

ECWB7004
Global Citizenship
and
Sustainability

Session 04

Green Growth

- **‘Green growth means fostering economic growth and development while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies. To do this it must catalyse investment and innovation which will underpin sustained growth and give rise to new economic opportunities.’ (OECD, 2011)**
- **Green growth is not a replacement for sustainable development.** Rather, it provides a practical and flexible approach for achieving concrete, measurable progress across its economic and environmental pillars, while taking full account of the social consequences of greening the growth dynamic of economies.
- The focus of green growth strategies is ensuring that natural assets can deliver their full economic potential on a sustainable basis. That potential includes the provision of critical life support services – clean air and water, and the resilient biodiversity needed to support food production and human health. Natural assets are not infinitely substitutable and green growth policies take account of that. (OECD, n.d.)

Green Growth

Structural reform for strong, more sustainable and inclusive growth through

- **Enhancing productivity** by creating incentives for greater efficiency in the use of natural resources, reducing waste and energy consumption, unlocking opportunities for innovation and value creation, and allocating resources to the highest value use.
- **Boosting investor confidence** through greater predictability in how governments deal with major environmental issues.
- **Opening up new markets** by stimulating demand for green goods, services and technologies.
- **Contributing to fiscal consolidation** by mobilising revenues through green taxes and through the elimination of environmentally harmful subsidies. These measures can also help to generate or free up resources for anti-poverty programmes in such areas as water supply and sanitation, or other pro-poor investments.
- **Reducing risks of negative shocks to growth** due to resource bottlenecks, as well as damaging and potentially irreversible environmental impacts. (ibid.)

What are possible limitations of Green growth?

[The rise and flaws of green growth – APN Science Bulletin](#)

[Five reasons 'green growth' won't save the planet](#)

Overview of Sustainable Development

Roots of the concept of sustainability (Du Pisani, 2006)

The demand for raw materials and its impact on the environment have been a constant issue throughout human history.

Ancient time

- Deforestation, salinisation and loss of fertility of soil occurred as early as ancient Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek and Roman Civilisations. Discussions on environmental degradation resulting from human activities (e.g. farming, logging and mining) can be traced back to as early as Plato.

18th Century

- The term of 'sustainability' was first used in German forestry circles in 1713 (by Hans Carl von Carlowitz) to suggest sustainable use of forest resources with a shortage of wood in Europe (for ship-building, mining and many other purposes), later a discussion of sustainable forestry and measures for the conservation of forests for future generations (by Marchand and Wilhelm Gottfried Moser) ([Moser, 1757](#)).
- Concern about population growth and its consequences for the consumption of resources started surfacing. Malthus (1798) argued that increase in population had to be restricted because it threatened to outstrip food production.
- Industrial Revolution (1760-1840)

Overview of Sustainable Development

19th Century

- Concerns over coal depletion (as the most important source of energy), William Stanley Jevons's work *The coal question* (1866) was the most influential work. Rudolf Clausius and others in Germany also argued that natural resources were not-renewable, thus ought not to be wasted.
- '[Stationary State](#)' (envisioned by John Stuart Mill, 1848): a stationary condition of capital and population, but not of human improvement - to address his concern over the detrimental effect on human flourishing brought by excessive focus on growth (which would degrade the natural environment).
- George Perkins Marsh (1864) raised concern on the disturbance of nature which was brought by human intervention, and how the Earth might become unfit for human habitation, which may result in the extinction of humankind. "Marsh did not want to protect nature for its own sake, but for the sake of humankind, which is similar to the approach of the contemporary proponents of sustainable development" (Pisani, 2006, p. 86).
- In Alfred Russell Wallace's *Our wonderful century* (1898), he discussed the damage done by the 'reckless destruction of the stored-up products of nature' and regarded the unlimited extraction of coal, oil, gas and minerals, and the exploitation of the rain forests as an 'injury done to posterity'. (ibid.)

Overview of Sustainable Development

First half of 20th Century

- Drastic increase in oil consumption raised concerns. Scientists and scholars warned against wasteful consumption and overexploitation of limited natural resources (Van Zon, 2002, pp.103-110; pp. 115-120). In 1950, K. W. Kapp published [*The social costs of business enterprise*](#), an analysis of most of the environmental issues which now form part of the sustainable development discourse.

Second half of 20th Century

- Post World War II, during this period of economic boom with industrial and commercial expansion (in 1950s and 1960s), the looming environmental crisis started to force people to change their basic assumptions about growth and development. (See also: [Today's environmental problems sparked by World War II](#) and)

SD timeline

[A Visual History of Sustainable Development](#)

[World Sustainable Development Timeline](#)