

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (CSD)

Handbook



TAEMUN

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Topic B. Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: Trends, Progress and Challenges in Sustainable Consumption, Production, Mining, Transport, Chemicals and Waste Management.

Sustainable Development cannot be referred to as a tangible goal, but it should be considered as the balance of the elements modified by the development of human beings that should lead, each one of us, to a better life.¹

In 2000, the Energy and Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean project was launched, with the purpose of creating conditions to incorporate sustainable development as a priority in the formulation and application of the energy politics (*) within the region countries.

Nowadays, the environment has become a global matter, including the pressure and the measures it carries within itself, resulting in greater collaboration among the countries in the matters such as global warming and the Ozone layer getting thinner.

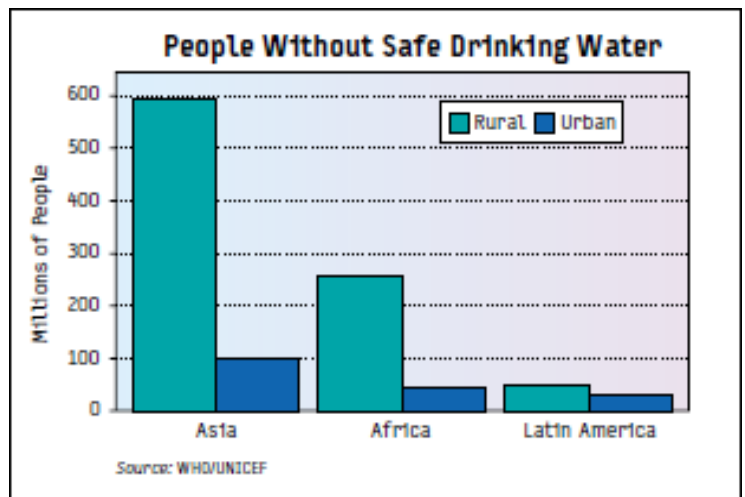
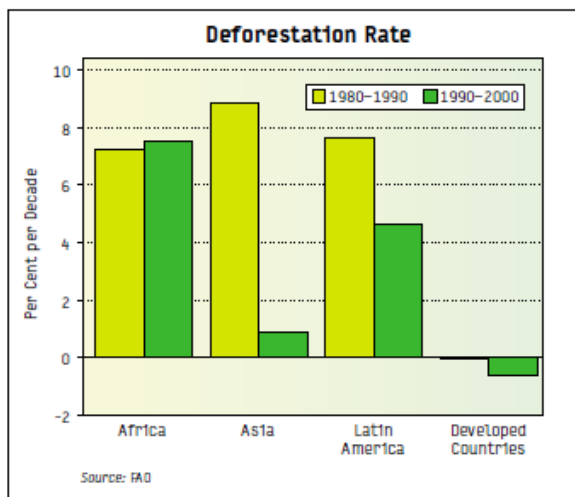
In 2002, during the World Summit on Sustainable Development, celebrated in Johannesburg, two years after the Millennium Summit and thirteen years after the Earth's Summit, objectives such as protection of natural resources were set.

Nonetheless, by 2005, Latin America and the Caribbean still lacked innovative solutions that allowed a socioeconomic balance and a productive development, as well as guarantee the sustainability of the environment.

¹ Pistonesi, H., Chávez, C., & Rodríguez, V. (2000, July). In *Energía y Desarrollo Sustentable en América Latina y el Caribe: Guía para las Formulaciones de Políticas Energéticas*. (chap. Preface). Retrieved Dec. 16, 2010, from <http://www.gtz.de/de/dokumente/es-olade-2.pdf>



In addition, the deforestation rate in Latin America was, globally, the second largest with a 5% per capita, following Africa with a 7% rate. And, still, over one billion people don't have drinking water and 2.5 billion people lack adequate sanitation facilities, summed up with Asia and Africa.



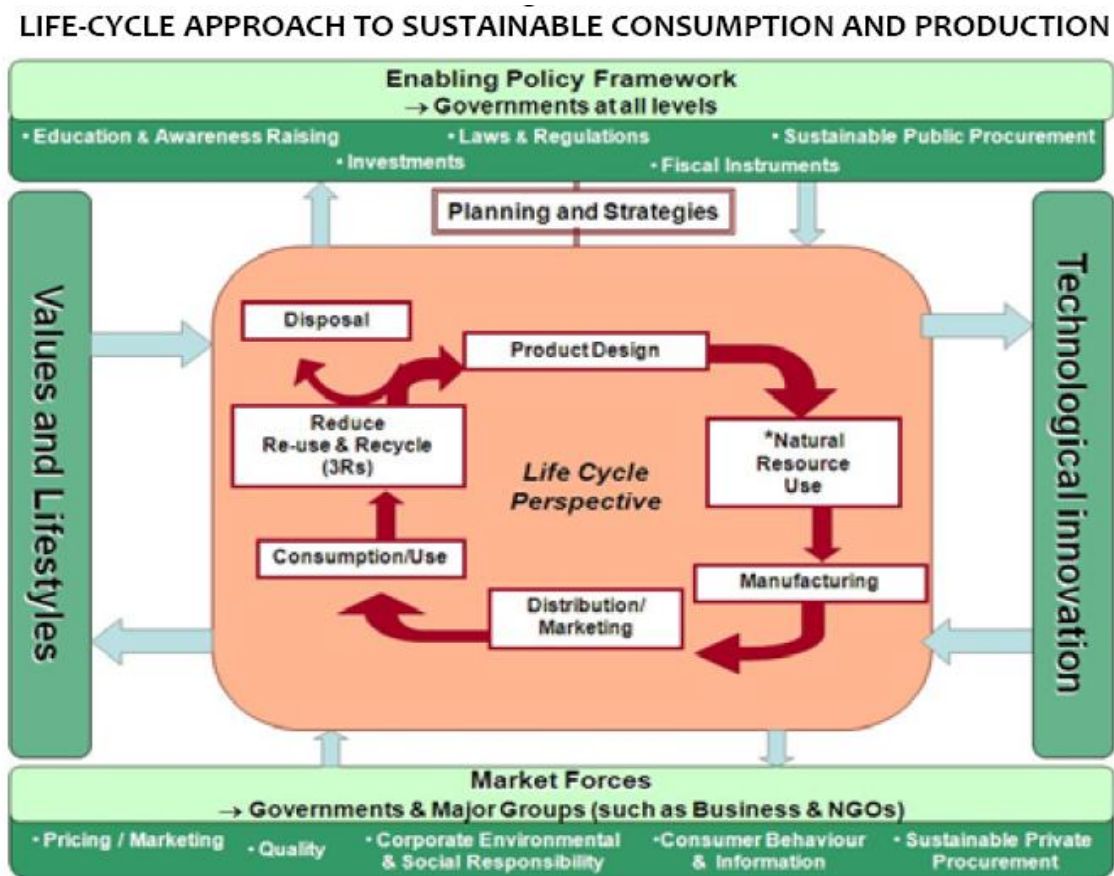
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What this committee has already been started is this new proposal: A life-cycle approach to the economic system as a tool for dealing with the broad concept of sustainable consumption and production in a structured and integral manner. That approach can provide a means for structuring the general approach of the 10YFP. It also allows using a separate approach to production vis-à-vis consumption, or an integrated approach to both, while taking into consideration the economic, social and environmental impact of goods and services throughout their entire life cycle.

The life-cycle approach is based on a consideration of the total resources used to produce a good or to provide a service, including emissions and any resulting waste.



Resource use and emissions at each stage of the entire cycle depend in large part on the general policy framework, which affects the entire system, and on specific regulations affecting each stage. Resource use and emissions also depend on values and social preferences, as well as on technological innovation, which, in turn, are influenced by the legislative and regulatory framework.



Source: “Green Economy and Sustainable Consumption and Production”, presentation by Arab Hoballah (UNEP) at the Third Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (La Antigua, Guatemala, 26-27 November 2009).



A study carried out by UNEP and the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) (Valdivia and Sonnemann, 2009) describes progress achieved in several countries of the region in applying the life-cycle approach to their economies. Progress as of October 2008 is summarized in the next table.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE LIFE-CYCLE APPROACH

Country	Regulations in place that use the life-cycle approach	Sectoral assessments in place on life cycles	Number of experts identified in each country
Argentina	No	No	12
Brazil	Yes	Yes, there are assessments on eight refinery products	42 (probably more)
Chile	No	No	8
Colombia	Yes	No	12
Costa Rica	In process	Yes, assessments on energy	8
Cuba	No	Yes, assessments on the sugar industry	10
Ecuador	No	No	1
Mexico	Yes	Yes, for fuels, chemicals, construction materials, electricity, waste treatment, paper and agribusiness	20
Peru	No	No	8
Uruguay	Yes ^a	No	3

Source: Valdivia, S. and G. Sonnemann (2009), "Evolution of Life Cycle Thinking in Latin America—An analysis", conducted in October 2008 by the UNEP/SETAC Life Cycle Initiative.

^a Uruguay has regulations governing life cycle. Law 17.283, article 20, refers to the life cycle of chemicals, and there are other regulations that limit, restrict or prohibit use based on a life-cycle approach.



THE PATH TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In response to the international commitment to sustainable consumption and production, Latin America and the Caribbean has taken a series of steps aimed at strengthening a regional strategy of sustainability based on a change in production and consumption patterns. The Council of Government Experts on Sustainable Consumption and Production was established in 2003 under the Forum of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, in order to follow up on the issue in national environmental bodies, advise the Forum and expand participation to include the private sector, academia, NGOs and other civil society organizations. Based on a series of recommendations made by the Council, the environment ministers decided in 2008 to include the issue of sustainable consumption and production as a priority of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC) and its Regional Action Plan.

As a result of several meetings held by the Council, and based on decisions of the Forum of Ministers of Environment, five priority programmes for sustainable consumption and production common to the countries of the region were defined. The programmes are described in the next table.



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LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: PRIORITY SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION| AND PRODUCTION PROGRAMMES

Programme	Policies and measures
1. Policies and national strategies for sustainable consumption and production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration and coordination of the issue of sustainable consumption and production in policies, programmes and development strategies; • Strengthening the provision of information, education and training to the population in issues concerning sustainable consumption and production (review the language and means for transmitting concepts; expanding participation of other organizations and civil society actors; use of the Regional Information Network for sustainable consumption and production as an instrument for strengthening South-South cooperation); • Quantifying of the costs and benefits associated with implementation of sustainable consumption and production in national and subregional initiatives; • Promotion of corporate social responsibility and the incorporation of concepts of a producer's extended responsibility and analysis of the life cycle in businesses producing basic consumer goods, which create greater environmental and social impact.
2. Improvement of the productive sector, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritization of sectors at the subregional level linked to environmental or ecosystem services (each region will define priority sectors to be included in the 10YFP); • Creation or strengthening of mechanisms and economic tools that promote the sustainability of the productive sectors and improve their productivity and competitiveness; • Definition of specific indicators of sustainable consumption and production within the framework of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC).
3. Sustainable public procurement (SPP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of high-level political leadership for the promotion of sustainable public procurement involving national public procurement agencies; • Adoption of a strategy for the gradual incorporation of environmental and social criteria into the procurement of priority goods and services; • Efforts to ensure the inclusion and sustainability of SMEs in sustainable public procurement programmes through the creation of policy measures and specific instruments; • Establishment of a multisectoral mechanism that promotes participation, evaluation and monitoring of sustainable public procurement (involving the ministries of economy and finance).
4. Sustainable lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation and application of policies that promote a sustainable supply of goods and services at prices accessible for all; • Active promotion of the inclusion of education about sustainable consumption into the education curricula; • Conducting of studies and use of systematic measuring mechanisms to identify and understand the motivations for consumption in the region.
5. Information network on SCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of the regional information network on sustainable consumption and production (REDPYCS) as a reference tool for measuring the quality and value of the information disseminated, for linking various actors, and for building the capacity needed to contribute to changes in consumption and production patterns for the achievement of sustainability.



GUIDE QUESTIONS:

Which treaties or international agreements has your nation already ratified?

Which are the main problems your nation faces in the ambit of lack of natural resources?

Which are the most important goals your nation needs to achieve in order to gain a better lifestyle for the citizens?

Does your nation has de necessary resources to develop a sustainable development campaign?

Which are your nation's most important challenges in the ambit of environment?

Which measures has you nation taken in order to solve the pollution caused by the different ways of transport?

Which are the most dangerous ways of waste management?

Which has been the most important and transcendent progress your nation has achieved in the matter of sustainable development??

How is the treatment of chemicals in your country so they don't become dangerous and to avoid their pollution?

References:

ECLAC. (2010). *Report to the eighteenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development of the United Nations, Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: trends, progress, and challenges in sustainable consumption and production, mining, transport, chemicals and waste management*. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_pdfs/csd_8/rims/LAC_background_eng.pdf (February 4, 2011).

