



Sustainable Development

Towards a Sustainable Development Strategy

Lecture Outline

- ⇒ SD Definitions – uncertainty/conceptual
- ⇒ Historical perspective and current problem
- ⇒ Quality of life issues – societal driver/subjective
- ⇒ Global differences
- ⇒ Global strategy – local policies and principles
- ⇒ UK Government's interpretation
- ⇒ UK Strategic Framework
- ⇒ Tutorial

Sustainable Development – a Global Concept!

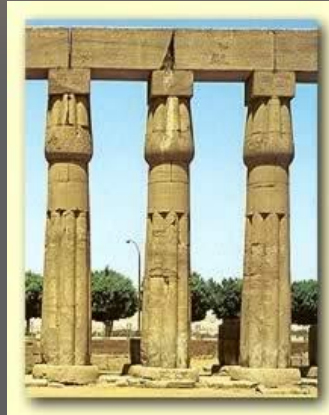


The Problem with Sustainable Development?

- Too many definitions – sceptics!
 - 70 different definitions (Holmberg and Sandbrook, 1992)
 - Uncertainty
 - Flexibility and popularity
-
- Such flexibility can also be of strength in a very diverse world.



Sustainable Development?



⇒ Concepts are not difficult to grasp:

- About finding the right balance between economic well-being, the benefit of society and concern for the environment and its resources, together with a notion of intergenerational equity...

Unsustainable living – a new problem?





Is this our future?



Unsustainable living – a new problem?



(Goffman, 2005)

So how did we get here?

A Systems Approach

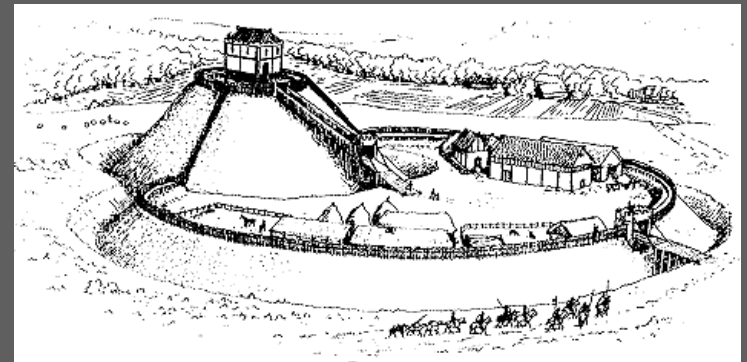


- Primitive periods
- Hunter gatherer.

Urban phase



- ⇒ Urban Phase
- ⇒ Trade
- ⇒ No science and technology



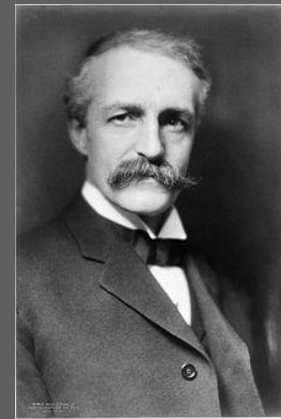
Technical phase



- ⇒ Mass production
- ⇒ Standardisation
- ⇒ Progress?

SD – an old concept

- ⇒ *‘the greatest good for the greatest number’* ..Jeremy Bentham (1789:1)
- ⇒*for the longest time*....Gifford Pinchot
- ⇒ Could we end up like the Easter islanders?



If in any doubt.....



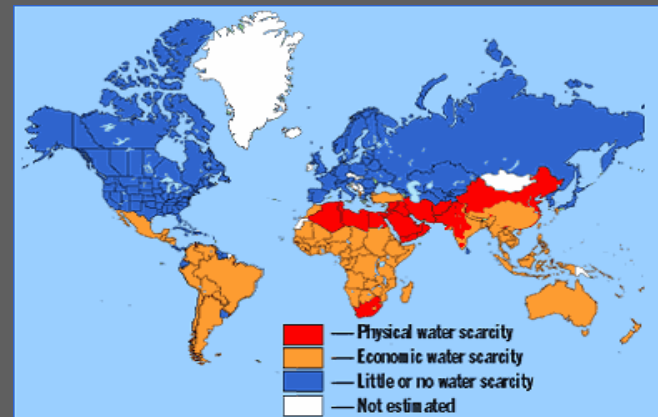
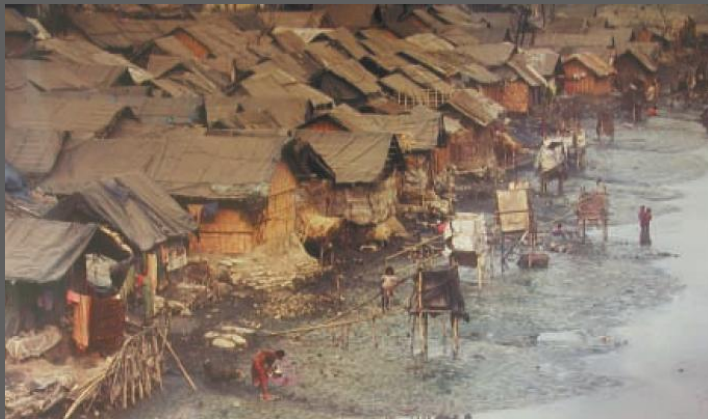
- Water demand doubling every 21 years
 - Over 70% - irrigation
 - Limits on irrigation $\Rightarrow$ limits on food production
 - Limits on food production in poor countries $\Rightarrow$ imports, higher prices and political instability
 - Water tables falling
- (WHO, 2010)

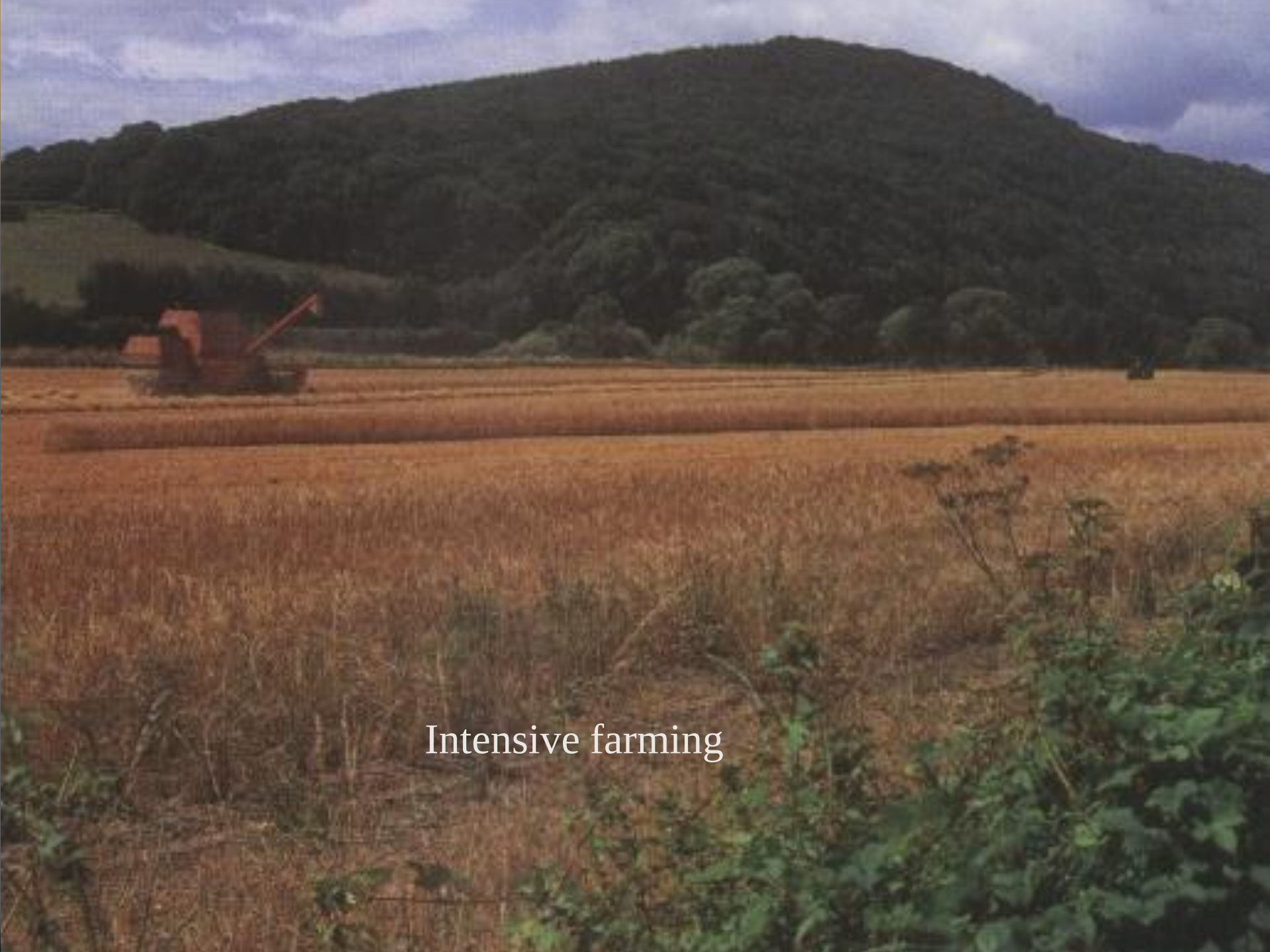
Sustainable Development – Quality of Life

- ⇒ How do we define quality of life?
- ⇒ What do you as an individual regard as quality of life
- ⇒ Subjective and diverse



Quality of life?





Intensive farming

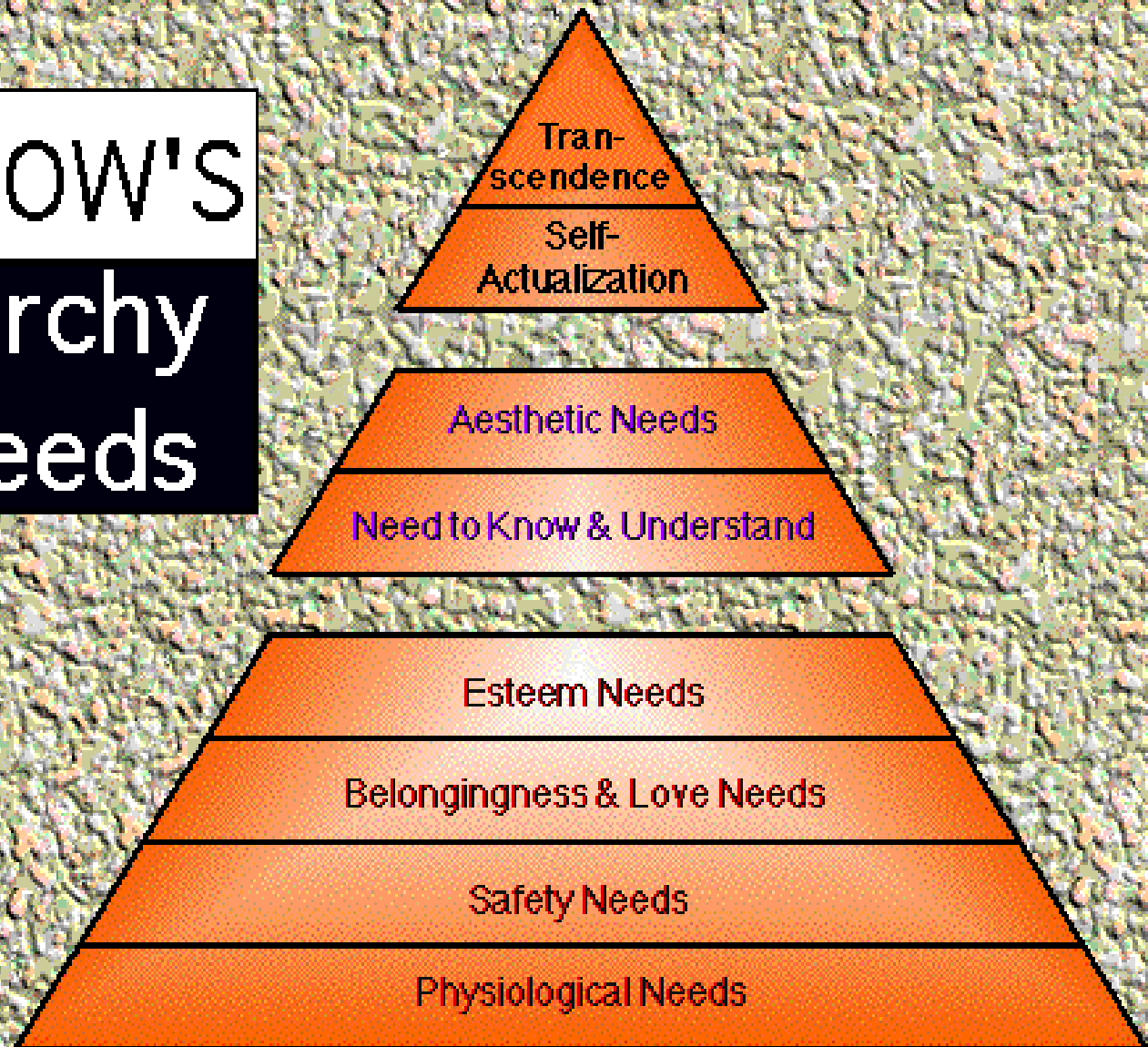


Dust storm...the cost of soil erosion is calculated at £14m per year. Soil loss in the UK & USA is 17 times greater than soil formation. (UNEP, 2002)

Sustainability

- ⇒ Is Brundtland's definition sufficient?
- ⇒ How do you define needs as opposed to greed or excessive luxury?
- ⇒ Does an increasing gap between rich and poor meet the sustainability test if environmental and population stability is achieved?

MASLOW'S Hierarchy of Needs



4 Levels of Sustainability *(Marshall & Toffel 2005)*



Recent Government publications have placed human quality of life at the forefront of defining sustainable development. So again what does it mean?

According to Cutter...

“...an individual’s happiness or satisfaction with life and environment including needs and desires and other tangible and intangible factors which determine overall well-being.”

Cutter (1985). Rating places: a geographer’s view on quality of life





The concept of sustainable development outlined in ‘Opportunities for Change’ (1997) included four key themes:

social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;

effective protection of the environment;

prudent use of natural resources; and

maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone



- ⇒ a share for all
- ⇒ less poverty
- ⇒ better housing
- ⇒ less unemployment
- ⇒ equity for all in the world, both now and in the future
- ⇒ a clean and safe environment

Effective protection of the environment



- ⇒ limit global environmental threats
- ⇒ protect human health and safety from hazards
- ⇒ protect things that people need or value
- ⇒ Wealthy nations are often protected from the environmental costs of their lifestyles while the poor often lack the means to care for their immediate environment

Prudent use of natural resources

- ⇒ efficient use (more from less!)
- ⇒ development of alternatives
- ⇒ care in the use of renewable resources



Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment

- ⇒ a share in high living standards for all
- ⇒ greater job opportunities
- ⇒ production of high quality goods and services
- ⇒ education and skills for the 21st century
- ⇒ investment by industry and infrastructure that supports it



Lately the UK Government has balanced a better quality of life to:

“...a more inclusive society in which the benefits of increased economic prosperity are widely shared, with less pollution and less wasteful use of natural resources.”

UK Government: A Better Quality of Life, A strategy for sustainable development for the UK (1999)

This definition has been developed from the Government's consultation document, Opportunities for Change, published in 1997.

Developed vs Developing

⇒ Same problems?



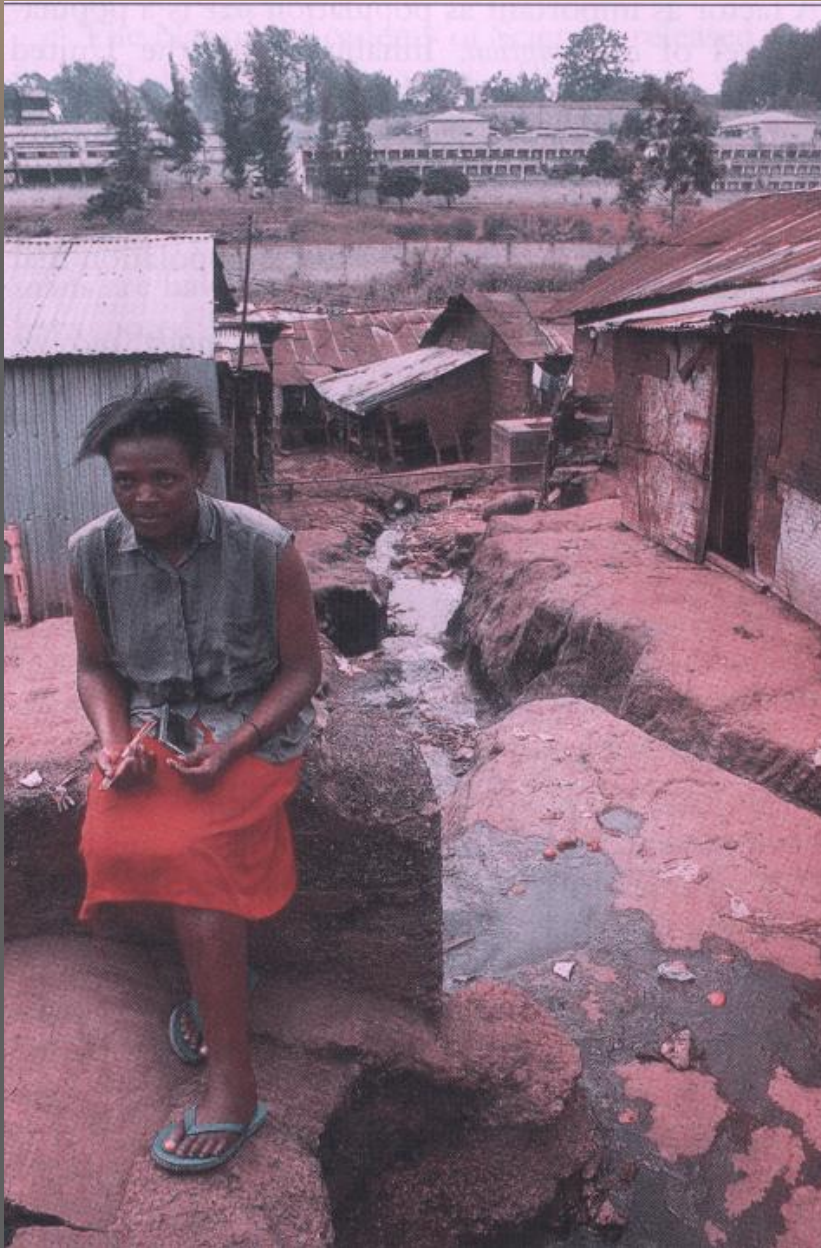
⇒ Same strategy?



Global Equity?



- ⇒ Education in Africa
- ⇒ The first ballot paper
- ⇒ Children with peace keepers
- ⇒ Introduction to global issues through computers
- ⇒ Access to clean water
- ⇒ Food distribution in disaster zones



Poverty: a slum in Kenya,
East Africa.

Many of the world's poor
live in extreme poverty

Poverty – some facts - South Asia

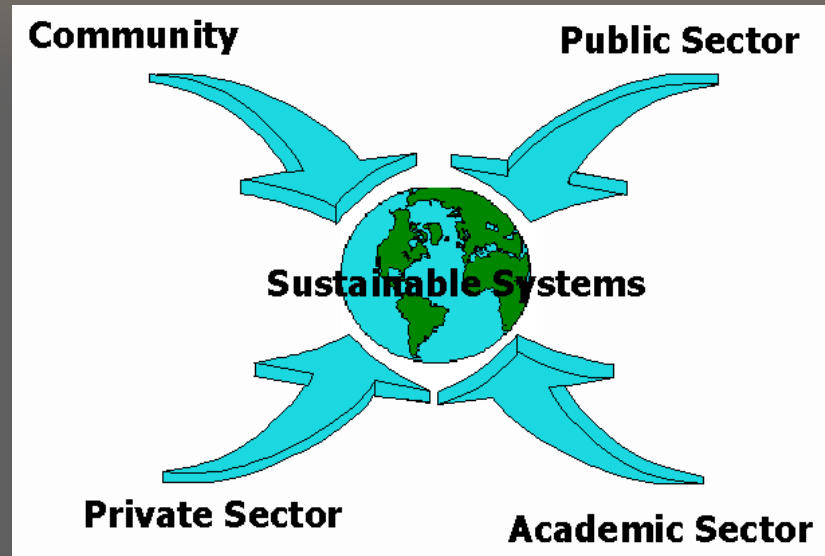
- Over 615 million people live in absolute poverty
- 88.8% on less than \$2 per day
- 320 million lack access to rudimentary health facilities
- 450 million are without safe drinking water
- 830 million have no access to basic sanitation
- 700 million have inadequate shelter
- 495 million adults are unable to read or write

(World Energy Council, 2010)

Education

- 'People require education and training to develop their potential to become productive members of society. An investment like any other. The poverty that results from failure to invest is as much a debt as a financial one, representing a burden of wasted potential weighing on the future. Since the human lifespan is limited, educational investment in individuals is ultimately depreciated and lost. Sustainability in human terms thus includes those educational and cultural processes that preserve human knowledge and ensure its transmission from generation to generation' (Dahl, 1995)

Systems/Holistic Approach



- Demand for sustainable development
- Stakeholder involvement to combat less well-defined problems!

Sustainable Development Strategy

1. Vision of progress
2. Mechanism for cross-sectoral policy integration
3. A capacity to monitor

Current SD strategy built around general principles from Rio and from the EU's 5th Action Programme on the Environment:



- use of the precautionary principle
- emphasis on scientific evidence as a requirement for decision making
- sharing of responsibilities
- for the environment to be conducive for debate

General principles cont'd

- the integration of environmental policy into all aspects of government;
- a preference for the use of market mechanisms rather than government regulation; and
- environmental policy should not inhibit wealth creation or national economic competitiveness.



Sustainable Development Strategy

- 'There can be no one size fits all approach to sustainable development' (*OECD 2001*)
- Conflicts between global, national, and local sustainable development priorities in the short term
- Success hinges on peace and security, political systems, and cultural norms

Key principles to all strategies

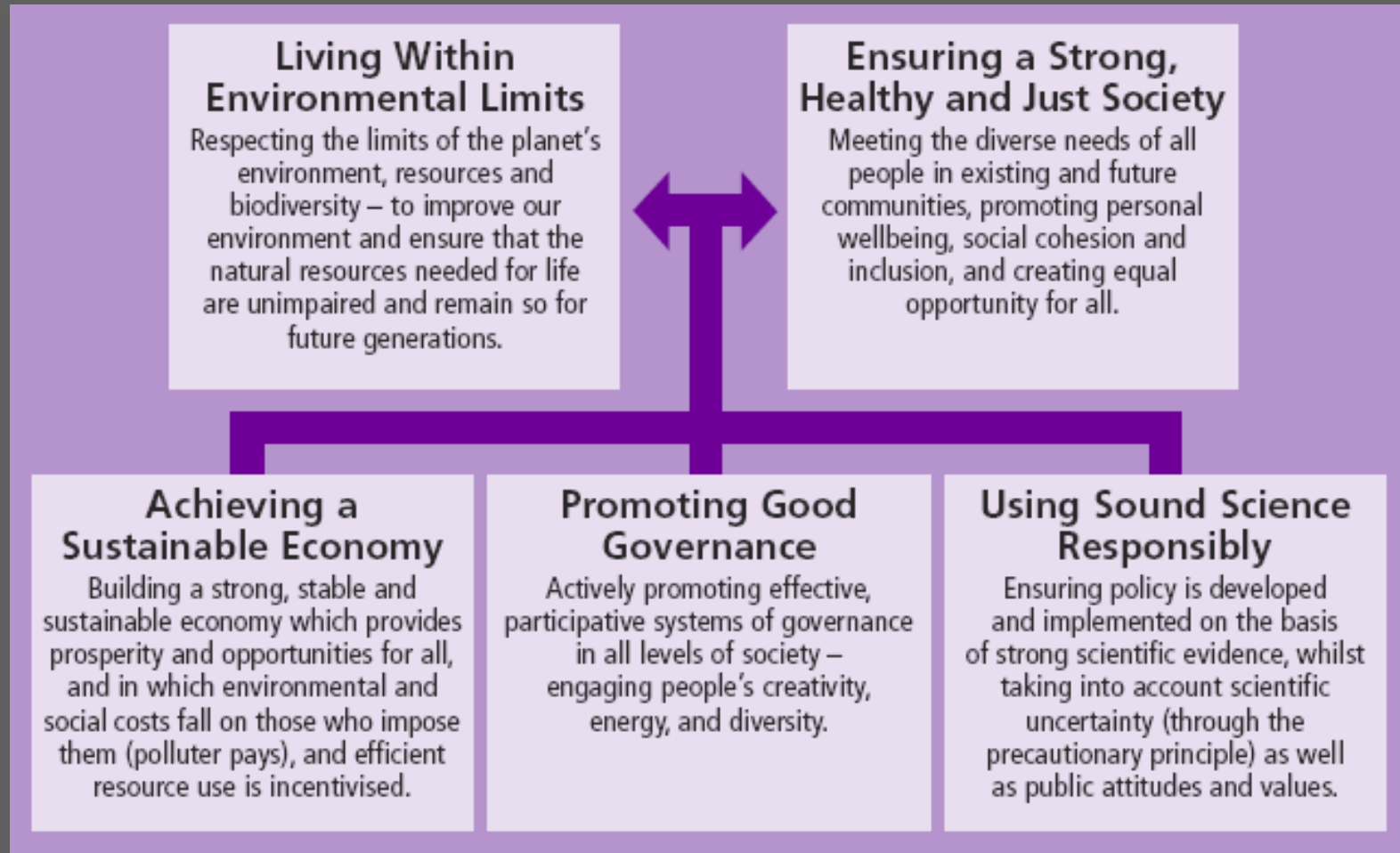
1. Country-led and nationally-owned
2. Rooted in a vision of long-term development
3. Defined through a participatory process
4. Based on solid analytical basis
5. Focused on ensuring sustained beneficial impacts on disadvantaged and marginalised groups
6. Link national and local levels

Securing the Future – the UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy 2005

UK Strategic Framework			
UK Gov't Strategy	Welsh Assembly Action Plan	Scottish Executive Strategy	Northern Ireland Strategy

- Need for action
- Sustainable Development Commission - independent watchdog – ceased to be March 2011

Securing the Future – Guiding principles – a set of shared UK principles



Tutorial: Sustainable Development!

Personal Research :

- Consider the document “One Wales:One Planet” – in particular, the chapter on “A Sustainable Environment”. Using evidenced statistics, comment upon its success so far.