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# Report of the Scientific and Technological Community to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)



WFEO/FMOI



## ICSU Series on Science for Sustainable Development

*The ICSU Series on Science for Sustainable Development is produced by the International Council for Science in connection with preparations for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The aim of WSSD is to bring together governments, United Nations agencies and other key stakeholders, including representatives of civil society and the Scientific and Technological Community, to build upon the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and to enhance efforts toward the future of sustainable development. The Series includes a set of inter-disciplinary reports focusing on major issues that are relevant to science for sustainable development. The Series is meant to serve as a link between the scientific community and decision-makers, but the reports should also be useful to all others interested in the contribution of science to sustainable development. The Series highlights the fundamental role science has played and will play in finding solutions to the challenges of sustainable development. It examines experiences since UNCED and looks towards the future. It provides up-to-date knowledge, examines lessons learned, successes achieved, and difficulties encountered; while also outlining future research agendas and actions to enhance problem solving and good practices in sustainable development. The Series was made possible due to a generous grant provided by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.*

## ICSU

*The International Council for Science (ICSU) is a non-governmental organisation representing the international science community. The membership includes both national science academies (98 members) and international scientific unions (26 members). The combined expertise from these two groups of scientific organisations provides a wide spectrum of scientific expertise enabling ICSU to address major international, interdisciplinary issues, beyond the scope of the individual organisations. ICSU builds upon this scientific expertise in a number of ways. It initiates, designs and co-ordinates major international, interdisciplinary research programmes, particularly in the areas of global environmental change. It also establishes policy and advisory committees to address important matters of common concern to scientists, such as education and capacity building in science, access to data, or science in developing countries. ICSU acts as a focus for the exchange of ideas, communication of scientific information and development of scientific standards and networks. Because ICSU is in contact with hundreds of thousands of scientists worldwide, it is often called upon to represent the world scientific community.*

# Report of the Scientific and Technological Community to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)

Dialogue Paper to the Second  
Preparatory Committee for the WSSD  
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Prepared by the International Council for Science (ICSU)  
and the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO)  
as organizing partners of the Scientific and Technological  
Community in collaboration with the International Academy  
Panel (IAP), the International Social Science Council (ISSC),  
and the Third World Academy of Science (TWAS).



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*twas*  
the third world academy of science



The reports in this series have been put together by groups of scientists on behalf of the various sponsoring bodies. While every effort has been made to make them as authoritative as possible, the reports do not formally represent the views of either the sponsoring organisations nor, where applicable, the individual members affiliated to those organisations.

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## Preface

ICSU, along with the World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO), was invited by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development to represent the Scientific and Technological Community during the preparatory process of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa 26 August – 4 September 2002.

The Scientific and Technological Community's first major responsibility was to write the following paper for the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Segment of the Second Preparatory Committee. This paper was to examine the role of science and technology in sustainable development since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in 1992 and identify priorities for implementation by the Scientific and Technological Community.

With the aim of involving a wide representation of the Scientific and Technological Community, ICSU created a "Consultative Group for the Scientific and Technological

Community." This Consultative Group consists of the Inter-Academy Panel (IAP), the International Social Science Council (ISSC), the Third World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), and WFEO. ICSU also invited all ICSU members to nominate focal points to assist in the WSSD process.

Dr. Larry Kohler, ICSU's previous Executive Director, played a leading role in the complex task of preparing this report. In addition, Katie Hamilton and Michael Sanio were instrumental in preparing the numerous drafts of the report. ICSU wishes to express its sincere thanks to all those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

ICSU is committed to continuing its leadership in promoting the important future contributions of science for sustainable development.

Professor THOMAS ROSSWALL

Executive Director  
ICSU

## Executive Summary

One of the major lessons learned since the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) is that the transition towards sustainable development is inconceivable without science, engineering and technology. This is why promoting the goals of sustainability, addressing immediate human and social needs while preserving the earth's fragile life support systems, has emerged as an increasing priority for the international Scientific and Technological (S&T) Community.<sup>1</sup>

Progress has been made towards meeting the challenges posed by sustainability but more needs to be done. Factors related to sustainability, such as global warming, biodiversity loss, population growth, consumption patterns and megacity expansion, pose problems, which have outstripped the capacities of the scientific and technological community and society to forge effective and comprehensive responses. At the same time, the rapid pace of economic globalization along with the explosion in information technologies, have radically altered the research environment in which scientists and engineers operate. The scientific and technological community and society is committed to devising a new set of strategies to meet the challenges that lie ahead. Building on Chapter 31 of Agenda 21<sup>2</sup>, the S&T Community proposes that these strategies be based on the following principles:

***A New Contract – Addressing social equity, poverty reduction and other societal needs must be integral to scientific, engineering and technological endeavors.***

The S&T Community has enormous potential to contribute to sustainable development. In order to effectively utilize this potential, the S&T Community must increasingly direct its research agendas towards issues that address basic human and societal needs. As stated at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)/ICSU World Conference on Science in 1999, the scientific community must be constantly aware of and take responsibility for the potential impacts that research may have on society. In turn, society has a responsibility

to provide adequate funding, up-to-date research facilities, and appropriate career structures, as well as opportunities to inform and participate in the decision making process. Such an effort requires a new contract between science and society in which ethical dimensions play a central and guiding role.

***Reorient and Invest – Science and engineering must give higher priority to identifying solutions for pressing environmental and developmental challenges with enhanced support by society and government.***

Economists have consistently reported that investments in science and technology are among the highest yielding investments that a nation can make. Yet investments in S&T have in many ways been inadequate, especially in developing countries, where funding for research and development is often less than 0.5 percent of annual GDP. In order to address existing and future social and environmental challenges, nations must not only substantially increase their investments in science and technology but also come to view such efforts as fundamental aspects of their overall economic and social development strategies. Investment in S&T must focus

1. The International Council for Science (ICSU) and the World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO), as “co-organising partners” for the Scientific and Technological Community (Chapter 31 of Agenda 21) in the preparatory process for WSSD prepared this report in collaboration with the Third World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), the Inter-Academy Panel (IAP) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC). All five organisations consulted their membership to reflect a wide range of views and ideas from those practising the natural, social, and engineering sciences worldwide. The report does not represent, however, an official position or statement of these organisations. Moreover, preparation of the report has been coordinated with UNESCO, which acts as task manager for chapter 35 (science for sustainable development). All five non-governmental organisations will continue to cooperate to ensure the active participation of the Major Group “Scientific and Technological Community” in the WSSD process together with other scientific, engineering and technological organisations and individual scientists and engineers from all parts of the world.

2. Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992. Vol. 1, resolution 1, annex 2.

increasingly on activities that cut across disciplines, the diversity of geographical regions and cultures, and examine the intricate relationship between nature and society.

***Build and Maintain – Scientific and technological capacity, as an elaboration of knowledge and new tools, must be built up and maintained in all countries, but especially in countries that currently lack a minimum, critical mass of S&T capacity.***

It is not possible for science and technology to effectively contribute to sustainable development if countries do not have basic scientific capacity. The sustained and enduring investments that Northern countries have made in building their educational and science and technological capacity largely explain their economic success. Experiences in China, Brazil, India, Singapore and the Republic of Korea over the past decades indicate that a nation's willingness to systematically invest in science and technology can yield substantial dividends. However national investment needs to be accompanied by responsible and mutually beneficial international partnerships. Experience shows that international scientific cooperation through efforts such as the creation of institutional networks, scientific exchanges and mobility, and the establishment of scientific centers of excellence among nations with weak scientific infrastructures, are excellent strategies for building scientific capacities. At the same time coordinated measures must be taken to counter the negative effects of 'brain drain' upon countries that are working to develop their own scientists and scientific capabilities. Science for sustainable development must be global in its reach, yet local and regional in its implementation. The responsibility for building and maintaining this capacity lies squarely on the shoulders of national governments but requires significantly enhanced collaboration and partnerships with the global development assistance community and the S&T Community.

***Innovate and Sustain – Development and sharing of new and existing technologies must be encouraged and directed towards sustainable production and consumption patterns with due emphasis on local, culturally appropriate and low-cost technologies.***

Science for sustainable development will fall short of its ultimate societal goals unless it is directly linked to innovation to achieve more sustainable production and consumption

patterns. This requires greater investments in cutting edge technologies that will reduce energy and natural resource requirements in both production and consumption processes. It will also require greater recognition of the value of indigenous knowledge, as well as the need to adapt existing technologies to meet local requirements. The social and behavioral sciences provide new insights and guidance to help facilitate the transition to more sustainable consumption patterns, especially in developed countries. Success will depend largely on the ability to forge new trusting relationships between the public and private sectors when devising policies and programs that link science and technology.

***Engage and Involve – Responsible engagement of the scientific and technological community in the decision-making process is indispensable for effective governance aimed at sustainable development.***

The S&T Community has a responsibility to inform and participate in decision-making processes in order to increase the impact of science in policy discussions and decisions. In an international arena increasingly defined by knowledge, in a global economy depending more and more on S&T for its success, and in a world challenged by environmental and social problems that spill across political and cultural boundaries, scientists and engineers have an obligation to become more involved in sustainable development policy issues and processes. The products of scientific endeavors, such as integrated assessments, should be designed and disseminated in such a way as to contribute directly to decision-making processes. At the same time, it must be openly recognized and accepted that the accumulation of scientific knowledge is an iterative process; S&T cannot have all the answers and uncertainty and risk are often inherent in the use of scientific knowledge. Moreover, the S&T Community has a major role to play especially through its representative academies and professional organizations in promoting the public understanding of science, science education and literacy at all levels.

## Introduction

This paper reviews progress achieved and identifies priorities for implementation by the Scientific and Technological (S&T) Community related to Agenda 21, Chapter 31: “Scientific and Technological Community”. The role of science and engineering is also addressed in other chapters of Agenda 21, in particular Chapter 34 (transfer of environmentally sound technology) and Chapter 35 (science). Moreover, implementation of the different sectoral and cross-sectoral chapters (e.g. freshwater and health) of Agenda 21 must be based on sound knowledge<sup>3</sup> and the introduction of environmentally sound technology. This report, however, focuses on the two priority issues in Chapter 31: improving communication and co-operation among the S&T Community, decision-makers and the public, as well as promoting codes of practice and guidelines.

These themes raise many challenges for the S&T Community. Our responses over the past decade have been proactive and significant in many areas, generating new initiatives, programs, and institutions related to sustainable development. However, as a community striving for increased integration, transparency and partnerships – we recognize we have just begun the journey – and our actions to date have been clearly inadequate and too fragmented to effectively meet the challenges. Science, engineering and technology<sup>4</sup> are instrumental to advancing human civilization and improving the quality of life. The improper and insufficient application of knowledge has also led to growing threats to the earth’s life support systems and has not enabled us to meet the basic needs of much of the world’s population.

Ten years after Rio, it is difficult to report on progress on Chapter 31 without serious reflection on the major events and challenges that have occurred during this period. Two major transformations are evident in our world. On the one hand, major global and regional changes in climate and the “health” of the biosphere have had serious implications for the sustainability of ecosystems and livelihoods, and on the other, the simultaneous market-driven processes of globalization of people, ideas and goods have opened up both new challenges and opportunities.

Promoting the goals of a transition to sustainability, that is, meeting human needs while preserving the life support systems of the earth, has become a major challenge for the S&T Community. A significant response to this challenge has emerged from various global and regional programmes of environmental research, assessments and capacity building mainly sponsored by the international organisations that make up the S&T Community, including the world’s scientific academies and professional bodies and independent networks of scholars, scientists and engineers. This has been supported by relevant UN system organisations and by an informal network of national research funding agencies, called the International Group of Funding Agencies for Global Change Research (IGFA).

Decision makers at all levels need timely, reliable access to the knowledge generated by science and engineering to introduce rational policies that reflect a better understanding of complex technical, economic, social, cultural and ethical issues concerning the society, the earth, and its environment. The important role played by scientists and engineers in informing and advising policy processes is expanding rapidly, and will continue to be an important part of global environmental governance but it is also increasingly extending its purview to the broader issue of governance of sustainable development. Indeed the UN Millennium Report<sup>5</sup> recommends as a priority for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century the need for more accurate scientific data.

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3. The World Conference of Science concluded that developing countries should not only be helped with the transfer of technology but also transfer of knowledge. (Conference on Science and Technology for Development, 1979).

4. Science, which includes the natural and social sciences, comprises a multi-disciplinary body of knowledge about nature and society gained through observation and experimentation. While its primary functions are descriptive and explanatory, science also affords guidance on normative goals such as improvements in the human condition, promotion of civil rights, and wiser ways of living. Engineering involves the practical applications of this knowledge and of empirical experiences to create structures, facilities, processes, and products. Those processes and products that have become established by acceptance of society and its marketplace are commonly classified as Technology.



The role of science and engineering in the current policy making process at national and global levels regarding the three pillars of sustainable development – social, economic and ecological – is insufficient. The environmental science supporting the ecological pillar is rapidly evolving and the most visible. Current research has rapidly advanced the understanding of development and poverty alleviation that is focused on the economic and social pillars. While progress has been steady in the economic area, the scientific underpinning of the social pillar is less developed and requires increasing attention, including follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development.

In the ten years since the Rio Earth Summit, many concepts, which seemed quite new or surprising at the time, have found general acceptance and there is growing awareness of sustainable development. In the Amsterdam Declaration<sup>6</sup>, four global environmental research programs provided a powerful review and synthesis of our knowledge in this field and urged governments, public and private institutions and the public to promote the development of “An ethical framework for global stewardship and strategies for Earth Systems management...” and “A new system of global environmental science...”

Sixty scientific Academies of the IAP in May 2000<sup>7</sup>, stressed that scientific, technological and health capabilities can produce substantial progress over the next two decades toward a sustainable human future and that this progress will demand a threefold effort by the S&T Community: to promote the use of existing knowledge more widely and effectively; to generate new knowledge and beneficial technologies; and to work with governments, international organizations and the private sector to promote a world-wide transition to sustainability.

The 1999 UNESCO/ICSU World Conference on Science<sup>8</sup>, bringing together scientists, engineers, and public sector decision-makers from 155 countries, signaled a new determination within the S&T Community to forge a partnership with society. Two documents<sup>9</sup> were adopted that set out detailed principles and guidelines of a shared and sustaining vision of the symbiotic relationship of science to society that very much reinforced and advanced the objectives of AGENDA 21 and especially Chapter 31. Participants in the WSSD process are encouraged to examine these documents as they provide a very valuable and detailed picture of the S&T Community's views and commitments on a wide range of issues critical to sustainable development.

In addition to such major statements and conferences, however, the S&T Community has carried out a multitude of research projects and programs, meetings, and operational activities throughout the world – and on a wide range of scientific and technological issues relevant to sustainable development. Rather than prepare a long report card cataloguing these many initiatives, the current report will focus on sharing several key themes that highlight the lessons learned and illustrate the contribution of science, engineering and technology to sustainable development since Rio and in the future. Our goal is to provide examples of how we have contributed towards sustainable development and how we must increase and redirect efforts in future.

The S&T Community's preparatory process for the WSSD, has itself been highly pertinent to the points raised in Chapter 31 concerning greater collaboration. Building on our first experience at the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue at CSD-9 on Energy and Transport, we have brought together five key international scientific and engineering institutions as well as contributions from many other scientific institutions and individuals, to prepare this report. We see this collaborative effort at communication and integration as a critical step towards meeting the commitments within this report, Chapter 31 and the decisions arising out of the Johannesburg Summit.

This Report is structured as follows: following this Introduction, Section I draws attention to the role of the S&T Community in the alleviation of poverty and inequity in the transition to sustainable development; Section II provides a series of examples of progress achieved and lessons learned since Rio related to a few priority themes; Section III reviews the critical cross-cutting factor of ethics, science, engineering and society; and Section V provides brief conclusions. An Executive Summary is also provided.

5. *We the Peoples – The Role of the United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, United Nations, 2000.

6. The Amsterdam Declaration on Global Change, Challenges of a Changing Earth: Global Change Open Science Conference, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 13 July 2001.

7. Transition to Sustainability in the 21st Century: The Contribution of Science and Technology, A Statement of the Worlds' Science Academies, May 2000.

8. Science for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A New Commitment Budapest, UNESCO and ICSU, 1999.

9. Declaration on Science and the Use of Science Knowledge and Science Agenda: Framework for Action.

## Poverty, Inequity and Sustainable Development

Poverty and inequity threaten the daily survival of millions of people, particularly women and children. Poverty and inequity are also key catalysts to conflict and wars that often lead to drastic setbacks in the economic and social progress already achieved. The S&T Community recognizes that there will be many excellent reports, descriptions and indicators of the tragic level and consequences of poverty and inequity in other reports available to the WSSD process.

Since Rio in 1992, and specifically over the past 3 to 4 years, poverty and inequity have risen higher on the agenda of the S&T Community. Our major concern is that to date science, engineering and technology have not played their full role in the world's attempts to respond to these fundamental challenges to sustainability. The S&T Community is convinced that there is already a very wide range of relevant, accessible and often inexpensive technologies and processes available to meet the basic needs of the poor and socially excluded. These include, among others: (a) progress on health and sanitation, particularly in the fields of infectious diseases, health of mother and child, improved hygiene, access to clean water and sanitation, and family planning practices; (b) research in the life sciences which are undergoing a major revolution through genetics and biotechnologies; (c) development of agriculture [drawing on specialized S&T resources like those of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)], based on studies of soils, land-use and land-cover change, improved irrigation practices and use of water, more sustainable use of agricultural chemicals, production and use of genetically modified plants, use of radiation in the conservation of foods, as well as the appropriate use of traditional knowledge; (d) research in the field of energy including energy efficiency improvements, the control of emissions of green house gasses, increased use of renewable energy sources such as solar, biomass, and wind as well as studies on clean-coal, use of natural gas, fuel-cells, and research on safety and waste management for nuclear energy; and (e) the contribution of science to peace (as aimed

at by Amaldi and Pugwash Conferences) and to the reduction of conflicts and the prevention of terrorism, which is essential for sustainable development. The basic needs of the poor and excluded must increasingly be taken into account in the setting of S&T priorities.

One example of what the S&T Community may do to help alleviate poverty is in the area of disaster reduction and relief. Wherever disasters strike invariably the poor suffer most in lives lost and costs to property. Events, such as El Nino, can be predicted up to 6 months before its occurrence. However, many national governments are ill prepared to receive and use the information. Unused predictions do not generate public confidence and the packaging and dissemination of data for various stakeholders is a major obstacle to saving lives. There are many opportunities for the S&T Community to provide support for mitigation, advance preparation and relief activities related to such disasters.

Better technological choices, improved through scientific research and engineering knowledge, exist for many other areas related to poverty alleviation. The S&T Community is committed to working with all stakeholders and especially the major research funding agencies, the development assistance community and private sector to establish a better balance in research priorities with a view to alleviating poverty and inequity.

## Themes to Illustrate S&T Progress

### Getting to Decision making – Integrated Assessments

#### PROGRESS ACHIEVED

Opening-up the decision-making process and increasing cooperation at all levels between the public, scientific and technological community and decision-makers is a key program area in Chapter 31 of Agenda 21. A crucial role in global governance of sustainable development that has found widespread acceptance since Rio is the institution of authoritative statements based on scientific assessments.

A good example is the substantial impact of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on policy. Assessments and outlooks were initially developed to inform the scientific community and over time they have evolved to provide advice to policy makers. Assessments have grown in importance and deal with many issues including climate, ozone, biodiversity, ecosystems, energy, water, large dams, etc. The climate story goes back to the International Geophysical Year in 1957 where ICSU and others organized a systematic look at our planet and made the first CO<sub>2</sub> measurements in Hawaii. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) created IPCC in 1988 to provide input to the decision-making process by conducting rigorous assessments of the latest scientific literature. The IPCC completed its First Assessment Report in 1990, which summarized the state of knowledge of climate change and helped to launch the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.<sup>10</sup> The Second Assessment Report in 1995 led to the negotiation of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Third Assessment Report in 2001, which is likely to play a key role as governments assess the adequacy of measures to protect the climate system, increases its focus on the regional implications of climate change and examines climate change in the context of development, equity and sustainability.

Another striking example of the value of integrated knowledge relates to the problem of ozone depletion. It shows how basic research has had huge impact in this domain following the discovery by S. Rowland and M. Molina of chemical reactions destroying ozone. This scientific discovery eventually led to the establishment of the International Stratospheric Ozone Assessment and the development and implementation of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.<sup>11</sup>

#### LESSONS LEARNED

One of the lessons learned is that bringing together policy makers and the S&TC to produce and approve the reports ensures that all key stakeholders take ownership of the findings. Publication of the reports and dissemination by the web ensures the results are accessible to policy makers, members of the public and the media. The experience has identified six key conditions vital to getting information to decision makers:

- *Saliency*: an important problem/solution seen as urgent by society.
- *Clarity*: a core message that is succinct, with quantitative indicators.
- *Credibility*: transparent, representing the view of prominent scientists.
- *Constructive*: action oriented, offering policy option without being prescriptive.
- *Legitimacy*: supported by government, private sector, and civil society.
- *Vision*: basic and applied knowledge that provides early warning.

<sup>10</sup>. United Nations, Treaty Series, Vol. 1771, No. 30822.

<sup>11</sup>. United Nations, Treaty Series, Vol. 1522, No. 26369.

Another important lesson is that high-quality, independent research results are essential for a reliable integrated assessment. For example, the IPCC was able to take advantage of the rapid expansion in global environmental change research such as the Tropical Oceans and the Global Atmosphere (TOGA) Project from 1985-1995 that significantly enhanced our understanding of the role of oceans in climate processes. In 1986, ICSU established the International Geosphere-Biosphere Program (IGBP) connecting global change and climate science of World Climate Research Program. Collaboration is now extended to the International Human Dimensions Program (IHDP) and DIVERSITAS - a global biodiversity research program. The results of these programs since 1992 have been synthesized and reviewed at an Open Science Conference in Amsterdam<sup>12</sup> that brought together a much wider scientific community - including policy-makers and the private sector. ICSU's Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE) mandate includes the carrying out of assessments.

The Global Biodiversity Assessment (GBA) prepared in 1995 provided a detailed review of all aspects of biodiversity but it had not established an appropriate authorizing environment so its results has not been used by policy-makers. Learning from these past experiences, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment<sup>13</sup> has recently become operational and has negotiated an effective authorizing environment prior to its launch.

Other lessons learned point to the need for increased collaboration by a wide variety of stakeholders in a broad, open, and interdisciplinary manner. For assessments to be useful, they must directly involve policy makers, scientists (in the pure and applied sciences), social scientists, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. Increased efforts to mobilize the participation of more disciplines, especially social scientists, and scientists from a wide geographical and linguistic backgrounds is also required.

Systematic observations and reliable indicators are essential to the success of integrated assessments. Continuing investment is necessary in the existing observation infrastructure, e.g. IGOS, GOOS, GCOS and GTOS<sup>14</sup>, to increase reliability, improve models, and make global data available for decision making locally. Consideration also should be given

to developing additional integrated assessments including coastal zone and mountain regions, desertification, agriculture, health and mega-cities.

## Changing Patterns of Consumption and Production

### PROGRESS ACHIEVED

Chapter 4 of Agenda 21 and the Commission on Sustainable Development both devoted considerable attention to the issue of changing production and consumption patterns. The equitable use of global resources is a debated but fundamental aspect of sustainable development. The richest twenty percent of the world account for eighty percent of consumption; the poorest twenty percent account for a little over one percent. Over the next 50 years, growth rates of consumption could continue well beyond that of population but this must be achieved in a sustainable way. Lifestyles of affluent countries in Europe and North America have become the model for consumers in developing countries. If those currently living in poverty consume at the rate of an average North American, global consumption of energy and materials would increase six fold. Reduction of consumption is resisted and is often seen to threaten lifestyles, competitiveness, and profitability. Economic wealth and quality of life, however, need not decline as a result of changing consumption patterns.

S&T is important to facilitating both enhanced efficiency in production processes all across the globe and help improve the quality of life and working conditions/opportunities for the poor through sustainable consumption patterns. The S&T Community is also aware that both through technology and behavioral change, we need to confront the challenge of the transition to more sustainable consumption patterns in the North.

12. Amsterdam Declaration, July 2001, four research programs "recognize that, in addition to the threat of significant climate change, there is growing concern over the ever-increasing human modification of other aspects of the global environment and the consequent implications for human well-being."

13. Implemented by UNEP, UNESCO, The World Bank, World Resources Institute and ICSU, including the Convention to Combat Desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification particularly in Africa and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance.

14. Integrated Global Observing Strategy, Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) and Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS).

The IAP gathered global leaders in science, engineering and technology in Tokyo at its Sustainability Transition Conference in May 2000 and identified consumption as one of the six most important and challenging issues in the transition to sustainability. UNEP has recently published the “Youth and Sustainable Consumption Handbook” and the Borgholm Youth Summit states “concerning consumption, the Western lifestyle must be on the Agenda at the Summit”<sup>15</sup>.

The Report of the S&T Community to CSD-9 in April 2001<sup>16</sup> concerning Sustainable Energy and Transport provides a number of proposals on ways to significantly contribute to enhancing the sustainability of the production and use of energy and transport services.

There is evidence that less energy and materials intensive industries and services can become an increasing source of progress in changing production and consumption patterns. Over the last decade several approaches have been explored to reduce energy and resource consumption through production process and product design. The concept of “cleaner production” gained recognition as a cost-effective approach. The UNEP Sustainable Consumption<sup>17</sup> programme applies the “life cycle approach” to consumer needs by understanding consumption and encourages cost-effective improvements. Green chemistry, a potential scientific breakthrough, enables the recycling of waste, production of environmentally safe products and has potential of lower initial investment cost. With scientific and engineering knowledge, public pressure and private action changes in consumption and production patterns are slowly being made. Aluminum cans weigh 40 percent less than a decade ago. In Europe car manufacturers must recycle 85 percent of a vehicle by 2005 rising to 95 percent by 2015. The S&TC is and will continue to make significant contributions to these processes of eco-efficiency.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Currently we have not made nearly enough progress in sustainable production and consumption and are confronted with a massive implementation gap. Current technology fixes, end of pipe solutions, and efficiency improvements are vital but insufficient. Our current approaches are too narrow and linear and system innovations are required that pursue changes and transformation that combine societal, institutional, and technological changes. Partnerships are needed

among developed countries and developing countries, the private sector, the S&T Community and others with the goal to identify and implement opportunities to leapfrog to efficient technologies and new models and approaches to providing food, energy, transport, water as well as more sustainable cities. The implementation gap is of particular relevance to the social sciences and they must focus on developing new approaches to bring knowledge to the attention of decision makers to enable them to narrow the implementation gap. The necessary behavior changes are possible given the political will, S&T and an informed society.

## Capacity Building and Education

### PROGRESS ACHIEVED

Capacity building for science and technology refers to the full array of S&T infrastructure and governmental and other support necessary for a country to create and maintain a productive and independent S&T Community. The development of such capacity is a permanent challenge in ALL countries as there are always new S&T developments on the horizon. Today, there are particularly deep concerns about the shortage of science and engineering resources in developing countries. They suffer on three counts: (i) they do not produce enough scientists and engineers for their own requirements, as education and training infrastructure is inadequate; (ii) they spend scarce foreign currency to send their students for training in developed countries; and (iii) when their efforts are successful in generating new scientists and engineers, people are enticed to leave to work in other countries.

In addition, the worldwide trend in enrollment in science and engineering appears to be declining. The earning prospects in other fields have reinforced the inclination of parents and students towards other careers. Studies by S&T

15. The Young Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development, Borgholm, Sweden, 2001; <http://www.youth.se/default.asp>

16. CSD, Ninth Session, E/CN.17/2001/6/add.2, Discussion paper contributed by the scientific and technological communities.

17. Global Ministerial Environment Forum, Malmö, Sweden in May 2000, endorsed the approach and encouraged implementation.

Academies have shown that the loss of interest in mathematics and science, particularly problematic with girls, begins in primary school and accelerates through secondary school years. By the time the students reach university, it is already too late for any remedy. These studies have identified one of the problems as the science education system itself. Too often the current model of science education is very formal and made from a collection of unrelated facts learned by memory.

To supplement the relative inefficiency of knowledge transfer, more and more emphasis has been placed on an inquiry-based education, with a strong experimental component, plus museums and activity centers, clubs or other out-of-school activities. Also today Internet or other multimedia products offer direct access to S&T content. Many S&TC members have been involved in both formal and “out-of-school” S&T programs during the past decade.

To increase the number of young people engaged in science, many countries have gone back to basics. That is to say, primary and secondary school science and mathematics education and the career development of mathematics and science teachers. Academies like the US National Academy of Sciences or the French Academie des Sciences have launched large-scale programs (respectively “Hands On” and “La main à la pâte”) to renovate primary school science education. Similar programs have now been launched in a number of countries, including Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Israel, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sweden.

ICSU has set up a Committee for Capacity Building in Science (CCBS) to address these issues. ICSU/CCBS has been organizing a series of international conferences on primary school science and mathematics education commencing in Beijing November 2000, Kuala Lumpur October 2001 and in Rio in September 2002 aimed at building regional networks for science education. Such meetings facilitate the exchange of experiences in science education from many countries and regions. The IAP has launched a special international program on science education and has also convened a meeting in Monterey, Mexico that will lead to a series of regional events. Many other science education programs are underway and the Report of UNESCO as Task Manager for Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 reviews action in this field.

Addressing capacity building programmatically is relatively new and is evolving rapidly, often in response to new S&T challenges. The global change System for Analysis, Research and Training (START) was established in 1992 in response to the shortage of developing country expertise in environmental change and sustainable development. As one of 7 Regional Centers, the START Temperate East Asia Regional Center in China used fellowships, workshops, Internet, and research training involving scientists from every country in East Asia and has now also developed a major research project on aridification and its implications for human sustainability and mitigation strategies in Northern China<sup>18</sup>. START, with IFS (International Foundation for Sciences) and TWAS, has developed a Decadal Plan for Capacity Building, a large-scale effort to increase the number of scientists trained in multi-disciplinary research, assist in career establishment, enhance the skills, and retain scientists in their careers.

TWAS has a long-standing programme of research grants and lectureships targeted at least developed countries. The centers of excellence of TWNSO<sup>19</sup> serve as a model for institutional capacity building. The IAP is supporting capacity building of African Academies. The Inter-Academy Council (IAC) is conducting an in-depth and wide-ranging study of capacity building and brain drain in developing countries. WFEO and the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) have been working on building the capacity of engineering institutions in developing countries on bilateral basis including accreditation of courses, recognition of degrees and registration of professionals and pairing on infrastructure projects. ICSU's Scientific Unions, National Scientific Members, and Interdisciplinary bodies are also carrying out a wide range of capacity building activities, including the ICSU Committee on S&T in Developing Countries (COSTED).

<sup>18</sup>. Sponsored by the Natural Science Foundation of China and the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

<sup>19</sup>. TWNSO/UNDP – (Third World Network of Scientific Organizations) Sharing Innovative Experiences, Vol. 1, Examples of Successful Initiatives in S&T in Developing Countries (NY, UNDP, 1998) and Vol. 2, Examples of Successful Initiatives in Conservation and Wise Use of Indigenous and Medicinal Plants in the South, (Karachi, Pakistan, 2000).

## LESSONS LEARNED

While only a very few examples since Rio have been mentioned above, there has been a multitude of capacity building initiatives for S&T undertaken all across the world. Each year millions of young people, scientists and engineers and others have participated in hundreds of thousands of training programs, fellowships, educational exchanges, special symposia, congresses, and awareness building activities from governments, public and private educational institutions, the private sector, foundations, international organizations and many others.

One of the most important lessons we have learned is that our approach to date has been too fragmented and uncoordinated to achieve the “critical mass” necessary to enable many countries to effectively take advantage of S&T to accelerate the meeting of their own development objectives. This critical mass must be complimented by adequate infrastructure, including high quality universities, modern, well-equipped and maintained laboratories, independent research funding mechanisms and especially peer-reviewed mechanisms, access to basic communications including internet, and adequate salaries and career recognition.

The S&T Community must catalyze governments and industry to invest more in education, training and research and development, especially in developing countries. They are not likely to solve, even in the medium term, the increasing shortage of scientists and engineers necessary to satisfy the requirement of the expanding Knowledge Economy. Efforts should be made to support the mobility of scientists and engineers to promote the exchange of experience and capacity that will benefit all parties.

Increased priority should be given to promoting and facilitating the participation of women in this training. Women remain an underutilized intellectual resource world wide, particularly in S&T disciplines, and yet they profoundly shape the attitudes toward sustainable lifestyles that policy makers hope to achieve. Educating and employing women could significantly accelerate a country’s transition from “developing” to “developed” via a more sustainable path.

Consideration should be given to promoting more exchanges of scientists and engineers within the South. A number of countries have extensive S&T capacity that they

could share with other developing countries. Innovative programs and policies to facilitate and support such exchanges are needed. Some developing countries are able to provide accessible and affordable science and engineering education for students from other developing countries.

The challenge of “brain drain”, which is not exclusive to developing countries, must be placed higher on our policy agenda. New partnerships and dialogue between receiving and sending countries and the S&T Community are necessary and urgently required to respond to this problem. Our goal is to develop new model agreements or “rules of the game” that will help to resolve these issues in the next five years.

The establishment of regional sustainable development centers/networks in representative locations in poverty-stricken areas of the world is a high priority. Such centers/networks could be linked by effective communication networks with senior scientists and engineers serving as advisors and mentors in critical fields. The centers could serve as focal points for capacity building for students from developing countries and as training centers for visiting volunteer engineers and scientists.

Professional educational programs that include the goals of sustainable development are also needed for scientists and engineers throughout their professional careers. We also need to develop a science literate civil service capable of technology management and a civil society that understands these challenges and their importance to human welfare and sustainable development.

The S&T Community is committed to strengthening partnerships within the field of capacity building and education with all other stakeholders, but particularly the education community, the development assistance community and the private sector

## Information and Communications Technology

### PROGRESS ACHIEVED

Information and communication are central to the role of S&T in sustainable development. Strategies for sustainable development are dependent on scientific studies and new

technologies. Better communication between the S&T Community, decision makers and the public is essential for the effective use of this information. Chapter 31 calls for full and open sharing of data as well as transfer of skills. The discovery of new information as well as the sharing and proper use of it, are responsibilities and challenges of the S&T Community.

In the past ten years, there has been greater progress in the development of information and communication technology than at any time in human history. These changes are transforming the way in which the world economy operates and presents both challenges and opportunities. This technology, with potential for improving cooperation and information exchanges, has opened new fields of research and information processing. To date this technology has not been fully exploited.

Space systems and remote sensing technologies are examples of new technologies, which have contributed towards our understanding of global systems. Currently researchers using space data processing and interpretation, developing land/atmosphere/ocean models to further our understanding of earth systems by examining areas such as the ocean (ocean circulation, ocean waves, air - sea interaction etc.), ozone chemistry and trace gases and their interaction with climate change, sinks and sources of greenhouse gases, changes in land use and land cover (key for estimating global and regional carbon cycle), desertification and urban environments. More generally, S & T are equally fundamental to pursuing solutions to human health and social issues, from key human health questions such as AIDS to sustainable transportation.

Large-scale production and analysis of new information is a prerequisite for sustainable development. However, rapid technological changes have led to a digital divide between developed and developing countries (the have-nets and the have-nots), since in many countries the infrastructure does not exist to access this information. Several efforts have been made to increase infrastructure in developing countries. For example in Chennai, India, the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation set up internet centers to provide access to the information on the internet to villagers. There are over 30 such experiments underway in India alone. ICTP/TWAS has added an Internet eJournals delivery program to complement their donations

programme for scientific journals. Other partnerships, such as SciDev.NET involving Nature and Science and the S&T Community have launched networks dedicated to reporting on science. The International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) has implemented a partnership between university faculties and research and information specialists to facilitate access to knowledge in developing countries. These efforts need to be amplified, especially for public health information, such as in the World Health Organization's (WHO) developing programme to provide medical information over the Internet to the developing world.

UNESCO and ICSU have sponsored two Electronic Publishing Conferences for Science (1996, 2001) that brought together scientists and publishers to discuss the rapid changes in this field. Despite important efforts to promote the availability of knowledge by groups such as ICSU's Committee on the Dissemination of Scientific Information, INASP and the World Data Center (WDC), providing the infrastructure, training and affordable access to updated scientific information remains a major challenge. Dissemination of information to developing countries lacking adequate telecommunications networks, reliable electricity supplies, technological training, and other key infrastructure, has been particularly difficult. For example the WDC was established 50 years ago to provide data to scientists, assure data preservation, improve data quality, and to promote a policy of full access for scientists in all countries. While successful in these goals, the WDC has not succeeded in extending its base operations outside of the industrialised countries.

Intellectual Property Rights, patents and copyrights also have an important role in the global dissemination of information. Currently learned journals and databases are often only available at prices that are prohibitive for developing countries, although some organisations are now providing new approaches to facilitate access over the Internet. The requirement for ongoing upgrades for computer hardware and software is expensive, further preventing transfer of accumulated knowledge to developing countries. Of particular concern is the tightening of the intellectual property rights laws relating to databases pioneered by the European Union, which could make the access to the basic scientific information necessary for development prohibitively expensive. Over the past decade, there has also been an increasing



concern related to the evolving commercialisation of scientific data and information which risks to challenge the principle of full and open access to data and information for research and education.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The S&T Community seeks to build, maintain and innovate tools and knowledge for better understanding earth and social systems. At the same time we seek to increase communication and dissemination of this information to policy makers and the public. Currently the greatest challenge lies in distributing information to developing countries. Increased capacity building, increasing infrastructure, training and affordable access are essential for the global communication of information. The S&TC must also remain vigilant to protect the principle of full and open access to information.

## Ethics, Science, Engineering and Society

Chapter 31 of Agenda 21 sets out as a key objective the need to develop, improve and promote international acceptance of codes of practice and guidelines recognized by the society. Since Rio, some progress has been made in the development of codes of practice and guidelines within the S&T Community. Engineers and medical doctors are bound by professional codes of ethics that state categorically public interest - life, safety, and property, overrides private interest in the practice of their profession. WFEO incorporated a Code of Environmental Ethics into its Engineering Code of Ethics. The engineering community also endorsed the Earth Charter, which calls upon member governments, professionals, and civil society to accept a moral and ethical guide of conduct and to commit to sustainable development. ICSU's Committee on Responsibility and Ethics in Science is completing an analysis of 115 codes of practice and standards from within the S&T Community.

Society depends on scientists and engineers as responsible individuals, to guard against negligence and misconduct and to safeguard mankind. Ethical challenges include: conflict of interest, whistle blowing, human rights, free migration of professionals, and research funding. In addition, scientists and engineers are increasingly being called upon to become

more engaged with the public and policy makers on highly emotive issues such as food safety, GMOs, gene technology, stem cells, cloning, use of animals in research, and nuclear energy - to name a few. The view of scientists and engineers solely as "independent" knowledge generators has been irrevocably altered by changes in society. Scientists now acknowledge they must take responsibility for the implication of their results, potential uses and abuses, and impacts on people and societies.

Ethics are particularly central to the integrity of the process and results from research and design activities by individual scientists as well as the ethical consequences of the application of S&T to solve problems. Both aspects require more attention and enhanced dialogue in partnership with other stakeholders. We wish to draw attention to several key issues concerning codes of ethics and guidelines. First, codes from many bodies deal only with the responsibility and ethics of scientists who are members of the relevant organizations and mainly concern such factors as honesty, integrity, transparency, etc. Second, many codes deal exclusively with activities within a national context and do not explicitly provide for international activities. Third, there appears to be less coverage within current codes of the social or community responsibilities of scientists, including their role in sustainable development. Fourth, there appears to be a need for more effective and visible efforts to monitor and implement existing codes. Fifth, mechanisms to promote interaction between the institutions adopting codes and other stakeholders within society regarding the development and monitoring of these codes has not yet been sufficiently developed.

The UNESCO Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology has made important progress, including the preparation of reports on "The Ethics of Outer-space", "The Ethics of Energy" and "The Ethics of Freshwater Use". UNESCO is also carrying out an important program of work on Bioethics that has included the adoption of the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights.

Scientific knowledge and new technologies continuously challenge society's values. Scientists and engineers have an obligation to contribute to this discussion. No sector of society has more knowledge about issues that generate ethi-

cal dilemmas and who also have the capacity to help to resolve them. For that reason, it is important to promote ethical sensitivities beginning with individual scientists and engineers. An important opportunity exists for enhancing the understanding of ethics throughout the S&TC and society by ensuring that these issues are integrated within our education programs at all levels. This will require collaboration by the S&T Community, and especially academies of science, with national and local education authorities, and other relevant ministries – as well as the public.

Closely related to these ethical concerns is increasing awareness that cultural diversity is a factor that must be effectively integrated within efforts to achieve sustainable development. Each country faces its own challenges and requirements guided by their own culture and values. The S&T Community welcomes the opportunity to engage in an open and constructive dialogue with policy and decision makers and society that will enable us to better reflect the wide diversity of culture and values throughout the world.

The 1999 World Conference on Science devoted considerable attention to the issue of ethics and science. A major document from this Conference the “Science Agenda – A Framework for Action” highlighted, inter alia, the following points: *“ethics and responsibility of science should be an integral part of education”*; *“the international scientific community, in cooperation with other actors, should foster a public debate, promoting environmental ethics and environmental codes of conduct”*; *“Governments should encourage the setting up of adequate mechanisms to address ethical issues concerning the use of scientific knowledge and its application”*.

The S&T Community is committed to extending its efforts regarding ethics and society and will increase its capacity to implement and monitor its codes of ethics and guidelines in collaboration with others. At the same time efforts will be made to extend existing codes as appropriate to deal with sustainable development. S&T organizations and individual scientists will also be encouraged to carefully consider their possible adherence to the Earth Charter.

## Conclusion

This paper has presented some of the significant contributions that science, engineering and technology have made and presents some suggestions for future commitments. The S&T Community can provide assistance at the strategic level by contributing to the decision-making cycle: (i) proactively seek opportunities, generate early warning, and find new ways of understanding complex interdependent aspects of sustainable development; (ii) engage extensively with policy formulation and implementation, by providing reliable information for setting policy goals; and (iii) help policy evaluation by monitoring implementation, providing assessments of change, learning from experience, and integrating new information.

To achieve these goals, science and engineering must fully engage with societal needs – a meaningful dialogue must be established with policy makers at all levels. Over the next five years the S&T Community is committed to significantly enhance the active participation of scientists and engineers within: national sustainable development commissions; all levels of government, advisers to heads of state, heads of international agencies, parliaments, etc.; and, private sector boards of directors.

- The S&T Community needs to include strengthened elements of problem solving by building upon the results of traditional disciplines and curiosity driven processes while also becoming more focused on society and its needs.

To reflect the contract between science and society, there are three cross cutting requirements to accomplish these goals:

- The world must reverse its under investment in science and engineering. This implies a significant increase in investment. It is clear that investment in these areas are tremendously productive, with economic and social returns much greater than many other investments. Investments in R&D in the developed world are typically only 2% to 3% of GDP;

in much of the developing world, less than 1%. The global total R&D must be much higher. Within overall R&D investment, a target for sustainable development, possibly 20 to 25 % of the total may be appropriate.

- The S&T Community must scrupulously nurture its commitments to ethics and to the pursuit of human welfare. The science, engineering, and technology community will increase its legitimacy at the national and international level by operating in a coordinated, transparent, balanced, and merit-based way, providing inputs that are credible, independent, and valid. At the national and international level, the science and engineering community must encourage widespread development and application of codes of ethics through debate and consensus with the general public.
- Objective, transparent indicators are a critical requirement to track progress. The S&T Community will work to establish clear indicators for all its commitments and assist policy makers and the general public to track its performance towards sustainable development.

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### ICSU's Mission

To identify and address major issues of importance to science and society, by mobilising the resources and knowledge of the international scientific community; to promote the participation of all scientists, irrespective of race, citizenship, language, political stance or gender in the international scientific endeavour; to facilitate interactions between different scientific disciplines and between scientists from 'Developing' and 'Developed' countries; to stimulate constructive debate by acting as an authoritative independent voice for international science and scientists.