 1968 African Nature Convention provides that the utilization of all natural resources "must aim at satisfying the needs of man according to the carrying capacity of the environment". Further support for sustainable use or management as a legal term may be found in the year 1992 Climate Change Convention⁵, and the 1992 Biodiversity convention. These issues include eradication of poverty, special responsibility of developed countries, reduction and elimination of unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, promotion of appropriate population policies and a supportive and open international economic system.

Equitable Use of Natural Resources (Inter-Generational Equity)

The study of environmental values suggests three possible ways in which these values could be generated. First, the preferences of individuals given rise to values that with a complete set of perfect markets are reflected in the prices of goods and services. This is the neoclassical approach to valuation and examples of market failure have already been examined. Market failures suggest that the environmental will not be adequately accounted for in the operation of market economies.

The second source of environmental values is that of social preferences, Sag off (1988) has suggested that individuals are capable of considering issues, in particular those concerning the environmental, from the point of society. It is not clear how such values could be established in the psyche of individuals. A possible explanation is a sociobiological one in that individuals behave as social organisms for the benefit of the species (Dawkins, 1976). Environmental choices are so complex that even if social preferences exist it is difficult to assume, that, apart from is a tautological sense, they will result in decisions that improve social welfare. However, it has been suggested that the poor in developing countries are the most dependent on the environment. Thus if social preferences are to give weight to the circumstances of the poor, the environmental should be given greater weight than would occur from simple aggregation of the individual values placed on the environmental.

The third source of environmental values follows from the belief that ecological systems have an intrinsic value independent of any value placed on them by humans (see Norton, 1987; Common, 1995). The individual preferences basis for values consider only humans to have rights. The ecological view

represents the extension of rights to other species. How these rights can be measured is a difficult problems. The ecological values view suggests that greater weight should be attached to the environmental than would be given by taking just social value or simple aggregation of individual values.

Integration of Environment and Development

The fourth element of sustainable development is the commitment to integrate environmental considerations into economic and developmental considerations. Its formal application requires the collection and dissemination of environmental information and the conduct of environmental impact assessments.

For many years the international regulation of environmental issues has taken place in international fora, such as UNEP and the Conference of the Parties of the environmental treaties, which are not directly connected with the World Bank and the GATT, multinational development banks, regional economic organizations (such as European Community). One of the consequences has been divergence in approaches. Thus, environmental concerns have historically been addressed on the margins of the international economic concerns. It is only in the recent past that the relationship between environmental protection and economic development has been recognized by the international community.¹⁷ The 1992 UNCED instruments reflect the need to integrate environment and development. Principle 4 of the Rio Declaration provides that "in order to achieve sustainable development, environmental protection shall constitute an integral part of the development process and can not be considered in isolation from it." Now environmental considerations are a feature of international economic policy and law.

The need to integrate environmental protection and economic development was regarded by ICJ as one of the decisive elements in the Gabcikovo Nagymaros Dam Case (1997)¹⁸. Environmental Economics has become a central part of economic studies and agreed rules are being sought for resolving conflicts between trade rules and environmental standards. In situations of such conflicts, the World Trade Organization is likely to have an important role in focusing on the trade-related aspects of environment.¹⁹

Conclusion

For a rational discussion on current issues there needs to be an agreement on the meaning of commonly used terms "growth" an development. There is a loose and dangerous ambiguity in their use. The dictionary definition of growth is "the increase in size by assimilation or accretion of materials". Development, on the other hand, means "expanding or realizing the potential of; to bring to a better, greater, fuller state". "Sustainable economic growth", a phrase now extensively used in official circles is, of course, an oxymoron or, as Harman Daly put it, an "impossibility theorem" in a world of finite resources. The term "sustained economic growth", as a prime objective, found its way in Agenda-21 without

comment or protest. Some have argued that it is a corruption of "Sustainable Development" brought to prominence in the Brundtland Report Our Common Future and have suggested more appropriate terms such as "Ecologically Sustainable Development" (ESD) and "sustainable human development" (SHD). These two terms are complementary; both are equally valid. Conservation of the environment is the more critical concern and vital for social justice. Hence, the term ESD should be preferred. The term "sustained economic growth" is a contradiction of terms and its acceptance gives licence to development, that is, in fact, unsustainable.

The principle of sustainable development reflects a range of substantive and procedural commitments and obligations. It accepts that development is essential but it should be eco-friendly. It is true that it is a concept towards realism from idealism. But, this crucial concept does not have a solid core of meaning. Does the content of sustainable²⁰ development include a policy of no growth or zero growth. Can zero growth be unsustainable? There are no categorical answers to these questions.

Accepting the principle of sustainable development as a customary rule internationally is also full of difficulties. For what are its substantive contents? How will it be ' And, if not followed by any state, then, how will it be enforced? What will be the sanctions? The definition of development given by WCED fails to explain either sustainability or of development and gives us not criteria for determining the parameters and the ultimate objective of development and environment. Nor does it tell us as to what will be the needs of the future generation? Sustainable development and its effectiveness is also? of because we can not assume that science is capable? adverse effects of the developmental plans and on environment.

Factories which provide employment to thousands of people but discharge effluents into the water and produce hazardous waste-is it development? Do some countries have more of a right to development and less of an obligation to ensue sustainability and vice versa? How much more do industrialized countries need to develop? Have they not gone far enough-who is to judge? All these questions are still to be answered.

Sustainable development has made some normative progress. But Birnie and Boyle have taken the view that it can not yet be said to be a norm of international law. However, they do recognize the widespread international endorsement of sustainable

development as the central concept of international law. Whereas, Sands is of the view that the concept of sustainable development is now established in international law²¹, even if its meaning and effect are uncertain. It is a legal term which refers to processes, principles and objective, as well as to a large body of international agreement on environmental economics and political rights.²²

Endnotes

1. *Phillippe Sands, Principles of International Environmental Law (Manchester University Press). 1994, p. 198*
2. *The International law of Sustainable Development is broader than International Environmental Law (JEL)*
3. *Phillippe Sands, Super note 2, p. 199*
4. *U.N. Chronicle, June, 1992. P. 46; WCDE, Our Common Future, 1987, 9.43*
5. *WCED, Super note 6, 1987, pp. 49-65*
6. *Super note 6.*
7. *Phillippe Sands, Super note 22, 5. 199*
8. *E Brown Weiss, Our Rights and Obligations to Future Generation for the Environment, Vol. 48, AJIL, 1980, pp. 198, 199.*
9. *Phillippe Sands, Super note 22, p. 415.*
10. *1946 International Whaling Convention (Preamble); 1972 World Heritage Convention (Art. 4); 1973*
11. *1949 Tuna Convention (Preamble).*
12. *1952 North Pacific Fisheries Convention (Preamble and Art. IV (i) (h) (II)).*
13. *1976 Pacific Fur Seals Convention (Preamble and Arts. 2 (1)(a), V (2) (d), XI).*
14. *1982 Law of the Sea Convention (Art. 61 (3)).*
15. *1972 Antarctic Seals Convention (Preamble).*
16. *1958 High Seals Fishing and Conservation Convention (Art. 2). 1982 Law of the Sea Convention (Art. 64, 91).*
17. *Phillippe Sands, Super note 24, 5. 206*
18. *P. Bhrnie and A. Boyle, international Law and Environmental, Oxford University Press, New York: 2002 pp. 86-87*
19. *A Quereshi, The World Trade Organization, 1996 pp. 4, 12*
20. *Economists readily accept that in some cases even Zero growth may be unsuitable: Jacobs, The Green Economy, London, 1991, p. 59*
21. *Birnie and Boyle, International Law and Environment, Oxford University Press, new York, 1992. P.5*
22. *Dominic, M.C. Goldrick, Sustainable Development and Human Rights : an Intergrated Conception, ICLQ, Vol. 45, 1996, P. 802*