

A National Sustainable Development  
Strategy: How New Zealand measures  
up against international commitments



sustain

### **Discussion Paper 1:**

A paper on the global milestones that have generated the need for countries to produce their own National Sustainable Development Strategies, to assess current global NSDS progress to date and consider New Zealand's progress.

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# Executive Summary

'Sustainable Future' is a sustainability think tank, the purpose of which is to promote transparency, good governance and quality decision making in sustainable development. Besides producing discussion papers, 'Sustainable Future' operates a web site, [www.sustainablefuture.info](http://www.sustainablefuture.info) which contains a timeline of both global and New Zealand developments.

'Sustainable Future' supports decisions by Cabinet (July 2001) and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment (August 2002) to develop a New Zealand National Sustainable Development Strategy (NZNSDS). However, Government changed its focus to a *Programme of Action* (January 2003), which looked specifically at water quality and allocation, energy, sustainable cities, and child and youth development.

The *Programme of Action* was based on the government's interpretation of priority actions rather than the result of any community consultation. Although 'Sustainable Future' supports all activities that promote sustainable development, 'Sustainable Future' considers the *Programme of Action* remains too narrow and a more strategic approach is timely.

The purpose of this paper is to report the global milestones that have generated the need for countries to produce their own National Sustainable Development Strategies, to assess current global NSDS progress to date and consider New Zealand's progress.

This paper is a research-based, rather than a policy discussion paper about ways forward. It therefore concentrates on 'what is' rather than 'what could be'. It does not attempt to define, develop or promote arguments for or against such a strategy, nor does it attempt to define the meaning of sustainable development or what an optimal National Strategy on Sustainable Development (NSSD) would look like. Notably, these concepts are identified as issues and there is an attempt to direct readers to key documents, which are listed at the end of this paper. Detailed discussions of these concepts are outside the terms of this paper. Lastly, due to the wide range of participants and the extensive use of abbreviations, this paper includes a full glossary.

This paper is divided into four parts.

## **Part 1: What is a National Sustainable Development Strategy?**

For the purposes of this paper, a National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) and a National Strategy on Sustainable Development (NSSD) should be read as equivalent. Both abbreviations are used throughout the paper. A principle-based definition of the term NSDS is contained in Part 1 with reference to Appendices 1 and 2. This section alerts readers to the lack of a detailed, concise, clear and internationally agreed definition of a NSDS.

## **Part 2: Global Milestones – Stockholm to Today**

Thirty years ago, in Stockholm, there was agreement by the world's nations to respond to the problem of environmental deterioration. Twenty years later, at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, it was further agreed that the protection of the environment and social and economic development are fundamental to sustainable development. Consequently, the United Nations States agreed to introduce National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD).

Between Rio and today, the world's nations have met at several major conferences under the auspices of the United Nations, including the International Conference on Financing for

Development, and the Doha Ministerial Conference. These conferences (discussed in Part 2) set the context for the future.

Since Rio, two international targets have been set:

1. 2002 - at a Special Session of the UN General Assembly (Rio +5) a target date of 2002 was set for NSSD's to be introduced;
2. 2005 - at the World Summit, it was agreed under the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* that United Nations Member States would take immediate steps to make progress in the formulation and elaboration of national strategies for sustainable development and begin their implementation by 2005. This is supported by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

Due to the poor response from some of the United Nations States, it was decided to provide additional support to United Nation Member States through the OECD/DAC and other UN projects.

### **Part 3: Global Progress – NSSD Today**

Global progress to date – on a volume basis – appears to be increasing, but an accurate framework for assessing progress is lacking. Suggestions to rectify the current situation would include;

- an accurate, comprehensive and compulsory register,
- a detailed, clear and an internationally agreed definition of what makes an NSDS; and
- a review process completed by an independent body to ensure national strategies are of the necessary standard to be placed onto the register.

Until the above occur, it is likely concerns will be raised over the quality of reporting and the quality of public disclosure.

### **Part 4: New Zealand's Progress – Where are we on the Journey?**

Although the Government is clearly making progress towards sustainable development, this is not to the extent either expected or agreed at the world summits, or by some New Zealand stakeholders.

Key points to note include;

- Government's use of the term 'sustainable development', as adopted by Cabinet in 2000, is not consistently applied.
- New Zealand has no 'National Sustainable Development Strategy' and nothing currently appears to be in the government pipeline. Therefore, contrary to the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation*, New Zealand is not taking immediate steps to make progress in the formulation and elaboration of national strategies by 2005.
- Government has not provided an explanation of why it changed its mind and decided not to proceed with an NSDS. Although it is clear something significant must have occurred between late 2002 and January 2003, there is no comprehensive public statement outlining the reason/s. For example; was an NSDS too costly to produce, too complex to achieve and/or has the Government decided it is no longer committed to meeting its obligations under *Agenda 21*?

- New Zealand is currently not represented on the Commission for Sustainable Development (currently there are 53 member countries) although participates at meetings<sup>1</sup>.
- Government should advise the UN DESA, (which produce an annual map of the state of play based on national reports to the Commission for Sustainable Development), that the UN DESA Annual Map of the state of play of NSDS for 2004 – published 2005<sup>2</sup> and included in this paper as Figure 2 – is incorrect. The New Zealand Government's state of play is not;
  - (i) NSDS being implemented (as indicated by UN DESA – Figure 2 Annual Map of the state of play of NSDS For 2004 – Published 2005)<sup>3</sup>,
  - (ii) NSDS approved by Government nor
  - (iii) NSDS development in progress,

*but either*

  - (iv) Components of Sustainable Development in Place. (The Programme on Action on four key issues, being: water quality and allocation, energy, sustainable cities and child and youth development may fit this description), or
  - (v) No information available/No action taken (This may be more accurate as from 2002 the production of a NSDS appears to be off the 'to do list' of the New Zealand Government).
- New Zealand has no independent body reviewing progress towards sustainable development. Although there is a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, the role does not extend to social and economic aspects. While the New Zealand Government fails to fund a non-political independent body to review and verify all aspects of sustainable development – including an NSDS – the policy framework for independently monitoring and verifying progress simply will not exist. Consequently, any potential benefits of a review, such as in the United Kingdom or the European Union, will not be realised.
- The OECD is currently completing an environmental review of New Zealand (2005/06), which includes a review of the progress in the integration of economic, social and environmental decision making.<sup>4</sup>
- In the past, New Zealand has positioned itself in the global markets as '100% Pure' and 'Clean and Green' and in the global public policy environment, as a key leader in sustainable development. Consequently, the lack of a commitment to producing an NSDS is likely to negatively impact on our credibility in both arenas.

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<sup>1</sup> New Zealand Response to the Reformed Commission on Sustainable Development Background Paper No. 1 to the Commission on Sustainable Development Twelfth Session New York  
[http:// www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/csd12\\_docs.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/csd12_docs.htm) CSD/12

<sup>2</sup> The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process, March 2005' Page 17 – Figure 3

<sup>3</sup> The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process, March 2005' Page 17 – Figure 3

<sup>4</sup> Page 21, Refer Ministry for the Environment

<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/ser/oecd-environment-review-apr05/index.html>

# Part 1: What is a National Sustainable Development Strategy?

## 1.0 Introduction

There is continued discussion in the key documents as to how an NSDS can be defined, however the most helpful tool for preparing NSDS appears to be the OECD principles. The OECD believe that any nationally-owned strategy which applies these principles, and which puts in place a coordinated set of mechanisms and processes to ensure their implementation, is a sustainable development strategy. An excerpt states:

### **Guiding principles for sustainable development strategies**

In preparing this guidance, we have worked intensively with a number of developing countries who have been actively formulating national sustainable development strategies. Their input has been essential. Our consultations and wider international experience have led to a consensus on the following principles for effective sustainable development strategies.

### ***Strategy formulation***

- Country ownership and participation, leadership and initiative in developing their strategies. Broad consultation, including particularly with the poor and with civil society, to open up debate on new ideas and information, expose issues to be addressed, and build consensus and political support on action.
- Ensuring sustained beneficial impacts on disadvantaged and marginalised groups and on future generations.
- Building on existing strategies and processes, rather than adding additional ones, to enable convergence and coherence.
- A solid analytical basis, taking account also of relevant regional issues, including a comprehensive review of the present situation and forecasts of trends and risks.
- Integration of economic, social and environmental objectives through mutually supportive policies and practices and the management of tradeoffs.
- Realistic targets with clear budgetary priorities.

### ***Capacity development***

- Strengthening and building on existing country capacity — public, civil society, and private as part of the strategy process.
- Linking national and local levels, including supporting devolution, in all stages of strategy development and implementation.
- Establishing continuous monitoring and evaluation systems based on clear indicators to track and steer progress.<sup>5</sup>

## 1.1 Conclusion

Appendix 1 and 2 also provide useful clarity, but a detailed, clear, concise, internationally agreed definition is, arguably yet to be developed.

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<sup>5</sup> Strategies for sustainable development: practical guidance for development co-operation, Statement by the DAC High Level Meeting upon endorsement of the 'Strategies for Sustainable Development: Practical Guidance for Development Co-operation (2001)' – page 2

## Part 2: Global Milestones – Stockholm to Today

### 2.0 Introduction

In order to understand what an NSSD is, it is critical to understand the journey from Stockholm to the present day. In order to do this, it is important to appreciate some of the early discussion on sustainable development. This part of the paper looks briefly at the early history of the term and the global milestones along the way that have helped define the purpose of a National Strategy on Sustainable Development. Refer the 'Sustainable Future' web site for a detailed timeline.<sup>6</sup>

### 2.1 Environment Protection and Economic Development – Two Separate Concepts

In the early 1970's, there was a growing awareness of global environmental issues which resulted in the creation of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP). Notably, a 1972 report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment delivered at Stockholm agreed on the urgent need to respond to the problem of environmental deterioration. Throughout the 1970's there was increasing recognition of the inter-dependence of economic development and the environment, and environmental protection with economic development. It was generally agreed that neither could be managed in isolation. This led to the establishment of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (UNCED) which was, in effect, the birth of what we now refer to as 'sustainable development'.

### 2.2 Sustainable Development – One Concept

In 1980, the United Nations Environment Programme commissioned the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) to produce a *World Conservation Strategy* (WCS). The resulting strategy was first and foremost an attempt to bring conservation and development together, as indicated by a quote from the strategy:

Human activities are progressively reducing the planet's life-supporting capacity at a time when rising human numbers and consumption are making increasingly heavy demands on it. The combined destructive impacts of a poor majority struggling to stay alive and an affluent minority consuming most of the world's resources are undermining the very means by which all people can serve and flourish.<sup>7</sup>

The early 1980's was a time when environmental protection and economic growth were seen as potentially complementary goals<sup>8</sup>. Five major global meetings occurred, several of which were 'firsts'; namely:

1983: The World Commission on Environment and Development. The World Commission was established in 1983 by the United Nations, but was independent of the UN. It later became the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development.

1984: The Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference on the Environment (IPU).

1984: The Global Possible Conference – Convened by the World Resources Institute (WRI).

1984: First World Industry Conference on Environmental Management (WICEM) – convened by UNEP and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC).

1985: The Global Meeting on Environment and Development for NGO's, convened by the Environment Liaison Center (ELC).

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<sup>6</sup> [www.sustainablefuture.info](http://www.sustainablefuture.info)

<sup>7</sup> World Conservation Strategy, 1980, Section 1.

<sup>8</sup> World Resources 1986, An Assessment of the Resource Base that Supports the Global Economy, page 184

By 1985, the term 'sustainable development' was in common usage but agreement on a definition was largely elusive. A 1986 publication by the World Resources Institute, states:

Achieving sustainable development – by way of environmentally and social sensitive economic growth – has become the new agenda. While the term 'sustainable development' has slipped into common parlance, its meaning remains elusive....It is all things to all people: a comfortable, but ill-defined concept.<sup>9</sup>

The 1986 World Resources Institute publication goes on to state four key features of the term 'sustainable development':

- It is the effort to unite the ingredients for current economic output with the future productivity of the resource base.
- The creation of wealth is measured over the long (rather than the short) term.
- A more sophisticated assessment of costs and benefits that accounts for the indirect costs of economic activity (such as the impacts of pollution distant in space or time), the value of non-market goods and services (such as regulation of the hydrologic cycle of forests, or the aesthetic value of the undisturbed wilderness), and impacts on commonly-owned property and on global commons (such as stratospheric ozone layer).
- Development is used to mean economic growth (rather than something that happens to developing countries), making the concept applicable to all countries.<sup>10</sup>

By 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development released its report titled: *Our Common Future* (often referred to as the Brundtland Report after the Commission's Chair, Mrs Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway). This report was presented to the United Nations General Assembly. This report has produced the most frequently used definition of the term, 'sustainable development', being:

Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.<sup>11</sup>

In 1991, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) was created.

From late 1980 to today, the United Nations has had a key role in co-coordinating key events and obtaining global agreements. This is illustrated by their role in the large number of significant events and agreements outlined below:

1. 3 – 14 June 1992: Rio Earth Summit – being the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development 1992 (UNCED)

Sustainable development was further defined by the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (27 Principles), *Agenda 21*, and the Statement of principles for the Sustainable Management of Forests. All three were adopted by more than 178 governments in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Notably, Chapter 8 of *Agenda 21* states under a section headed, 'adopting a national strategy for sustainable development':

Para 8.7

Governments, in cooperation, where appropriate, with international organizations, **should adopt a national strategy for sustainable development** based on, inter alia, the implementation of decisions taken at the Conference, particularly in respect of Agenda 21. This strategy should build upon and harmonize the various sectoral economic, social and environmental policies and plans that are operating in the country. The experience gained through existing planning exercises such as national reports for the Conference, national conservation strategies and environment action plans should be fully used and incorporated into a country-driven sustainable development strategy. Its goals should be to ensure socially responsible economic development while protecting the resource base and the environment for the benefit of future generations. It should be developed through the

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<sup>9</sup> World Resources 1986, An Assessment of the Resource Base that Supports the Global Economy, page 184

<sup>10</sup> World Resources 1986, An Assessment of the Resource Base that Supports the Global Economy, page 184

<sup>11</sup> 'Our Common Future' (often referred to as the Brundtland Report). 1987 A report of the World Commission on Environment and Development

widest possible participation. It should be based on a thorough assessment of the current situation and initiatives.<sup>12</sup> [Bold added]

2. November 1996: International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

The IISD adopts the Bellagio Principles for assessment of progress towards sustainable development.

3. June 1997: Earth Summit + 5

The Special Session of the General Assembly adopted a comprehensive document entitled *Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21* prepared by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). This special session again noted the importance of NSDS and set a target of 2002 for their formulation and elaboration.

Para 24

**By the year 2002, the formulation and elaboration of national strategies for sustainable development that reflect the contributions and responsibilities of all interested parties should be completed in all countries**, with assistance provided, as appropriate, through international cooperation, taking into account the special needs of the least developed countries. The efforts of developing countries in effectively implementing national strategies should be supported. Countries that already have national strategies should continue their efforts to enhance and effectively implement them. Assessment of progress achieved and exchange of experience among governments should be promoted. Local Agenda 21s and other local sustainable development programmes, including youth activities, should also be actively encouraged;<sup>13</sup> [Bold added]

Also at this time, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) was established by the Coalition of Responsible Economic Development (CRED) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to enhance the quality, rigour and utility of sustainability reporting.

4. 18 September 2000: United Nations Millennium Declaration, United Nations General Assembly New York – Resolution A/RES/55/2

The Millennium Resolution adopted by the General Assembly supported sustainable development and included the following statements:

6. We consider certain fundamental values to be essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. These include:

- **Freedom.** Men and women have the right to live their lives and raise their children in dignity, free from hunger and from the fear of violence, oppression or injustice. Democratic and participatory governance based on the will of the people best assures these rights.
- **Equality.** No individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development. The equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured.
- **Solidarity.** Global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most.
- **Tolerance.** Human beings must respect one other, in all their diversity of belief, culture and language. Differences within and between societies should be neither feared nor repressed, but cherished as a precious asset of humanity. A culture of peace and dialogue among all civilizations should be actively promoted.
- **Respect for nature.** Prudence must be shown in the management of all living species and natural resources, in accordance with the precepts of sustainable development. Only in this way can the immeasurable riches provided to us by nature be preserved and passed on to our descendants. The current unsustainable patterns of production and consumption must be changed in the interest of our future welfare and that of our descendants.

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<sup>12</sup> *Agenda 21*, Chapter 8, Integrating Environment And Development In Decision-Making, (D)

<sup>13</sup> Programme for the Further Implementation of *Agenda 21*, Para 24 (a) Resolution Adopted By The General Assembly, S/19-2. [www.un.org/documents/ga/res/spec/aress19-2.htm](http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/spec/aress19-2.htm)

• **Shared responsibility.** Responsibility for managing worldwide economic and social development, as well as threats to international peace and security, must be shared among the nations of the world and should be exercised multilaterally. As the most universal and most representative organization in the world, the United Nations must play the central role.<sup>14</sup>

The United Nations agreed key values and principles and then translated these shared values into actions by identifying key objectives, being:

- Peace, security and disarmament.
- Development and poverty eradication.
- Protecting our common environment.
- Human rights, democracy and good governance.
- Protecting the vulnerable.
- Meeting the special needs of Africa.
- Strengthening the United Nations.

One of the objectives, 'protecting our common environment', reaffirmed support for *Agenda 21* and stated:

#### **IV. Protecting our common environment**

##### Paragraphs

21. We must spare no effort to free all of humanity, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities, and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for their needs.

22. We reaffirm our support for the principles of **sustainable development**, including those set out in Agenda 21, agreed upon at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

23. We resolve therefore to adopt in all our environmental actions a new ethic of conservation and stewardship and, as first steps, we resolve:

- To make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, preferably by the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 2002, and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases.
- To intensify our collective efforts for the management, conservation and **sustainable development of all types of forests**.
- To press for the full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity<sup>8</sup> and the Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa.
- To **stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources** by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels, which promote both equitable access and adequate supplies.
- To intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and manmade disasters.
- To ensure free access to information on the human genome sequence.<sup>15</sup>

By the year 2015, all 191 United Nations Member States have pledged to meet these goals, which are stated on the Millennium Goals website as Table 1:

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<sup>14</sup> [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/)

<sup>15</sup> *Agenda 21*

**Table 1: Millennium Development Goals (MDG)**

<b>1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day</li> <li>■ Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger</li> </ul>
<b>2. Achieve universal primary education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling</li> </ul>
<b>3. Promote gender equality and empower women</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015</li> </ul>
<b>4. Reduce child mortality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five</li> </ul>
<b>5. Improve maternal health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio</li> </ul>
<b>6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS</li> <li>■ Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases</li> </ul>
<b>7. Ensure environmental sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b><u>Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes;</u></b> reverse loss of environmental resources</li> <li>■ Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water</li> <li>■ Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020</li> </ul>
<b>8. Develop a global partnership for development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory. Includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction—nationally and internationally</li> <li>■ Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction</li> <li>■ Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States</li> <li>■ Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term</li> <li>■ In cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth</li> <li>■ In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries</li> <li>■ In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies—especially information and communications technologies</li> </ul>

Source: [www.un.org/millenniumgoals/](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/) [Bold and underline added]

5. 14 November 2001: World Trade Organisation in Doha

The resulting *DOHA WTO Ministerial Declaration 2001* reaffirmed its commitment to sustainable development.

**Para 6**

We strongly **reaffirm our commitment to the objective of sustainable development**, as stated in the preamble to the Marrakesh Agreement. We are convinced that the aims of upholding and safeguarding an open and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, and acting for the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development can and must be mutually supportive.<sup>16</sup>

6. 21 – 22 March 2002: International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico

The resulting *Monterrey consensus*, arrived at during the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development, Distr. General, also reaffirmed its commitment to sustainable development.

<sup>16</sup> DOHA WTO Ministerial Declaration 2001 [WT/MIN(01)/DEC/1

**Para 1**

We the heads of State and Government, gathered in Monterrey, Mexico, on 21 and 22 March 2002, have resolved to address the challenges of financing for development around the world, particularly in developing countries. **Our goal is to eradicate poverty, achieve sustained economic growth and promote sustainable development** as we advance to a fully inclusive and equitable global economic system.<sup>17</sup>

7. 26 August – 4 September 2002: Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)

The full implementation of *Agenda 21*, the *Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21* and the Commitments to the *Rio principles*, were strongly reaffirmed at the WSSD held in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In addition, the Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development 2002, Resolution 2 – the *Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development* – states:

[Bold added]

**Para 81<sup>18</sup>**. The implementation of Agenda 21 and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration as well as in the present plan of action, **require a substantially increased effort, both by countries themselves and by the rest of the international community, based on the recognition that each country has primary responsibility for its own development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized**, taking fully into account the Rio principles, including, in particular, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, which states:

*States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem. In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.*

**Para 136<sup>19</sup>**. Promote and further develop methodologies at policy, strategy and project levels for sustainable development decision-making at the local and national levels, and where relevant at the regional level. In this regard, emphasize that **the choice of the appropriate methodology to be used in countries should be adequate to their country-specific conditions and circumstances, should be on a voluntary basis and should conform to their development priority needs**.

Strengthening institutional frameworks for sustainable development at the national level

**Para 162 et al.<sup>20</sup>**. States should:

(a) Continue to promote coherent and coordinated approaches to institutional frameworks for sustainable development at all national levels, including through, as appropriate, the establishment or strengthening of existing authorities and mechanisms necessary for policy-making, coordination and implementation and enforcement of laws;

(b) **Take immediate steps to make progress in the formulation and elaboration of national strategies for sustainable development and begin their implementation by 2005**. To this end, as appropriate, strategies should be supported through international cooperation, taking into account the special needs of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries. Such strategies, which, where applicable, could be formulated as poverty reduction strategies that integrate economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development, should be pursued in accordance with each country's national priorities.

**Para 163**. Each country has the **primary responsibility for its own sustainable development, and the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized**. All countries should promote sustainable development at the national level by, inter alia, enacting and enforcing clear and effective laws that support sustainable development. **All countries should strengthen governmental institutions, including by providing necessary infrastructure and by promoting transparency, accountability and fair administrative and judicial institutions**.

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<sup>17</sup> [www.undp.org/ffd/](http://www.undp.org/ffd/)

<sup>18</sup> Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002, page 50

<sup>19</sup> Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002, page 64

<sup>20</sup> Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg 2002, page 71

**Para 164.** All countries should also **promote public participation**, including through measures that provide access to information regarding legislation, regulations, activities, policies and programmes. They should also foster full public participation in sustainable development policy formulation and implementation. Women should be able to participate fully and equally in policy formulation and decision-making.

**Para 165.** Further **promote the establishment or enhancement of sustainable development councils and/or coordination structures at the national level, including at the local level, in order to provide a high-level focus on sustainable development policies.** In that context, multi-stakeholder participation should be promoted.

**Para 166.** Support efforts by all countries, particularly developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, **to enhance national institutional arrangements for sustainable development**, including at the local level. That could include promoting cross-sectoral approaches in the formulation of strategies and plans for sustainable development, such as, where applicable, poverty reduction strategies, aid coordination, encouraging participatory approaches and enhancing policy analysis, management capacity and implementation capacity, including mainstreaming a gender perspective in all those activities.

**Para 167.** Enhance the role and capacity of local authorities as well as stakeholders in implementing Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the Summit and in strengthening the continuing support for local Agenda 21 programmes and associated initiatives and partnerships and encourage, in particular, partnerships among and between local authorities and other levels of government and stakeholders to advance sustainable development as called for in, inter alia, the Habitat Agenda.<sup>21</sup>

## 8. 2002 to Today

Since 2002, governments have continued to reiterate their commitment to develop and implement NSDS at subsequent CSD sessions<sup>22</sup> and produce NSDS. In addition, a large number of NGO's have worked together in order to progress NSDS. This paper does not provide a detailed discussion of either the specific NGO's or their activities, but it does recognise that NGO's are key stakeholders in any NSDS.

Of particular note is the Earth Charter Commission. The final version of the Earth Charter was approved in March 2000. The background to the charter is as follows: in 1987, the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development issued a call for creation of a new charter that would set forth fundamental principles for sustainable development. The drafting of an Earth Charter was part of the unfinished business of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. In 1994 Maurice Strong, the secretary general of the Earth Summit and chairman of the Earth Council, and Mikhail Gorbachev, president of Green Cross International, launched a new Earth Charter initiative with support from the Dutch government. An Earth Charter Commission was formed in 1997 to oversee the project and an Earth Charter Secretariat was established at the Earth Council in Costa Rica.

Part 3 identifies NSDS produced to date and some of the resulting feedback. Many governments have also met in order to learn and discuss ways forward.

To conclude this section 'Stockholm to Today', one such NSDS report – *The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy 2005*<sup>23</sup> – provides a comprehensive diagram that depicts both how the WSSB outcomes complement the MDG's and reinforces the Doha and Monterrey agreements, and how the key international priorities can be viewed in terms of goals, targets and tools. A copy of the diagram is contained in Figure 1.

In addition to countries producing their own national sustainable development strategies (like the UK above), there has been a range of actions and policy developments by the United Nations and others to assist countries produce and publish relevant, meaningful and accurate NSDS. Courses of action include:

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<sup>21</sup> Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, 2002

<sup>22</sup> The United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/nsds/nsds.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/nsds/nsds.htm)

<sup>23</sup> The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy, March 2005, page 19

- (i) United Nations - Expert Group Meeting - Reviewing National Sustainable Development Strategies, New York - 11 October 2005.
- (ii) European Commission on Sustainable Development is preparing a Draft Declaration on Guiding Principles for Sustainable Development - May 2005.<sup>24</sup>
- (iii) A project that peer reviews France's NSDS was completed in March 2005. The project was initiated in 2004 by the French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the help of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). The results have been placed on the NSSD web site.<sup>25</sup>

The project aimed to:

- develop a methodology for 'peer review' of, and shared learning about NSDSs;
- test the methodology on the French NSDS.

It brought together four partner countries: Belgium, Ghana, Mauritius and the United Kingdom

1. for each country: one representative from government and one from civil society
2. the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
3. the European Commission (Environment DG)
4. the International Organisation of the Francophonie
5. a range of participants who had been involved in developing and implementing the French NSDS (government, civil society)

- (iv) A January 2004 workshop, co-organised by OECS and the Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DSD/DESA) to meet the challenge of developing national strategies for sustainable development by 2005, published a report which concluded with the following calls to action;

#### **Recommendations**

There is a need to:

1. Ensure high-level political commitment to the development and use of indicators of sustainable development.
2. Develop a national vision, policies and priorities that reflect a commitment to sustainable development.
3. Establish a more coordinated approach towards planning so that current sectoral indicator sets are more fully integrated in the national planning process.
4. Link indicator development and/or use to policy and decision-making.
5. Reconcile at the international level, the various existing indicator sets to streamline reporting requirements at the national level.
6. Develop an institutional mechanism at the national level to coordinate the process of indicator development and analysis.
7. Strengthen basic data and statistics for the development of indicators.
8. Strengthen human and technical capacity in the collection, dissemination and analysis of data relevant for indicator development.
9. Establish national and regional networks, such as integrated information management systems, to facilitate the exchange of information at all levels.
10. Coordinate external funding to respond to national needs and priorities for the development of indicators.
11. Educate stakeholders and increase awareness at all levels on the importance of Indicators of Sustainable Development (ISDs) and relevance to current development issues and to their individual concerns.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup><http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/604&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en>

<sup>25</sup>[www.nssd.net/peer\\_review\\_b.html](http://www.nssd.net/peer_review_b.html)

<sup>26</sup>[www.wrm.org.uy/actors/WSSD/finalreport.pdf](http://www.wrm.org.uy/actors/WSSD/finalreport.pdf)

- (v) A project to develop policy guidance was completed in 2002, known as the *Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book*. This resource book provides guidance on how to develop, implement and assess national sustainable development strategies (NSDSs). It is based on an analysis of past and current practice, in both developed and developing countries, to undertake comprehensive approaches to sustainable development. This project<sup>27</sup> was referred to in *OECD/DAC Donor-Developing Country Dialogues on National Strategies for Sustainable Development*.
- (vi) The publication of a significant number of NSDS and in some cases, their independent assessments. Appendix 3 lists recent and significant NSDS while Part 3 discusses the assessments of some of the NSDS in more detail.
- (vii) Country Profiles Project – Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)  
*Agenda 21* recommended that member States consider preparing national reports and communicating the information therein to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Each profile covers all 40 chapters of *Agenda 21*, as well as those issues that have been separately addressed by the CSD since 1997, including trade, energy, transport, sustainable tourism and industry.  
  
The 2002 Country Profiles series provides the most comprehensive overview to date of the status of implementation of *Agenda 21* at the national level. Each Country Profile is based on information updated from that contained in the national reports submitted annually by governments. Importantly, the register<sup>28</sup> provides an opportunity for countries to publish their NSDS. Refer Appendices 4 and 5.
- (viii) The publication of a number of Guides on NSDS. Refer Appendix 7 for publications since 2001.

## 2.3 Conclusion

Since Rio, two international targets have been set:

1. 2002 - at a Special Session of the UN General Assembly (Rio +5) a target date of 2002 was set for NSSD's to be introduced (Refer 3, above);
2. 2005 - at the World Summit, it was agreed under the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation* that United Nations Member States would take immediate steps to make progress in the formulation and elaboration of national strategies for sustainable development and begin their implementation by 2005. This is supported by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (Refer 7, above).

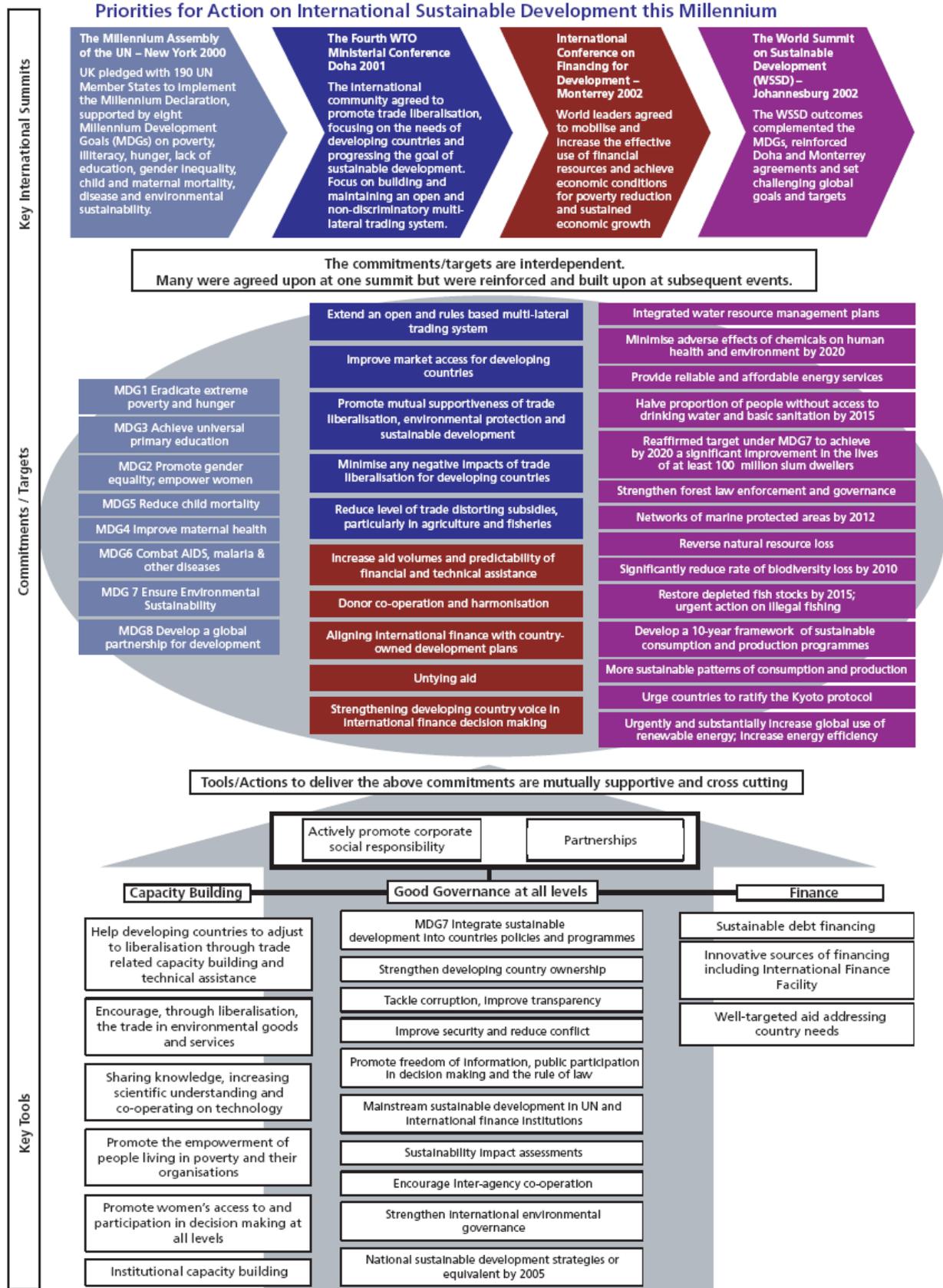
Due to the poor response from some of the United Nations States, it was decided to provide additional support to United Nation Member States through the OECD/DAC and other UN projects.

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<sup>27</sup> [www.nssd.net/project.html](http://www.nssd.net/project.html)

<sup>28</sup> [www.earthsummit2002.org/es/national-resources/nssd.htm](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/national-resources/nssd.htm)

Figure 1: Excerpt: *The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy' March 2005 Report*, page 19.



## Part 3: Global Progress – NSSD Today

### 3.0 Introduction

As at 2005, most countries have some form of national strategy for sustainable development (NSDS) in place or in progress. However, a recent report implies quality reports may be some time away. The report, titled, *The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process, March 2005*<sup>29</sup> states:

Experience in many countries indicates that there continue to be a number of common challenges to national strategies. But the transition to sustainable development clearly requires a coordinated, structured (i.e. strategic) response that deals with priorities, that can manage complexity and uncertainties, and that encourages innovation.<sup>29</sup>

The report discusses the need for an integrated approach to sustainable development<sup>30</sup> – in particular in regard to global, national and local perspectives – and considers three recognised frameworks are predominant, and one ‘organic’ option has emerged in practice.

- At local level, *Local Agenda 21s* have been developed in thousands of local districts or municipalities, as means to put Agenda 21 into action. Some of these have led to significant innovation and changed behaviour.
- The national-level equivalent is the *National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS)*
- In 1999, the World Bank introduced the concept of the *Comprehensive Development Frameworks (CDF)* as means to ensure integrated development. But this approach has now been largely subsumed under the international focus on PRSPs [Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers].
- Other integrated approaches to sustainable development have developed more organically, most notably the evolution of those environmental strategies (for example, Pakistan) which have progressively had to deal with social and economic issues during implementation, or through the evolution of national development plans, which have had to face up to pressing social and environmental concerns (as in Thailand).<sup>31</sup>

### 3.1 National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS) as at 2005

Organisations monitoring National Strategies include; the United Nations, the OECD and the World Bank.

#### (i) United Nations

The UN DESA provides an annual map of the state of play based on national reports to the Commission for Sustainable Development. (Refer Figure 2: UN DESA Annual Map of the state of play of NSDS For 2004 – Published 2005).<sup>32</sup>

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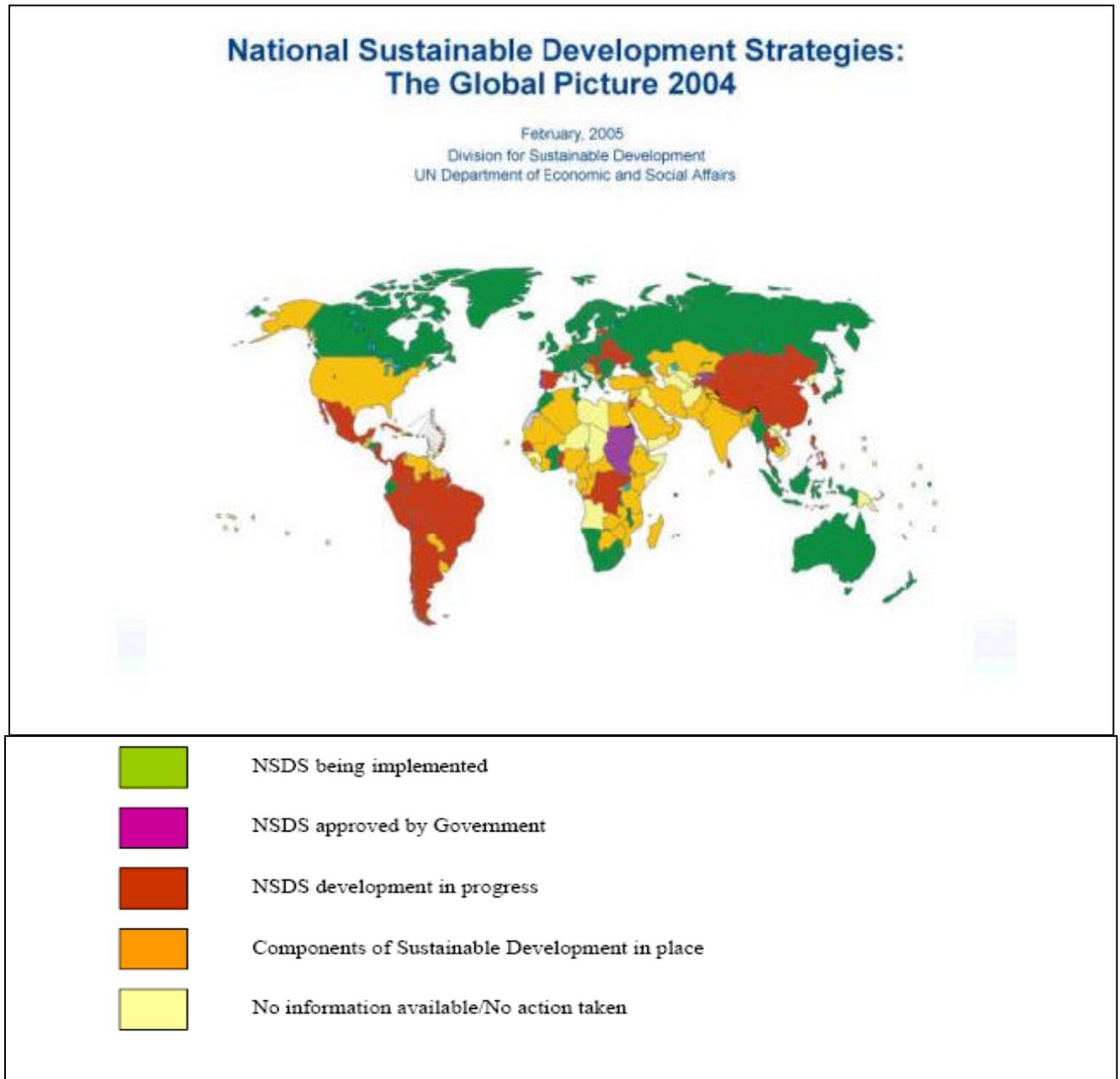
<sup>29</sup> The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process, March 2005' Page 16-17

<sup>30</sup> The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process, March 2005' Page 16-17

<sup>31</sup> The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process, March 2005' Page 16-17

<sup>32</sup> The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process, March 2005' Page 17 – Figure 3

Figure 2: The Global Picture 2005



Three key points to note are;

- Although the United Nations does make available a register of national information<sup>33</sup>, it is an individual country webpage found on the National information website rather than a compulsory annual reporting process, consequently information is not necessarily up to date. For example, recent French and United Kingdom national strategies are not under the heading 'National SD Strategy'. Refer Appendices 4 & 5.
- The colour of New Zealand on the map (green) implies New Zealand has an NSDS and that the strategy it is now being implemented. This is incorrect, as the New Zealand Government acknowledges that an NSDS is yet to be prepared (refer Part 4) and the NSSD register<sup>34</sup> in

<sup>33</sup> [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/natlinfo.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/natlinfo.htm)

<sup>34</sup> [www.earthsummit2002.org/es/national-resources/nssd.htm](http://www.earthsummit2002.org/es/national-resources/nssd.htm)

Appendix 4 does not record that an NSDS has been prepared for New Zealand. In contrast, Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland and the United Kingdom have registered their NSDS.

- New Zealand is currently not represented on the Commission for Sustainable Development (currently there are 53 member countries) although New Zealand frequently attends meetings.

Other information on countries' uptake on NSDS was found in the European Union Paper<sup>35</sup>, (Table 1 below), which implies a significant uptake.

**Table 1: date of adoption of NSDS in relation to the adoption of EU SDS in 2001**

	Before 2001	After 2001	Under preparation / revision
<b>Member States</b>	The Netherlands (1), Sweden, Finland, United Kingdom (1) and (2), Luxemburg, Belgium (1)	Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Germany, Sweden Italy, France, The Netherlands (2) Portugal	Spain, Belgium (2)
<b>Acceding Countries</b>	Poland	Slovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, <i>Cyprus</i>	Hungary, Estonia, Czech republic, Slovenia, Malta

(ii) OECD

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) review is designed to help OECD member countries to improve their individual and collective performances in environmental management with the **goal of achieving sustainable development**. The OECD has been undertaking environmental reviews of its member countries since 1992. The first cycle of reviews was completed in 2000, with New Zealand getting its first review in 1995/96. The OECD has now begun the second cycle of reviews aimed at promoting sustainable development. Currently, there is a 2005/06 review of New Zealand's environmental performance. The emphasis of the review is on implementation of domestic and international environmental policy, as well as on the integration of economic, social and environmental decision making.

(iii) World Bank

One other source that effectively states whether an 'environmental strategy/action plan' has been prepared is the World Bank's *Little Green Data Book*. In the case of New Zealand, the 2005 book states the last environmental strategy/action plan was prepared in 1994<sup>36</sup>, no doubt referring to the *Environment 2010 Strategy*. This strategy identified nine serious environmental issues that need to be dealt with if New Zealand is to justify its claim to be a 'clean green' country.

Appendix 3, although not comprehensive, lists recent and relevant NSDS. An initial review of the quality and relevance of the NSDS listed in Appendix 3 indicates the large gap between those countries that are producing quality NSDS and those that are not. For example, in the case of Australia, which is listed on the NSSD web page as having completed an NSDS, is nearer the beginning of the journey in comparison with the others, like the United Kingdom.

<sup>35</sup> Report: National Sustainable Development Strategies in the European Union - A first analysis by the European Commission, April 2004, Page 8

<sup>36</sup> 2005 *Little Green Data Book*, World Bank, Page 161, <http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/ESSD/envext.nsf/44ByDocName/EnvironmentalIndicatorsCurrentInitiativesTheLittleGreenDataBook2005>

Specifically, Australians and the Commission on Sustainable Development may wish to know more about;

- the extent social issues were considered and integrated,
- the extent and range of stakeholder engagement,
- the age and therefore relevance of Australia's last – and only – NSDS (1992) and
- the frequency the strategy has been reviewed against progress (once in 1996).

What this research implies is that although there is a desire by the Commission on Sustainable Development to have in place an accurate and comprehensive public register of NSDS, the current process must be improved in order for stakeholders to be able to use and rely upon the information contained in the National Profiles and NSDS. This, combined with the principle-based definition of an NSDS, is likely to make the end outcome – and therefore progress towards sustainable development – difficult to assess.

### 3.2 Assessments of NSDS to Date

An increasing amount of relevant information is becoming available through the independent assessment process that will be very helpful for preparers, verifiers, policy advisors, decision makers and other stakeholders. Report findings include;

#### (i) United Kingdom

The report by the UK Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) *Shows promise... But must try harder* April 2004<sup>37</sup> is an independent assessment of the UK Government's reported progress on sustainable development from 1999 to 2004. The report indicates the level of progress made and identifies where further challenges lie. The SDC goes into some depth on a national strategy (being paragraphs 18, 19, 20 and 23 below) and of the twenty challenges to government; they identify the creation a 'New Strategy' (excerpt below), as challenge number one. This challenge was taken up by government and the result is the recent completion of the March 2005 publication, *Securing the future – delivering UK sustainable strategy*. To date the March 2005 National Strategy is yet to be comprehensively independently assessed.

**18.** The Government's Sustainable Development Strategy ought to be a powerful means of establishing goals and priorities and co-coordinating vigorous action for change. As it has turned out, however, the strategy in *A Better Quality of Life* was not sufficiently tightly defined, or sufficiently vigorously implemented, to make as much difference as it should have done. It did not transform the Government's approach, nor did it provide the basis for a thorough-going effort to communicate the challenge of sustainability to the public.

**19.** The progress over the last five years has had a similar character. There have been a number of programmes and policies driven by sustainability concerns, but many other policies have only incidentally served to advance sustainable development, and some have sent it in the opposite direction. The Government and society as a whole have not been unified and driven by a single central concern to achieve a more sustainable society for the future, and the strategy has not been widely enough owned and supported to enable it to drive positive change or to resist those changes in society that are going in an unsustainable direction.

**20.** We report throughout the text on the performance of different UK Government departments on sustainability. Some are clearly making better progress than others. But none could in our view yet claim to have completely embedded and mainstreamed sustainability in all their processes and actions ....(and)

**23.** Within each chapter we have not offered comments on every topic covered in the Government's report. We have instead picked out a few key issues on which the need for more sustainable development presents the biggest challenge to present patterns of behaviour and where, therefore, Government most needs to act decisively. At the end of each section we have formulated a challenge to the Government and society on these key issues. We urge that particular attention should be paid to these during the consultation on the review of the

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<sup>37</sup> [www.sd-commission.gov.uk/pubs/assessment/](http://www.sd-commission.gov.uk/pubs/assessment/)

UK Strategy for Sustainable Development. The creation of the new Strategy provides an excellent opportunity to tighten up on the weaknesses of the first Strategy, and to create the machinery that will ensure that it is vigorously implemented in all areas.

### Challenge One – New Strategy

The Commission's first challenge to the Government is: -to create a new Strategy that is unified and much more strongly driven by a fundamental over-arching commitment to sustainability at all levels and in all parts of Government; it should be a core part of the programme of all Departments, led from the centre.

#### The new Strategy must:

- ensure that sustainable development principles and practices are mainstreamed into all Government programmes and policies and into the central determination of priorities and allocation of resources;
- galvanise all our institutions at national, devolved, regional and local level and inspire the whole of our society towards the changes that are needed;
- actively engage key stakeholders, including communities and the wider public, in the changes that are needed;
- be driven by a much more vigorous and well directed communications and engagement strategy built around key sustainability challenges; and
- be vigorously implemented and effectively monitored.<sup>38</sup>

### (ii) European Commission

The report by the European Commission: *National Sustainable Development Strategies in the European Union - A first analysis by the European Commission*, was also published in April 2004. The report<sup>39</sup>, an assessment of its 25 EU member states, compares national strategies in terms of content and areas of focus as well as the different institutional and procedural settings for their preparation and implementation, highlighting both common features and differences. They go on to identify seven common challenges and a list of opportunities for joint action: being;

1. Getting the process right.
2. Creating a sense of ownership.
3. International collaboration.
4. Finding a coherent vision or an agreed path for long term development.
5. Prioritisation and concretisation of policies.
6. Financial implications of the NSDS.
7. Matching intentions with action<sup>40</sup>.

There is clearly a need to pool experiences and to develop a more systematic identification and **exchange of good practice** between all actors involved (representatives from Governments, National Councils, stakeholders and scientists) on issues....There is also the need at EU level to **increase synergies and complementarities** between national and European efforts on sustainable development in order to maximise the effectiveness of policies at each level and to avoid conflicting policy measures.

The review has shown that the EU and national strategies are at least to a certain degree compatible in their choice of both thematic and horizontal priority areas. Further analysis may well identify actions within these areas that could be managed more coherently. The planned review of the EU-SDS will provide an opportunity to do this as well as to integrate more closely the EU's internal and global commitments (*WSSD, Doha and Monterrey*). It will also be the occasion to introduce more clarity between different European processes (Cardiff, Lisbon, Gothenburg and Johannesburg) and instruments (Extended Impact Assessment and Indicators for Sustainable Development).<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> UK Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) *Shows promise... But must try harder* April 2004

<sup>39</sup> [www.are.admin.ch/are/en/nachhaltig/laender\\_unterverzeichnis/](http://www.are.admin.ch/are/en/nachhaltig/laender_unterverzeichnis/)

<sup>40</sup> Report: National Sustainable Development Strategies in the European Union - A first analysis by the European Commission, April 2004 Section 7.1

<sup>41</sup> Report: National Sustainable Development Strategies in the European Union - A first analysis by the European Commission, April 2004, Page 21

The EU strategy for sustainable development was adopted by the European Council in Gothenburg in June 2001. It focuses on four key priorities: limiting climate change and increasing the use of clean energy; addressing threats to public health; managing natural resources more responsibly; improving the transport system; and land use. The 2001 sustainable development strategy is currently being reviewed.

### (iii) Peer Review: French National Strategy

On 3 June 2003, the Council of Ministers adopted a national strategy on sustainable development. It set the direction for sustainable development for the next five years and was peer reviewed early this year. *The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process*, 24 March 2005 presented the recommendations of the peer review in four sections: Process; Content; Implementation and Outcomes; and Monitoring and Indicators. The following is an excerpt from the report findings:

- (A) PROCESS
1. Empower public servants both at senior and operational levels to champion the integration of sustainable development into their activities
  2. Improve the quality of the process by investing more time and resources to plan the next review and future iterations, including implementation of the NSDS
  3. Clarify the role of the National Council for Sustainable Development, and the relationship between and respective roles of the Council and the Government
  4. Ensure that the NSDS is fully institutionalised so that the progress of sustainable development in France is not vulnerable to political change
  5. Put in place a more participatory process next time, adopting a dialogue model rather than one of consultation, through the following:
- (B) CONTENTS
6. The government should ensure that the NSDS expresses a clear and compelling vision of sustainable development for the country (with a general sense of direction and how to get there), and a fuller assessment of the extent to which sustainability is already in place in the country.
  7. The process of systematic integration should be taken further in future iterations of the strategy
  8. The NSDS should promote sustainable development partnerships with developing countries
  9. The external dimension of the domestic sustainable development strategy should be taken into account, including footprint issues/cross border aspects, etc.
- (C) IMPLEMENTATION AND OUTCOMES
10. Ensure consistent and coherent implementation at the national level.
  11. Ensure consistent and coherent implementation among national, regional and local authorities.
- (D) MONITORING AND INDICATORS
12. A system of sustainable development indicators should be developed with a stronger mobilization and communication potential, rooted in more common ownership and better prioritised at all levels.
  13. Ensure effective monitoring of the progress of sustainable development which addresses the main global challenges and risks, by sharing information with stakeholders and encouraging cooperation in achieving NSDS objectives.<sup>42</sup>

### 3.3 Conclusion

Global progress to date, on a volume basis, appears to be increasing, but an accurate framework for assessing progress is lacking. Suggestions to rectify the current situation would include;

- an accurate, comprehensive and compulsory register,
- a detailed, clear and an internationally agreed definition of what makes an NSDS; and
- a review process completed by an independent body to ensure national strategies are of the necessary standard to be placed onto the register.

Until the above occur, it is likely concerns will be raised over the quality of reporting and the quality of public disclosure.

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<sup>42</sup> The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process 24 March 2005, pages 6-10

## Part 4: New Zealand's Progress – Where are we on the Journey?

### 4.0 Introduction

This part of the discussion paper considers the extent to which the New Zealand Government has met its commitments to the United Nations and its New Zealand stakeholders.

### 4.1 Government Reports

Prior to 2000 the efforts of successive New Zealand governments to meet *Agenda 21* commitments and promote sustainable development have been weak<sup>43</sup>. A more detailed background from 2000 to August 2002 is provided in the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment *Creating Our Future* Report.

What is a key concern is that although Government agreed to develop an NSDS in July 2001, within eighteen months it appears to have reversed its decision and decided not to pursue an NSDS. Since January 2003, there have been public announcements on the change of approach, but no explanation of why and exactly when this decision took place.

Key documents over this time include;

2000 – CAB (00) Min 17/1 D (1)

Cabinet adopted the Brundtland Report definition and concept of sustainable development. Government acknowledged the approach and agreed that this involves 'integrat(ing) social, environmental and economic issues...thinking broadly about objectives, considering long-term as well as short term effects, assessing indirect as well as direct effects, and taking extra care when changes are brought about by development may be irreversible'. Government emphasised the importance of partnership between central government and other sectors – including local government, NGO's, Iwi/Maori and business – in implementing sustainable development.

April 2001 – POL Min(01) 6/2, 7

Cabinet directed officials from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (lead), Economic Development, Treasury, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Environment and Social Policy to report back to Cabinet Policy Committee by 30 June 2001 on the potential scope, process and timetable for the possible development of an integrated New Zealand Sustainable Development Strategy.

Mid 2001 – Paper to the Cabinet Policy Committee: Proposal – New Zealand Sustainable Development Strategy – from the Minister of Economic Development, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Minister of Social Policy and Employment and Minister for the Environment. This paper included sections on Background, Options for Government Action, Preferred Option, Work to Develop the Strategy and Recommendations.

This paper asks the Committee to approve adoption by government of an approach to sustainable development which includes both:

- (a) a number of practical steps which will improve current practice and provide national leadership; and which will also contribute to –

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<sup>43</sup> Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment *Creating Our Future: Sustainable Development for New Zealand*, page 102 (and) strong sustainability ... recognises that the economy is a subset of society (i.e. it only exists in the context of a society), and that many important aspects of society do not involve economic activity. Page 35

- (b) the development of a New Zealand sustainable development strategy.<sup>44</sup>

### Cabinet Policy Committee Paper (9 July 2001)

“On July 9, 2001, following reference from the Cabinet Policy Committee, Cabinet:

“(3) agreed that the Government adopt an approach to sustainable development which includes both:

- (3.1) a number of practical steps which will improve current practice and provide national leadership, and which will also contribute to:
- (3.2) the development of a New Zealand Sustainable Development Strategy;<sup>45</sup>

### February 2002

In addition, the Government has set the direction for the economy through the February 2002 document *Growing an Innovative New Zealand*<sup>46</sup> – commonly known as the Growth and Innovation Framework (GIF) – and for the social sector through policies to reduce inequalities. The Government's Growth and Innovation Framework is designed to deliver the long-term sustainable growth necessary to improve the quality of life of all New Zealanders.

It is a strategy based on a vision of New Zealand as:

- a land where diversity is valued and reflected in our national identity
- a great place to live, learn, work and do business
- a birthplace of world-changing people and ideas
- a place where people invest in the future
- an environment people cherish and are committed to protect for future generations.<sup>47</sup>

### May 2002

The Ministry for the Environment submitted a paper to the Cabinet Policy Committee outlining the proposals for developing New Zealand's sustainable development strategy. This included a set of draft principles to articulate the Government's approach to sustainable development.

### August 2002

In preparation for the Johannesburg World Summit, a report was produced by the Government titled *Towards Sustainable Development in New Zealand*.

### August 2002

*Monitoring Progress Towards a Sustainable New Zealand: An experimental report and analysis*<sup>48</sup> provides a selection of information related to sustainable development in New Zealand. The report is a first attempt to bring the information together.

### August 2002

*The Government's Approach to Sustainable Development* outlines the Government's present approach to sustainable development and illustrates this by describing a wide range of activities across the government sector. The Government clearly acknowledges that no NSDS has been prepared to date, as clarified in the statement on the web site below:

But as it stands, the report is incomplete. While it is a useful step towards a New Zealand Sustainable Development Strategy it is clear that further work is needed.

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<sup>44</sup> Mid 2001 – Paper to the Cabinet Policy Committee: Proposal – New Zealand Sustainable Development Strategy – from the Minister of Economic Development, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Minister of Social Policy and Employment and Minister for the Environment

<sup>45</sup> This is an excerpt from Adviser – Environment & Technology, August 2001

<sup>46</sup> [www.businessnz.org.nz/doc/189/52EnvironmentSustainableDevelopment](http://www.businessnz.org.nz/doc/189/52EnvironmentSustainableDevelopment)

<sup>47</sup> [www.gif.med.govt.nz/](http://www.gif.med.govt.nz/)

<sup>47</sup> [www.gif.med.govt.nz/](http://www.gif.med.govt.nz/)

<sup>48</sup> [www.stats.govt.nz/analytical-reports/monitoring-progress/default.htm](http://www.stats.govt.nz/analytical-reports/monitoring-progress/default.htm)

The next step in the process is the World Summit in Johannesburg. After the Summit, we will review the Programme of Action and decide whether there are new issues that New Zealand needs to address. The Government will also need to form a view about priorities. Some of the priorities are already evident in this report - such as economic growth, the implications of international population change for New Zealand, decoupling of economic growth from environmental harm, governance for sustainable development, and implementation of the Local Government Bill. Others may emerge from the World Summit and the process of engagement that follows. Once a draft strategy has been written there will be a process of consultation and an opportunity for everyone to comment and contribute their ideas.<sup>49</sup>

#### January 2003

*The Programme of Action* (January 2003)<sup>50</sup> draws together a number of key issues and signals, in particular that the Government intends to apply a sustainable development approach to its policy and decision-making processes. This *Programme of Action* focuses on the practical application of the sustainable development approach to certain key issues, being: water quality and allocation, energy, sustainable cities and child and youth development. The Government has stated it intends to produce an updated programme of action, but as yet no date has been set, nor and more importantly is there any clear commitment to developing a national strategy (NSDS). Since early 2003, the term 'National Strategy' appears to have been replaced with 'Programme of Action'.

The *Programme of Action* identified a number of goals for sustainable development which included:

- Strengthen national identity and uphold the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- Grow an inclusive, innovative economy for the benefit of all.
- Maintain trust in government and provide strong social services.
- Improve New Zealanders' skills.
- Reduce inequalities in health, education, employment and housing.
- Protect and enhance the environment.<sup>51</sup>

In January 2003, Government stated:

The Programme of Action represents a new approach. Earlier strategies had a relatively narrow focus, even though they were based on sustainable development principles. The Programme of Action signals that the Government now intends applying the sustainable development approach across the government sector and to all policy and decision making. **It is the first step in this process and focuses on four areas. Over time, the sustainable development approach will be infused across the public sector to become the normal way of working.**<sup>52</sup> [Bold added]

#### April 2004

*New Zealand Response to the Reformed Commission on Sustainable Development Background Paper No. 1 to the Commission on Sustainable Development Twelfth Session New York.* The paper does refer to a number of specific strategies, like the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy, but it **does not** refer to a National Strategy. (Refer excerpt below):

Following the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), New Zealand carefully considered how it might seek to implement the sustainable development ideas contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI). The result of this was two strands of action which focus on the areas where New Zealand could best apply these ideas. These are:

- The development and publication of a national programme of action, Sustainable Development for New Zealand, in January 2003.
- The incorporation of key sustainable development ideas into the development assistance programmes already being implemented by the New Zealand Agency for International Development.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> [www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=14744](http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.aspx?DocumentID=14744)

<sup>50</sup> Sustainable Development for New Zealand, Programme Of Action, January 2003 [www.beehive.govt.nz](http://www.beehive.govt.nz)

<sup>51</sup> Sustainable Development for New Zealand, Programme of Action, January 2003 [www.beehive.govt.nz](http://www.beehive.govt.nz)

<sup>52</sup> Sustainable Development for New Zealand, Programme of Action, January 2003 [www.beehive.govt.nz](http://www.beehive.govt.nz)

<sup>53</sup> [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/csd12\\_docs.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd12/csd12_docs.htm) CSD/12

Along with the legislation and government reports mentioned above, past Governments have developed a number of strategies and policies that contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. These include: the *Environment 2010 Strategy*, the *Green Package* announced in the 1996 Budget, the *Research Science and Technology 2010 Strategy*, and the *New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS)*, among others.<sup>54</sup> Appendix 7 identifies other New Zealand strategies.

## 4.2 Non-government Reports

There is no equivalent to the UK Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) in New Zealand, but there have been a number of reports prepared that have attempted to review progress. There are also a number of non-government organisations focussed on sustainable development and reporting. In particular; Sustainable Aotearoa New Zealand (SANZ) – established 2003, the Sustainability Council – established 2002, the New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development (NZBCSD) – established 1999, the Sustainable Development Reporting Committee of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of New Zealand (SDRC) – established 2003, and the Sustainability Special Interest Group (SSIG) – established 2000, which is a special interest member group that is also linked to the Institute. In addition, there are a range of Sustainable Development Awards<sup>55</sup> – both for reporting and performance.

October 1998

*Towards sustainable development, the role of the Resource Management Act 1991, PCE environmental management review No. 1*<sup>56</sup>, a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment report, reviews the role of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and its contribution to New Zealand's sustainable development goals. The report raises strategic issues to contribute to the debate about achieving better environmental performance.

Late 2002

*Here Today, Where Tomorrow*<sup>57</sup> is a discussion paper by the Pacific Rim Institute of Sustainable Management and Stephen Knight.

August 2002

*Creating our future: Sustainable development for New Zealand*<sup>58</sup>, a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment report, is a review of the progress of sustainable development in New Zealand with particular reference to environmental management performance since the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. At the time of publishing, the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment clearly had no knowledge that Government was about to change its mind, as illustrated by the following excerpts:

The focus on developing a national strategy on sustainable development is to be applauded. It is encouraging to see the beginnings of a central government position on sustainable development. This is a significant component that has been conspicuously absent since the Earth Summit in 1992.<sup>59</sup>

The Government has introduced, or has under consideration, a number of strategies and legislation (see figures 2 and 3) that contribute in some way to aspects of sustainable development. The Government's intention is to draw all these together under an overarching sustainable development strategy. In some cases the links between the individual strategies and sustainable development are not clear because they were not developed with sustainability in mind (see figure 4). It would have been more logical to have in place a sustainable development strategy before all other related strategies were considered, so that the links and direction were

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<sup>54</sup>New Zealand Profile 2002

<sup>55</sup>[www.sustainablefuture.info](http://www.sustainablefuture.info)

<sup>56</sup>[www.pce.govt.nz](http://www.pce.govt.nz)

<sup>57</sup>[www.pce.govt.nz](http://www.pce.govt.nz)

<sup>58</sup>[www.pce.govt.nz/reports/allreports/1\\_877274\\_03\\_8.shtml](http://www.pce.govt.nz/reports/allreports/1_877274_03_8.shtml)

<sup>59</sup>Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment *Creating Our Future: Sustainable Development for New Zealand*, page 106

clear. **Nevertheless the production of a series of strategies in the last two years shows great promise for the implementation of sustainable development in New Zealand.**<sup>60</sup>

[Recommending]

That the Prime Minister should establish **an advisory body responsible for overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the Government's proposed New Zealand Strategy on Sustainable Development**<sup>61</sup>

[Bold added]

April 2003

*Making New Zealand Strong*<sup>62</sup>, being 'Discussion Paper One' by Sustainable Aotearoa New Zealand (SANZ). The paper makes five key recommendations:

- *Develop a National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) using the 'strong sustainability'*<sup>63</sup> *approach.*
- *Consider and apply practical tools for measuring sustainability over time.*
- *Establish a National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) responsible for developing leadership in sustainable development.*
- *Re-write the Government's Draft Principles in line with 'strong sustainability principles'.*
- *Obtain additional information in order to determine the most appropriate strategy for sustainable development.*

2003 / 2004

A number of academic papers, including Milne et al<sup>64</sup> (Otago), Brown & Fraser<sup>65</sup> (Victoria) and Lawrence & Collins<sup>66</sup> (Waikato). Notably, a recent paper by Milne, *Business and sustainability: agenda for change or soothing palliatives?* states;

We need to learn that sustainability is a systems – not an organisational – concept. Our current systems of financial and economic organisation lead us to try to relate all important matters to the level of current business organisations because it is here that power and decision making seem to lie. But nature and ecology know nothing of our business and institutions.<sup>67</sup>

### 4.3 Legislation

Since 1983, eleven statutes (listed below) use the term 'sustainability'. The term 'sustainability' is used 68<sup>68</sup> times and 'sustainable development' 45 times in statutes in New Zealand.

Biosecurity Act 1993  
Conservation Act 1987  
Conservation Law Reform Act 1990  
Energy, Efficiency and Conservation Act 2000  
Environment Act 1986

<sup>60</sup> Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment Creating Our Future: Sustainable Development for New Zealand, page 9

<sup>61</sup> Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment Creating Our Future: Sustainable Development for New Zealand, page 18

<sup>62</sup> [www.sustainablefuture.info](http://www.sustainablefuture.info) – SANZ

<sup>63</sup> Strong sustainability '... recognises that the economy is a subset of society (i.e. it only exists in the context of a society), and that many important aspects of society do not involve economic activity. Creating our Future, Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, page 35

<sup>64</sup> Milne, M.J., Owen, D.L. & Tilt C.A., Corporate environmental reporting: Are New Zealand Companies being left behind? University of Auckland Business Review, 2001 3(2): 24-36; [and] Milne, M.J., Tregidga, H. & Walton, S. The triple bottom line: benchmarking New Zealand's early reporters. University of Auckland Business Review, 2003, 5(2): 36-50

<sup>65</sup> Brown, J., Fraser, M., Social and environmental accounting: how are you approaching it? Part 1 & 2, Chartered Accountants Journal, August and September 2004

<sup>66</sup> Lawrence, S. & Collins, E. Sustainability Practices of New Zealand Business. University of Waikato Management School. 2004, Report online, [www.management.ac.nz/rethink](http://www.management.ac.nz/rethink) [and] Collins, E, Corner, P., Kearins, K., & Lawrence, S., Getting Serious About Voluntary Environmental Programmes, University of Auckland Business Review, 2004, 6(2): 57-65

<sup>67</sup> Professor Markus Milne, University of Otago, 2004, Business and sustainability: agenda for change or soothing palliatives?

<sup>68</sup> [http://www.legislation.govt.nz/browse\\_vw.asp?content-set=pal\\_statutes](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/browse_vw.asp?content-set=pal_statutes)

Fisheries Act 1983 and 1996  
Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996  
Land Transport Act 1998 and Land Transport Management Act 2003  
Local Government Act 2002  
Resource Management Act 1991  
Retirement Income Act 1993

One of the older and frequently debated pieces of legislation is the Resource Management Act 1991. Palmer (1995)<sup>69</sup> discusses the creation of the Act, in particular stating the purpose,<sup>70</sup> and maintains;

It cannot be denied however, there remain important issues to be dealt with in deciding how the various factors set out in section 5 mesh with one another and how a hierarchy of priorities is determined.<sup>71</sup>

Other relevant legislation does not state the term 'sustainable development' but includes the concept, for example the Forests Amendment Act 1993, Ozone Layer Protection Act 1996 and numerous pieces of legislation focused on health, education and welfare.

With the move towards sustainable development reporting, the Government has established a voluntary explorative approach for departments which is being managed by the Ministry for the Environment (refer Annual Report<sup>72</sup>) and a mandatory descriptive approach for local authorities (refer the Local Government Act 2002). The context for local authorities was outlined in an article by Frame et al., which stated:

The Act places a heavy emphasis on the need for local authorities to identify 'community outcomes' in order 'to provide opportunities to discuss their desired outcomes in terms of the present and future social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of the community'. The latter point is important in that it places an additional emphasis on local authorities to report on the expected effects of future actions.<sup>73</sup>

#### **4.4 Government's use of the Term 'Sustainable Development'**

The term is widely but loosely applied in government, even though the Government accepted the Brundtland definition of sustainable development in 2000.

The term 'sustainable' is being used in a variety of ways, including defining financial sustainability. For example, (1) Hon Pete Hodgson (October 2004) is suggesting the forestry sector must be profitable – a financial sustainability approach, (2) MED and (3) Hon Marian Hobbs advocate a sustainable economic development approach; and (4) Hon Steve Maharey (October 2004) an intergenerational social equity approach.

<sup>69</sup> Palmer G., Environment – The International Challenge, Victoria University Press, 1995 – The making of the Resource Management Act, page 171

<sup>70</sup> Resource Management Act 1991, Section 5

- (1) The purpose of this Act is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.
- (2) In this Act, 'sustainable management' means managing the use, and development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural wellbeing and for their health and safety while –
  - a. Sustaining the potential of natural resource (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and
  - b. Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of future generations; and
  - c. Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

<sup>71</sup> Palmer G., Environment – The International Challenge, Victoria University Press, 1995 – The making of the Resource Management Act, page 171

<sup>72</sup> [www.mfe.govt.nz](http://www.mfe.govt.nz) 2001/2002

<sup>73</sup> Frame, B., McGuinness, W., and Gordon R., Accountability Quarterly, September 2003 (AQ21), Reinforcing a clean green brand: An overview of sustainable development reporting in New Zealand, pages 25-26

- (1) But as I said in January, the essential truth is that underlying all these issues is that the forestry sector must be profitable. Only a profitable industry will be a sustainable and growing industry.<sup>74</sup>
- (2) The Ministry [Ministry of Economic Development] works across the public sector to advise on, co-ordinate and align activities that stimulate sustainable economic development. We influence the environment in which businesses grow and invest. We strive for a policy environment that regulates economic activity effectively and at low cost. We deliver services to businesses and consumers that assist them to conduct their affairs effectively... Sustainable development is a goal that emphasises a long-term (intergenerational) and holistic perspective, integrating economic, environmental, social and cultural dimensions.<sup>75</sup>
- (3) I see 'Thinking outside the triangle' as an opportunity to look very carefully at the roadmap for our future. I see the triangle as representing the way forward for New Zealand. How? Because a triangle has three sides, and sustainability has three sides: economic growth, an environment that can be sustained and a healthy, safe society. The path for the future of New Zealand must be founded on this principle of sustainability – looking at economic growth, the environment and society in its entirety. The Resource Management Act is a key law in guiding New Zealand down the path of sustainable management – striking a balance between our desire for a healthy environment and our expectations for growth and opportunity.<sup>76</sup>
- (4) In developing the Local Government Act...We intended to promote a sustainable development approach – an approach that meets the needs of communities today, without compromising outcomes for future generations...And we intended to promote the value of regional demographic and social information as a vital tool for planning.<sup>77</sup>

#### 4.5 Measuring and Reporting on Sustainability Progress

Both government and non-government organisations have made significant progress towards measuring progress towards sustainability. Two recent examples of how some alternative measurement methods are being applied in New Zealand are examined in Appendix 6, being Ecological Footprint<sup>78</sup> and Natural Resource Accounts. Please note, a comprehensive review of such measures lies outside the scope of this paper.

#### 4.6 Conclusion

Although the Government is clearly making some progress towards putting in place sustainable development policies, this is not to the extent either expected or agreed at the world summits or by many New Zealand stakeholders. The Government's approach is neither a 'bottom-up approach' nor a 'top down approach'.

The current Government approach is perhaps best described as a 'middle-down approach', in that government selected four key issues and then provided the resources and framework for each of the four issues to be managed. Importantly, Government has never stated that the Programme of Action is an NSDS.

In the definition of NSDS outlined in Appendix 1, NSDS does indicate that there may be situations where a 'range of initiatives/strategies' may 'reflect' an 'NSDS', but this is based on the

<sup>74</sup> Hon Pete Hodgson, Press Release, NZ Forestry Industry Council-NZ Forest Owners Association forum, Auckland <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.cfm?DocumentID=21178>, 12 October 2004

<sup>75</sup> [www.med.govt.nz/values.html](http://www.med.govt.nz/values.html)

<sup>76</sup> Hon Marion Hobbs, Press Release, 'Thinking Outside the Triangle' Fourth Trans-Tasman Surveyors' Conference, 13 October 2004

<sup>77</sup> Hon Steve Maharey, Press Release, Social development and community planning, <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/ViewDocument.cfm?DocumentID=21151> 8 October 2004

<sup>78</sup> [www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/community/sustainability/ecofoot/report.htm](http://www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/community/sustainability/ecofoot/report.htm)

assumption that an integrated, comprehensive and significant debate has taken place. The level of debate is described as including engagement with society, NGO's, academia, local authorities, women's and indigenous groups and the private sector.

This lack of progress is a key concern to a growing number of individuals and organisations committed to sustainable development in New Zealand.

Key points to note include;

- Government's use of the term 'sustainable development', as adopted by Cabinet in 2000, is not consistently applied.
- New Zealand has no 'National Sustainable Development Strategy' and nothing currently appears to be in the government pipeline. Therefore, contrary to the *Johannesburg Plan of Implementation*, New Zealand is not taking immediate steps to make progress in the formulation and elaboration of national strategies for sustainable development in 2005.
- Government has not provided an explanation of why it changed its mind and decided not to proceed with an NSDS. Although it is clear something significant must have occurred between late 2002 and January 2003, there is no comprehensive public statement outlining the reason/s. For example; was an NSDS too costly to produce, too complex to achieve and/or has the Government decided it is no longer committed to meeting its obligations under *Agenda 21*?
- New Zealand is currently not represented on the Commission for Sustainable Development (currently there are 53 member countries attending meetings).
- Government should advise the UN DESA, who produces an annual map of the state of play based on national reports to the Commission for Sustainable Development, that the UN DESA Annual Map of the state of play of NSDS for 2004 – Published 2005<sup>79</sup> and included in this paper as Figure 2 – is incorrect. The New Zealand Government's state of play is not;
  - (i) NSDS being implemented (as indicated by UN DESA – Figure 2 Annual Map of the state of play of NSDS For 2004 – Published 2005<sup>80</sup>),
  - (ii) NSDS approved by Government nor
  - (iii) NSDS development in progress,

*but either*

  - (iv) Components of Sustainable Development in Place. (The *Programme on Action* on four key issues, being: water quality and allocation, energy, sustainable cities and child and youth development may fit this description) or
  - (v) No information available/No action taken (This may be more accurate as from 2002 the production of an NSDS appears to be off the 'to do list' of the New Zealand Government)
- New Zealand has no independent body reviewing progress towards sustainable development. Although there is a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, the role does not extend to social and economic aspects. While the New Zealand Government fails to fund a non-political independent body to review and verify all aspects of sustainable development – including an NSDS – the policy framework for independently monitoring and verifying progress simply will not exist. Consequently

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<sup>79</sup> The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process, March 2005 Page 17 – Figure 3

<sup>80</sup> The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process, March 2005 Page 17 – Figure 3

any potential benefits of a review, such as in the United Kingdom or the European Union, will not be realised.

- The OECD is currently completing an environmental review of New Zealand (2005/06), which includes a review of the progress in the integration of economic, social and environmental decision making.<sup>81</sup>
- In the past, New Zealand has positioned itself in the global markets as '100% Pure' and 'Clean and Green' and in the global public policy environment, as a key leader in sustainable development. Consequently, the lack of a commitment to producing an NSDS is likely to negatively impact on our credibility in both arenas.

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<sup>81</sup> Page 21, Refer Ministry for the Environment  
<http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/ser/oecd-environment-review-apr05/index.html>

## **Glossary, Abbreviations and Websites**

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### **Agenda 21**

Agenda 21 is a (300 page) comprehensive plan of action to be taken globally, nationally and locally by organizations of the United Nations system, governments, and major groups in every arena in which human activity impacts on the environment.

[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/index.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/agenda21/index.htm)

### **Anew NZ**

An independent, non-partisan network of motivated and concerned New Zealanders seeking a sustainable future. [www.anewnz.org.nz](http://www.anewnz.org.nz)

### **Bellagio Principles**

Refer IISD

### **Civil Society Organisations**

All civic organisations, associations and networks which occupy the 'social space' between the family and the State and who come together to advocate their common interests through collective action. It includes volunteer and charity groups, parents and teachers associations, senior citizens groups, sports clubs, arts and culture groups, faith-based groups, workers clubs and trade unions, non-profit think-tanks and 'issue-based' activist groups.

[www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)**

The United Nations CSD was created in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED, to monitor and report on implementation of the agreements at the local, national, regional and international levels. [Before 1992, the above task was completed by the WCED.]

[www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/cycle1.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/cycle1.htm)

### **Department for International Development (DFID)**

The DFID is the part of the UK Government that manages Britain's aid to poor countries and works to get rid of extreme poverty. It is headed by a Cabinet minister, one of the senior ministers in the Government, reflecting the importance the UK Government places on reducing poverty around the world. DFID has two headquarters (in London and East Kilbride, near Glasgow) and 25 offices overseas. Almost half of its 2500 staff work abroad.

[www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/)

### **Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (of the OECD)**

The Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development is a forum for consultation among 22 donor countries and the European Commission on how to increase the level and effectiveness of aid flows to all aid recipient countries. The member countries are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and United States.

[www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **Environment Liaison Center (ELC)**

Environment Liaison Centre International is an old non-governmental organization (NGO), by most standards: it emerged from the first Earth Summit in Stockholm in 1972, and was established in Nairobi in 1974 to track international environmental processes when the United Nations Environment Programme was located there. [www.elci.org/](http://www.elci.org/)

### **European Community (EC)**

The 15 member states and the common institutions, notably the European Commission, cooperating on a range of economic and other issues in supra-national integration. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **European Development Fund**

The European Development Fund is the main route through which EC funds committed to the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific under the Cotonou Convention are channelled. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **European Union (EU)**

Created by the Treaty of Maastricht 1992, which enhanced the integration of the European Community but also enabled the member states to cooperate together in an inter-governmental, not supra-national, way in the areas of Common Foreign and Security Policy Justice and Home Affairs. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **Global Reporting Initiative (GRI)**

The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) is a multi-stakeholder process and independent institution whose mission is to develop and disseminate globally applicable Sustainability Reporting Guidelines. [www.globalreporting.org/](http://www.globalreporting.org/)

### **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**

The total value of goods and services produced within a country. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **Gross National Income (GNI)**

Previously known as Gross National Product, Gross National Income comprises the total value of goods and services produced within a country (i.e. its Gross Domestic Product), together with its income received from other countries (notably interest and dividends), minus similar payments made to other countries. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **Growth and Innovation Framework New Zealand (GIF)**

The New Zealand Government's Growth and Innovation Framework (GIF) is designed to deliver the long-term sustainable growth necessary to improve the quality of life of all New Zealanders.

### **G7/G8 Group**

The G7 Group of major industrialised democracies comprises Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the United States. The Group of Eight (G8) includes Russia. Their heads of government meet annually at the G7/G8 Summit to discuss areas of global concern. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting (IEEA)**

Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting (IEEA) is an operational tool that tracks resource use, natural resource depletion and the resulting environmental degradation, hence providing a more real indicator for sustainable development. [www.unep.ch/etb/areas/valuationEnvAcc.php](http://www.unep.ch/etb/areas/valuationEnvAcc.php)

### **Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**

Established in 1988, its first report provided the initial scientific evidence of climate change. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)**

The International Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1919 with an overriding aim that remains unchanged: to serve world business by promoting trade and investment, open markets for goods and services, and the free flow of capital. [www.iccwbo.org/](http://www.iccwbo.org/)

### **International Institute for Economic Development (IIED)**

IIED is an independent, non-profit organization promoting sustainable patterns of world development through collaborative research, policy studies, networking and knowledge dissemination. It works to address global issues, for example; mining, the paper industry and food systems. [www.iied.org/index.html](http://www.iied.org/index.html)

### **International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)**

Founded in 1990, the IISD is in the business of promoting change towards sustainable development. Through research and effective communication of their findings, they engage decision-makers in government, business, NGOs and other sectors to develop and implement policies that are simultaneously beneficial to the global economy, the global environment and to social well-being. In 1996, the IISD with others developed, in cooperation with a group of leading international practitioners, the Bellagio Principles [www.iisd.org/measure/principles/bp\\_full.asp](http://www.iisd.org/measure/principles/bp_full.asp). The Bellagio Principles identify common patterns in sustainable development-related assessments. [www.iisd.org/](http://www.iisd.org/)

### **International Monetary Fund**

The International Monetary Fund aims to promote international monetary cooperation, exchange stability, and orderly exchange arrangements; to foster economic growth and high levels of employment; and to provide temporary financial assistance to countries to help ease balance of payments adjustment. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)**

The World Conservation Union is the world's largest and most important conservation network. The Union brings together 82 States, 111 government agencies, more than 800 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and some 10,000 scientists and experts from 181 countries in a unique worldwide partnership. The Union's mission is to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. The World Conservation Union is a multicultural, multilingual organization with 1000 staff located in 62 countries. Its headquarters are in Gland, Switzerland. [www.iucn.org/en/about/](http://www.iucn.org/en/about/)

### **Inter-Parliamentary Union Meeting (IPU)**

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) was founded in 1889 by two backbench MPs: Frederic Passy from France, and William Randal Cremer from Westminster. It is a world-wide organisation of parliamentarians working for peace and cooperation among peoples and the firm establishment of representative institutions. [www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org)

### **Marrakesh Agreement**

The Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization [in 1994], often referred to as 'the Marrakesh Agreement', embodies the results of the Uruguay Round. The Agreement defines the institutional framework, objectives and functions of the new organization. In addition, a number of important specific agreements and understandings negotiated during the Uruguay Round are incorporated into this Agreement as Annexes. [www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/whatis\\_e/eol/e/wto01/wto1\\_52.htm#note2](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/eol/e/wto01/wto1_52.htm#note2)

### **Millennium Development Goals (MDG)**

A set of eight international development goals for 2015, adopted by the international community in the UN Millennium Declaration in September 2000, and endorsed by IMF, World Bank and OECD.

- eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- achieve universal primary education
- promote gender equality and empower women
- reduce child mortality
- improve maternal health

- combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- ensure environmental sustainability
- develop a global partnership for development

Alongside the goals, a series of 18 targets were also drawn up to give the international community a number of tangible improvements to aim for within a fixed period of time, and also make it easier for them to measure their progress to date. The intention is that almost all of these targets will be achieved by 2015. [www.dfid.gov.uk/mdg/](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/mdg/)

### **National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD) [also known as NSDS]**

This web site (funded by DFID (UK) and SIDA [www.nssd.net](http://www.nssd.net) provides tools to assist in promoting dialogues on national strategies for sustainable development and providing necessary background information and reference material in support of these dialogues. Overall objectives are to:

- Improve international understanding of the key challenges and modalities for developing and implementing effective NSSD's.
- Elaborate good practices for donors in assisting developing countries with the formulation and implementation of NSSD's.
- Inform bilateral donor response to developing country requests for support of NSSD processes.

### **National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS)**

Refer NSSD

### **Non-governmental organisations (NGO)**

These are private non-profit making bodies which are active in development work. To qualify for official support UK non-governmental organizations must be registered charities. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development is a unique forum where the governments of 30 market democracies work together to address the economic, social, environmental and governance challenges of the globalising world economy, as well as to exploit its opportunities. [www.OECD.org](http://www.OECD.org)

### **Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)**

OECS came into being on 18 June 1981, when seven Eastern Caribbean countries signed a treaty agreeing to cooperate with each other and promote unity and solidarity. Their mission is to be a major regional institution contributing to the sustainable development of the OECS Member States by assisting them to maximise the benefits from their collective space; by facilitating their intelligent integration with the global economy; contributing to policy and program formulation and execution in respect of regional and international issues, and by facilitation of bilateral and multilateral cooperation [www.oecs.org/index.htm](http://www.oecs.org/index.htm)

### **Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)**

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) are prepared by the member countries through a participatory process involving domestic stakeholders as well as external development partners, including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Updated every three years with annual progress reports, PRSPs describe the country's macroeconomic, structural and social policies and programmes over a three year or longer horizon to promote broad-based growth and reduce poverty, as well as associated external financing needs and major sources of financing. Interim PRSPs (I-PRSPs) summarise the current knowledge and analysis of a country's poverty situation, describe the existing poverty reduction strategy, and lay out the process for producing a fully developed PRSP in a participatory fashion. The country documents, along with the accompanying IMF/World Bank Joint Staff Assessments (JSAs), are being made available on the

World Bank and IMF websites by agreement with the member country as a service to users of the World Bank and IMF websites. [www.imf.org/external/np/prsp/prsp.asp](http://www.imf.org/external/np/prsp/prsp.asp)

### **Programme of Action (POA) or (NZPOA)**

This January 2003 New Zealand programme of action focuses on the practical application of the sustainable development approach to certain key issues, including:

- water quality and allocation
- energy
- sustainable cities
- child and youth development.

[www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/sus-dev/sus-dev-programme-of-action-jan03.html](http://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/sus-dev/sus-dev-programme-of-action-jan03.html)

### **Rio Earth Summit**

Rio Earth Summit is the 1992 meeting of the UNCED. [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/help\\_faq.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/help_faq.htm)

### **Rio +5**

Special Session of the General Assembly to Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21 New York, 23 -27 June 1997.

### **Rio +10**

Earth Summit 2002, Johannesburg.

### **Strategies for Achieving the International Development Targets (or Target Strategy Papers)**

These DFID papers set out the key development challenges to be addressed in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The papers also explore the action needed by the international community, developing country governments, civil society, the private sector and others in order to achieve the targets. Finally the papers explain what DFID will do to contribute to that effort. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **Sustainable Aotearoa New Zealand (SANZ)**

SANZ is a diverse group of individuals and organisations that have met in order to progress sustainable development in New Zealand through leadership, advocacy, networking, education and support. [www.sustainablefuture.info](http://www.sustainablefuture.info)

### **Sustainable Development Commission (SDC)**

The Sustainable Development Commission is the UK Government's independent advisory body on sustainable development. [www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/principles/definitions.html](http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/principles/definitions.html)

### **Sustainable Development Reporting Committee of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of New Zealand (SDRC)**

The SDRC was established in 2003 and is a national committee of the Institute.

### **Sustainability Special Interest Group New Zealand (SSIG)**

A special interest member group that is linked to the Institute of Chartered Accountants of New Zealand (SDRC)

### **Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)**

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, is a government agency that reports to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In August 2004 Sida had 769 employees of whom 165 were working abroad, usually at one of Sida's approximately 40 offices in the partner countries. The Government appoints the members of Sida's board and Sida's director general. Sida is responsible for most of Sweden's contributions to international development cooperation. In 2004, the contributions amounted in total to SEK 21 751 millions. The goal of Sida's work is to improve

the standard of living of poor people and, in the long term, to eradicate poverty. [www.sida.se/Sida/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=107](http://www.sida.se/Sida/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=107)

### **United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)**

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992 [www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.htm](http://www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.htm)

### **United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)**

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social and environmental spheres and national action. The Department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates and analyses a wide range of economic, social and environmental data and information on which Member States of the United Nations draw to review common problems and to take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on joint courses of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capacities. [www.un.org/esa/index.html](http://www.un.org/esa/index.html)

### **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)**

The regional arm of the United Nations Secretariat for the Asian and Pacific region is the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). The functions of UNESCAP have been defined by the Secretary-General as follows:

1. Promoting economic and social development through regional and sub regional cooperation and integration;
2. Serving as the main economic and social development forum within the United Nations system for the UNESCAP region;
3. Formulating and promoting development assistance activities and projects commensurate with the needs and priorities of the region while acting as an executing agency for relevant operational projects;
4. Providing substantive and secretariat services and documentation for the Commission and its subsidiary bodies;
5. Carrying out studies, research and other activities within the terms of reference of the Commission;
6. Providing advisory services to governments at their request;
7. Developing and executing programmes of technical cooperation;
8. Coordinating UNESCAP activities with those of the major departments/offices of the United Nations at Headquarters and specialized agencies and inter-governmental organizations [www.unescap.org/about/index.asp](http://www.unescap.org/about/index.asp)

### **United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)**

To provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. [www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=43](http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=43)

### **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

UNFCCC represents the international community's collective response to climate change. It was established at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development which was held in Rio. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **World Bank**

The term World Bank is commonly used to refer to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Development Association. Three other agencies are also part of the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the Multilateral Investment Guarantee

Agency and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. Together these organizations are referred to as the World Bank Group. [www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/aboutdfid/glossary.asp)

### **World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)**

The WBCSD is a coalition of 175 international companies united by a shared commitment to sustainable development via the three pillars of economic growth, ecological balance and social progress. A New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development (NZBCSD) was established in 1999. [www.wbcscd.ch/](http://www.wbcscd.ch/)

### **World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED)**

The WCED was established in 1983 by the UN to propose long-term environmental strategies for achieving Sustainable Development by the year 2000 and beyond (resolution 38/161 of 19 December 1983). It was subsequently changed into the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).

### **World Conservation Strategy (WCS)**

The United Nations Environment Programme commissioned the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) to produce the strategy in 1980. The WCS was first and foremost an attempt to bring conservation and development together.

### **World Resources Institute (WRI)**

World Resources Institute is an independent non-profit organization with a staff of more than 100 scientists, economists, policy experts, business analysts, statistical analysts, mapmakers, and communicators working to protect the Earth and improve people's lives. [www.wri.org/](http://www.wri.org/)

### **World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)**

The IIED have a home page on the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg, South Africa in September 2002. [www.iied.org/wssd/](http://www.iied.org/wssd/)

### **World Trade Organisation (WTO)**

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. At its heart are the WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the bulk of the world's trading nations [approx 146 member countries] and ratified in their parliaments. The goal is to help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business. [www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/whatis\\_e/whatis\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/whatis_e.htm)

## What are National Strategies for Sustainable Development?

*"a strategic and participatory process of analysis, debate, capacity strengthening, planning and action towards sustainable development"* (OECD Development Assistance Committee 1999)

The call for National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs) came out of discussions at the first Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro, 1992). There is no internationally agreed definition, nor official guidance on how to prepare an NSSD. However NSSDs should define the **process** by which countries will commit to meeting Sustainable Development targets or "Agenda 21" at a national level.

**NSSDs should not require a completely new planning process but rather a reorientation of existing activities.** An individual country may have a range of initiatives/strategies (e.g. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, Comprehensive Development Frameworks, Vision 20:20) in response to international commitments or agreements. These strategies may contribute to or even individually reflect what is considered an "NSSD".

### Goal of NSSDs

The aim is for countries to develop on-going strategies toward reducing **economic inequality, social instability and environmental degradation.**

*"to ensure socially responsible economic development while protecting the resource base and the environment for the benefit of future generations."* (OECD DAC 1999)

### Agreed Time frame

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 2002 | NSSDs introduced in all countries and reviewed at UN CSD 10 (agreed at UNGASS "Rio +5" 1997) |
| 2005 | NSSDs to be in a process of implementation (OECD DAC 1996)                                   |
| 2015 | Strategies to have reversed loss of environmental resources (OECD DAC 1996)                  |

### Objectives

Taking the OECD DAC definition of NSSD as a basis, the following list might be seen as key (but not the only) elements of an NSSD:

1. Analysis
2. Debate
3. Capacity strengthening
4. Planning
5. Action

#### 1. Analysis

Review of national economic, social and environment trends to give baseline picture of current national situation. Assessment of existing and relevant strategies e.g. Local Agenda 21. Regional and international links to identify common challenges between neighbouring countries and more widely.

#### 2. Debate

Engagement of people from many disciplines e.g. government and society, NGOs, academia, local authorities, women's and indigenous groups and the private sector. Development of ownership through effective communication and consultation over the choices and dilemmas facing a country and discussion over alternative actions to address them.

#### 3. Capacity building

Mobilisation of society as a whole requires an expansion of knowledge and skills amongst all relevant actors to enable them to get involved e.g. formal/informal education, public awareness campaigns and training.

#### 4. Planning

Outline of participative processes. Framing of approaches for policy coordination and coherence, institutional

reform. Definition of key issues, goals and processes in order to frame and outline how the strategy will be implemented.

#### 5. Action

Implementation phase of NSSD at national and local levels. Coordination and coherence between sectoral operations and administration of incentives. Regulation, negotiation, conflict management and crisis prevention, as well as review and amendment of NSSD. International partnerships for knowledge, information sharing, as well as sharing and development of best practice and indicators.

#### International Support for NSSDs

UNESCO and Earth Council have a proposed programme for "Education, Public Awareness and Training in National Strategies and Action Plans for Sustainable Development"

The OECD DAC Working Party on Development Cooperation and the Environment (WP/ENV) have a task force, co-led by the European Commission and the United Kingdom (Department for International Development and International Institute Environment and Development). This will aim to produce guidance on best practice for developing countries, to assist them with the formulation and implementation of NSSD processes.

#### References/ Links

DFID White Paper, Eliminating World Poverty: A Challenge for the 21st Century

OECD/DAC (1999) Donor-Developing Country Dialogues on National Strategies for Sustainable Development. Executive Summary of the Project

OECD/DAC (1999) Assisting Developing Countries with the Formulation and Implementation of National Strategies for Sustainable Development.

## Appendix 2: OECD Policy Brief: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

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### What is a sustainable development strategy?

Integrating social, economic and environmental objectives, taking account of their implications for different socio-economic groups and for future generations, poses many technical and political difficulties. Such complex challenges cannot be tackled on an ad hoc or piecemeal basis. First, countries need to have a vision of progress and where they want to go in the future.

Such a vision must reflect the country's history and core values and be widely shared among the public as well as economic and other actors [players] across the political spectrum. They also need multi - stakeholders for a (including representatives of government, business, labour and civil society) to examine available policy options and translate the broad vision into specific short and long term objectives at the national and local levels.

Mechanisms for cross-sectoral policy integration are essential to examine the interaction between policy decisions taken at different levels and in different sectors and their implications for different socio-economic groups. These must provide for the active participation of civil society and private sector stakeholders in policy formulation and planning at various levels. Last but not least, a capacity to monitor current social, economic and environmental conditions and likely future trends is necessary to be able to assess options and constraints, define realistic objectives, monitor progress towards agreed goals and identify necessary changes of course. Taken together, these elements form the basis of a sustainable development strategy.

In other words, a strategy is not a "grand plan" or set of plans, but rather a set of instruments and ways of working which enable sustainable development challenges to be tackled in a coherent and dynamic way. Based on a comprehensive review of experience in developing and developed countries, the DAC has sought to clarify the principles underlying effective national and local strategies for sustainable development. These are summarised in Box 2 [below].

#### **Box 2: Key principles of sustainable development strategies**

*These principles represent a set of desirable features of sustainable development strategies.*

- **Country-led and nationally owned.** Countries must take the lead and initiative in developing their own strategies. Sustainable development strategies cannot emerge from outside pressures.
- **Rooted in a vision** of long-term development. The vision should reflect a consensus among social, economic and political stakeholders across the political spectrum. High-level government commitment to the vision is also essential.
- **Defined through a participatory process,** involving civil society, the private sector and political stakeholders to open up debate, expose issues to be addressed, and build consensus and political support on action.
- **Based on a solid analytical basis,** taking account also of relevant regional issues, including a comprehensive review of the present situation and forecasts of trends and risks, including those beyond the country's control. Such analysis depends on credible and reliable information on changing environmental, social and economic conditions, pressures and responses, and their implications for strategy objectives and indicators.
- **Focused on ensuring sustained beneficial impacts on disadvantaged and marginalised groups,** notably the poor.

• **Comprehensive and integrated.** Strategies should seek to integrate economic, social and environmental objectives through mutually supportive policies. But where integration cannot be achieved, and hard choices have to be made, they should be negotiated in a transparent and participative manner. Ensuring transparency and accountability is therefore essential.

*In developing the strategy key it is essential to:*

• **Build on existing strategies** and processes, rather than adding additional ones, and focus on improving the convergence, complementarity and coherence between different planning frameworks and policies. This requires mechanisms to co-ordinate different processes, and to identify and resolve potential conflicts, as well as good communication and information dissemination with a premium on transparency and accountability.

• **Set realistic and monitorable targets linked to clear budgetary priorities.** Targets need to be challenging – but realistic in relation to financial and other constraints. The strategy needs to be fully integrated into the budget process to ensure that financial resources are available to translate it into action. Conversely, the formulation of budgets must take account of the priorities highlighted in the strategy.

• **Identify priority capacity development needs.** This includes taking stock of the institutional, human, scientific and financial capacity of state, market and civil society stakeholders and finding ways to fill gaps.

• **'Build in' continuous monitoring and improvement from the outset.** This requires developing mechanisms and indicators to track progress, capture lessons from experience, and identify necessary changes of course. Local capacities for analysis and existing information should be fully utilised.

• **Define the roles, responsibilities and relationships** of key participants in strategy processes early on. Governmental, civil society, and private sector stakeholders should agree on the 'rules of the game' and be bound to clearly defined standards of behaviour.

• **Link national and local levels.** Policy-making and planning should involve two-way iterative processes within and between national and decentralised levels of governments. The main strategic principles and directions should be set at the central level but detailed planning, implementation and monitoring would be undertaken at a decentralised level, with appropriate transfer of resources and authority.

### Appendix 3: Table of Recent and Significant NSDS

Please also note the large number of Europe Union<sup>82</sup> Member States and Acceding Countries that have produced a wide range of NSDS – Refer Table 1 of the main Discussion Paper.

Country	Published NSDS	Other Relevant Recent Publications
European Union	<p><i>A sustainable Europe for a better world: A European strategy for Sustainable Development - Gothenburg</i> (2001)  <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/strategy_en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/strategy_en.htm</a></p> <p><i>Towards a global partnership for Sustainable Development</i> [A second paper covering external policies was adopted by the Commission in February 2002, adding a global dimension to the EU strategy]  <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/strategy_en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/strategy_en.htm</a></p> <p>[The Commission will present a proposal for a new, more comprehensive and ambitious Sustainable Development Strategy later in 2005.]  <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/review_en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/review_en.htm</a></p>	<p><i>A European Union Strategy For Sustainable Development</i>, European Commission (2002)  <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/docs/strategy_en.pdf">www.europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/docs/strategy_en.pdf</a></p> <p><i>The European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development: Process and Prospects</i> (January 2004)  <a href="http://www.nssd.net/pdf/eustrategy_14jan2004.pdf">www.nssd.net/pdf/eustrategy_14jan2004.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Other Key Documents</b>  <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/page/document_en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/page/document_en.htm</a></p>
France	<p><i>The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development</i> (2003) <a href="http://www.nssd.net/peer_review_b.html">www.nssd.net/peer_review_b.html</a></p>	<p><i>The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process - IIED</i>(24 March 2005)  <a href="http://www.nssd.net/pdf/peer_review/3.pdf">www.nssd.net/pdf/peer_review/3.pdf</a></p>
United Kingdom	<p><i>Sustainable Development: The UK Strategy</i> (1994)</p> <p><i>A Better Quality of Life</i> (1999)</p> <p><i>Securing the Future</i> (2005)  <a href="http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/uk-strategy/uk-strategy-2005.htm">www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/uk-strategy/uk-strategy-2005.htm</a></p>	<p><i>Achieving a Better Quality of Life</i> (2003)</p>
Australia	<p><i>National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development</i>  <a href="http://www.deh.gov.au/esd/national/nsepd/index.html">http://www.deh.gov.au/esd/national/nsepd/index.html</a> (1992)</p>	<p>Refer Status Report (2003)  <a href="http://www.un.org/esa/agenda21/natlinfo/countr/austral/">http://www.un.org/esa/agenda21/natlinfo/countr/austral/</a>            [The 1992 strategy was reviewed in 1996.]</p>
Canada	<p>SDS 1997–2000 <i>Our Commitment to Sustainable Development: The Strategy of the Canadian International Development Agency</i></p> <p>SDS 2001–2003 <i>CIDA's Sustainable Development Strategy 2001–2003: An Agenda for Change</i></p> <p>SDS 2004–2006 <i>Sustainable Development Strategy 2004–2006: Enabling Change</i>  <a href="http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/cida_ind.nsf/0/F395F90E46BEEF1285256E3500699F9F?OpenDocument#16">www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/cida_ind.nsf/0/F395F90E46BEEF1285256E3500699F9F?OpenDocument#16</a></p>	

<sup>82</sup> Report: National Sustainable Development Strategies in the European Union – A first analysis by the European Commission, April 2004. Table 1. [europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/links\\_en.htm#\\_6](http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/links_en.htm#_6)

## National Strategies for Sustainable Development & National Reports

### About NSSD's

The first Earth Summit in 1992 called for all governments to produce National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD) by 2002. Here we provide links to those strategies as they come online, and link to other useful resources and networks. We have also provided links to Country National Reports available on the UN CSD's web-site.

If your country's NSSD is online but not listed below, email us with details to:  
[tmiddleton@earthsummit2002.org](mailto:tmiddleton@earthsummit2002.org)

Afghanistan National Report	Albania <a href="#">National Report</a>	Algeria <a href="#">National Report</a>	Andorra National Report
Angola <a href="#">National report</a>	Antigua & Barbuda <a href="#">National Report</a>	Argentina <a href="#">National Report</a>	Armenia <a href="#">National Report</a>
Australia <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>	Austria <a href="#">National Report</a>	Azerbaijan National Report	Bahamas <a href="#">National Report</a>
Bahrain <a href="#">National Report</a>	Bangladesh <a href="#">National Report</a>	Barbados <a href="#">National Report</a>	Belarus <a href="#">National Report</a>
Belgium <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>	Belize National Report	Benin <a href="#">National Report</a>	Bhutan National Report
Bolivia <a href="#">National Report</a>	Bosnia & Herzegovina National Report	Botswana <a href="#">National Report</a>	Brazil <a href="#">National Report</a>
Brunei Darussalam <a href="#">National Report</a>	Bulgaria <a href="#">National Report</a>	Burkina Faso <a href="#">National Report</a>	Burundi National Report
Cambodia National Report	Cameroon <a href="#">National Report</a>	Canada <a href="#">NSSD National report</a>	Cape Verde National Report
Central African Republic National Report	Chad National Report	Chile <a href="#">National Report</a>	China <a href="#">National Report</a>
Republic Colombia <a href="#">National Report</a>	Comoros National Report	Congo National Report	Costa Rica <a href="#">National Report</a>
Cote d'Ivoire <a href="#">National Report</a>	Croatia <a href="#">National Report</a>	Cuba <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>	Cyprus National Report
Czech Republic <a href="#">National report</a>	Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea National Report	Democratic Republic of the Congo National Report	Denmark <a href="#">National Report</a>
Djibouti National Report	Dominica National Report	Dominican Republic National Report	Ecuador <a href="#">National Report</a>
Egypt <a href="#">National Report</a>	El Salvador <a href="#">National Report</a>	Equatorial Guinea National Report	Eritrea National Report
Estonia <a href="#">National Report</a>	Ethiopia National Report	Fiji <a href="#">National Report</a>	Finland <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>
France <a href="#">National Report</a>	Gabon National Report	Gambia <a href="#">National Report</a>	Georgia <a href="#">National Report</a>
Germany <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>	Ghana <a href="#">National Report</a>	Greece <a href="#">National Report</a>	Grenada National Report

Guatemala National Report	Guinea National Report	Guinea Bissau <a href="#">National Report</a>	Guyana <a href="#">National Report</a>
Haiti <a href="#">National Report</a>	Honduras <a href="#">National Report</a>	Hungary <a href="#">National Report</a>	Iceland <a href="#">National Report</a>
India <a href="#">National Report</a>	Indonesia <a href="#">National Report</a>	Iran (Islamic Republic) <a href="#">National Report</a>	Iraq <a href="#">National Report</a>
Ireland <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>	Israel <a href="#">National Report</a>	Italy <a href="#">National Report</a>	Jamaica <a href="#">National Report</a>
Japan <a href="#">National Report</a>	Jordan <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>	Kazakhstan <a href="#">National Report</a>	Kenya National Report
Kiribati National Report	Kuwait National Report	Kyrgyzstan <a href="#">National Report</a>	Lao People's Democratic Republic National Report
Latvia National Report	Lebanon <a href="#">National Report</a>	Lesotho National Report	Liberia National Report
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya National Report	Liechtenstein National Report	Lithuania <a href="#">National Report</a>	Luxembourg <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>
Madagascar <a href="#">National Report</a>	Malawi <a href="#">National Report</a>	Malaysia <a href="#">National Report</a>	Maldives National Report
Mali National Report	Malta <a href="#">National Report</a>	Marshall Islands National Report	Mauritania National report
Mexico <a href="#">National Report</a>	Micronesia National Report	Monaco <a href="#">National Report</a>	Mongolia <a href="#">National Report</a>
Morocco <a href="#">National Report</a>	Mozambique National report	Myanmar <a href="#">National Report</a>	Namibia National Report
Nauru National Report	Nepal <a href="#">National Report</a>	Netherlands <a href="#">National Report</a>	New Zealand <a href="#">National Report</a>
Nicaragua <a href="#">National Report</a>	Niger <a href="#">National Report</a>	Nigeria <a href="#">National Report</a>	Norway <a href="#">National Report</a>
Oman National Report	Pakistan <a href="#">National Report</a>	Palau National Report	Panama <a href="#">National Report</a>
Papua New Guinea National Report	Paraguay <a href="#">National Report</a>	Peru National Report	Philippines <a href="#">National Report</a>
Poland <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>	Portugal <a href="#">NSSD National Report</a>	Qatar <a href="#">National Report</a>	Republic of Korea <a href="#">National Report</a>
Republic of Moldova <a href="#">National Report</a>	Romania <a href="#">National Report</a>	Russian Federation <a href="#">National Report</a>	Rwanda National Report
Saint Kits & Nevis National Report	Saint Lucia National Report	Saint Vincent & the Grenadines National Report	Samoa National Report
San Marino National Report	Sao Tome & Principe <a href="#">National Report</a>	Saudi Arabia <a href="#">National Report</a>	Senegal <a href="#">National Report</a>
Seychelles National Report	Sierra Leone National Report	Singapore <a href="#">National Report</a>	Slovakia <a href="#">National Report</a>
Slovenia <a href="#">National Report</a>	Solomon Islands National Report	Somalia National Report	South Africa <a href="#">National Report</a>

<b>Spain</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Sri Lanka</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Sudan</b> National Report	<b>Suriname</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>
<b>Swaziland</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Sweden</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Syrian Arab Republic</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Tajikistan</b> National Report
<b>Thailand</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Togo</b> National Report	<b>Tonga</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>
<b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b> National Report	<b>Tunisia</b> <a href="#">National report</a>	<b>Turkey</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Turkmenistan</b> National Report
<b>Tuvalu</b> National Report	<b>Uganda</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Ukraine</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>United Arab Emirates</b> National Report
<b>United Kingdom of Great Britain &amp; Northern Ireland</b> <a href="#">NSSD</a> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>United Republic of Tanzania</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>United States of America</b> <a href="#">National report</a>	<b>Uruguay</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>
<b>Uzbekistan</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Vanuatu</b> National Report	<b>Venezuela</b> <a href="#">National report</a>	<b>Viet Nam</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>
<b>Yemen</b> National Report	<b>Yugoslavia</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>	<b>Zambia</b> National Report	<b>Zimbabwe</b> <a href="#">National Report</a>

## National Information - New Zealand



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- [Sanitation](#)

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National Assessment

Report

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[Pre-WSSD National  
Report](#)

2003 Status Report  
Link to Country's NSDS

2003 Status Report  
Contact person for indicators of sustainable development

[Partnerships being  
implemented](#)

[Link to Country's SD websites](#)



[CSD-13](#)

[CSD-12](#)

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9 November 2004

## Appendix 6: Measurement Methods

The following are two examples of how some alternative measurement methods are being applied in New Zealand. (A comprehensive review of such measures is not included as it is outside the purpose of this paper.)

### 1. Ecological Footprint<sup>83</sup>

New Zealand's ecological footprint is in the top 10 (including the United States of America and Australia) out of 150 nations surveyed in the *Living Planet Report 2000*.<sup>84</sup> Notably; Environment Waikato has calculated its ecological footprint and defined the term as follows.

The 'ecological footprint' measures how much productive land it takes to support the lifestyle of an individual, a city, region or country in today's economy. This is calculated as the land use types (built up areas, crop and pastoral land, managed forest land and energy land) required for production and consumption of goods and services (food, housing, transport, consumer goods and services). Ecological footprints are usually expressed in hectares, or hectares per capita (per person), for a given year. The larger the ecological footprint, the more resources are needed to sustain an individual's or population's current lifestyle.<sup>85</sup>

### 2. Natural Resource Accounts

Statistics New Zealand recognises that standard measures of economic performance such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) do not fully account for unsustainable use of natural resources and have therefore been working on the production of Natural Resource Accounts.

In order to complement measures such as GDP, Statistics New Zealand is providing a more complete picture of a country's economic and environmental performance by publishing Natural Resource Accounts.<sup>86</sup>

Standard measures of economic performance such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP) do not fully account for unsustainable use of natural resources. Natural resource accounts complement measures, such as GDP, to provide a more complete picture of a country's economic and environmental performance.<sup>87</sup>

Statistics New Zealand, in association with the Ministry for the Environment, has prepared physical and monetary stock and flow estimates for four of New Zealand's significant natural resources – energy, fish, forestry, mineral and water resources. Technically, the physical estimates are referred to as natural resource accounts, while the monetary estimates are referred to as environmental accounts. In New Zealand, the initial impetus to begin compiling natural resource and environmental accounts came about as a result of decisions stemming from the Budget 2000. The Government decided that more information was required on complex relationships between the economy, the environment and society.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> [www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/community/sustainability/ecofoot/report.htm](http://www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/community/sustainability/ecofoot/report.htm)

<sup>84</sup> [www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/community/sustainability/ecofoot/keypoints.htm#Footnote4#Footnote4](http://www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/community/sustainability/ecofoot/keypoints.htm#Footnote4#Footnote4)

<sup>85</sup> Environment Waikato,

[www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/community/sustainability/ecofoot/keypoints.htm#Footnote4#Footnote4](http://www.ew.govt.nz/enviroinfo/indicators/community/sustainability/ecofoot/keypoints.htm#Footnote4#Footnote4)

<sup>86</sup> [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

<sup>87</sup> [http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/prod\\_serv.nsf](http://www.stats.govt.nz/domino/external/web/prod_serv.nsf)

<sup>88</sup> [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)

## Appendix 7: List of Key Documents

### **International Published Material**

(By alphabetical order)

Please note the list below is not comprehensive. For information on recent and significant NSDS refer to Appendix 3. For current information on publications refer to the National Strategies for Sustainable Development ([www.nssd.net](http://www.nssd.net)) and/or the United Nations of Economic and Social Affairs ([www.un.org/esa/](http://www.un.org/esa/)).

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Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development and Ministry of Foreign Affairs; France [in association with the governments of Belgium, Ghana, Mauritius and the United Kingdom], *The French National Strategy for Sustainable Development: Report on a Peer Review and Shared Learning Process* [www.nssd.net/pdf/peer\\_review/3.pdf](http://www.nssd.net/pdf/peer_review/3.pdf) (March 2005)

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United Nations, *Monterrey Consensus*, International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico [www.undp.org/ffd/](http://www.undp.org/ffd/) (March 2002)

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World Resources Institute (WRI), *World Resources 1986, An Assessment of the Resource Base that Supports the Global Economy* (1986)

World Trade Organization, Ministerial Declaration [known as the *Doha Declaration*], T/MIN(01)/DEC/1 (20 November 2001)

### **Published Guidance on NSDS and/or Assessments of NSDS – 2001 to Today**

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*Strategies for National Sustainable Development: A Handbook for their Planning and Implementation*, Carew-Reid J, Prescott-Allen R, Bass S and Dalal-Clayton DB, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), London, and World Conservation Union (IUCN), Gland, in association with Earthscan Publication, London (1994)

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- Training Manual on National Sustainable Strategy* NORAD and United Nations Environment Programme Draft Version Published by the United Nations Environment Programme (2004)

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## **New Zealand Government Papers that outline the ‘Government’s approach’ to sustainable development**

(By date order)

CAB (00) Min 17/1 D (1) – adopted the Brundtland Report definition of sustainable development (2000)

Paper to the Cabinet Policy Committee: Proposal – New Zealand Sustainable Development Strategy (Early to Mid 2001)

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New Zealand Government, *The Government's Approach to Sustainable Development* [www.beehive.govt.nz](http://www.beehive.govt.nz) (August 2002)

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(By date order)

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New Zealand Government, *Quality of Life Report* (October 2003)

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Ministry of Economic Development and the Treasury, *Growth through Innovation: Economic Development Indicators 2005* (February 2005)

## **New Zealand Government ‘Strategies, Plans, Initiatives’**

(By date order)

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