THE BRUNDTLAND REPORT

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DEFINITION

The Brundtland Report, also known as Our Common Future, is named for the Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland, who in her position as Chair of the World Commission on Environment and Development, played an important role in its writing. The United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (UNWCED) was established in 1983, and working under the chairmanship of Dr. Brundtland, was assigned to form “the Global Agenda for Change”. The UN General Council requested that the agenda to be formed would be as comprehensive as to cover long-term environmental strategies, international solidarity and cooperation, more efficient actions by human beings with respect to environment, and the expectations and aims of the global society.

THE MAIN CONCEPT

In the Brundtland Report, accepted after ratification by the UN General Council in 1987 and also known as “Our Common Future”, attention was called to the danger that would be created by the negative changes likely to occur in the ecological system due to the irresponsible use of natural resources. “Sustainable development” constitutes the main concept of the report. An oft-quoted definition of sustainable development is defined in the report as: "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Within the scope of this definition, the understanding of justice among countries, regions and generations is integrated into the report. The report is one of the seminal environmental documents of the 20th century. The Commission's brief was to re-examine the critical environment and development problems on the planet and to formulate realistic proposals to solve them; to create a 'global agenda for change'. It was to work within the principle of Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD). The three basic components of sustainable development that are highlighted by the Report of the World Commission on Environment
and Development are indicated as environmental protection, economic growth and social equality. “The Report notes with appreciation the important contribution made by the Commission to raising the consciousness of decision-makers in Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental international organizations, industry and other fields of economic activity, as well as of the general public, in regard to the imperative need for making the transition towards sustainable development, and calls upon all concerned to make full use of its recommendation”.

The Brundtland report provided a key statement on sustainable development. The Report brought about a new perspective reflecting the words of North American Indian Chief Seattle’s declaration of protest in 1854 on the protection of the environment and environmental risk. His words, “the world is not the heritage of the past but a debt borrowed from the future” can be seen as the first diplomatic-political protest against pressure (Toprak, 2003). Today countries believe that the issues of development and environment constitute an integral whole, or at least do not clearly reject this. In support of international environment-focused agreements, they accept to deal with their national, regional and international policies for the future from this perspective.

Today, the basic approach to sustainable development and the environment is based on the idea of protecting nature and establishing a balance between protection and use. Discussions focus on the concept of sustainability not only in an ecological but also in an economic sense.

As evaluated in the Rio Summit (1992) and Agenda 21, the basic philosophy brought about by Sustainable Development is to determine present and future prosperity under the guidance of economic and social criteria and to ensure the rationalistic use of natural resources while enhancing human efficiency. While discussions on the progress of Sustainable Development continue, Dr. Brundtland, in her deep evaluation on sustainable development, summarized the issue by saying “The nation–state alone is too small a scene to address regional global challenges. If the attitudes of national governments towards global problems are basically unilateral, anarchy will prevail over international governance and world order. Thus, what should be our global village may in fact turn into a global jungle” (Brundtland, 1996).

In his work entitled “The tragedy of the commons”, Garrett James Hardin (1915-2003) stated: “a true tragedy is not the owned resources in the society, but the resources that are not owned by anybody.” Bearing in mind a person’s right to life in a healthy and balanced environment and the insurance of the permanence of livable settlements, country and world with the responsibility initiated with the provision of social welfare are doubtlessly the common points in these definitions. For the last thirty years, activities on environment and for the prevention
of multidimensional problems about the environment have been increasingly taking place at international level.

It is proposed that there are two possible ways (Warford, 1991) of approaching the management of natural resources directly such that environmental integrity within economic and social policies will be created. The first is the establishment of investment programs supporting nature and the environment, while the second one requires economic, social and institutional policies as well as incentives. Both these are influenced by attitudes of institutions (public) and their environment-related activities. The basic understanding is:

(i) to determine present and future prosperity under the guidance of economic and social criteria; and

(ii) to ensure the rationalistic use of natural resources while enhancing human efficiency.

In the report on environment (1994) by the Commission of the European Community, it is stressed that the link between economic growth and environment is of importance for the welfare of countries. Welfare, or more comprehensively wealth, does not depend solely on economic welfare as it is measured traditionally. In addition, it refers to the fresh air we inhale and the environmental health we depend on in many services (Commission of the European Communities, 1994). Nevertheless, it has failed to conserve the natural resources. The environment has been neglected and the pressures on the natural environment have been further exacerbated. Thus, the economic policies aiming at development models should have responsibility for the environment and be sustainable in the future, too. We can find the development of this idea in the United Nations Millennium Goal.

In the UN Millennium Declaration of September 2000, leaders from 189 nations embraced a vision for the world in which developed and developing countries would work in partnership for the betterment of all. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight international development goals that 192 United Nations member states and at least 23 international organizations have agreed to achieve by the year 2015. They include reducing extreme poverty, reducing child mortality rates, fighting disease epidemics such as AIDS, and developing a global partnership for development (http://www.undp.org/mdg/).

“Ensure environmental sustainability” is the 7th goal in the Declaration of United Nations Millennium Development Goals (September 6-8, 2000). The following summarized targets determined for the realization of the specified goals (http://www.undp.org/mdg/) are as
follows; Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs; reverse loss of environmental resources, Reduce biodiversity loss, Provide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, Develop a global partnership for development. (http://www.undp.org/mdg/) and Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system,

World leaders met in New York on September 14-16, for the 2005 World Summit (http://www.un.org/ga/president/60/summitfollowup/index.html) and revised the Millennium goals of 2000 relating to: Development; Terrorism; Peace-building, Peacekeeping, and Peacemaking; Responsibility to Protect; Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law; Management Reform; Environment; International health; Humanitarian Assistance; and Updating the United Nation Charter. In 2007, this monitoring framework was again revised with new targets, agreed by member states at the 2005 World Summit. Additional developed indicators to track progress towards the new targets were also identified.

Attainment of these stated goals might from time to time be evaluated as an uphill struggle. Likewise, as also clearly expressed in the introduction (http://www.undp.org/mdg/) to the Millennium 2009 Report, “…Progress towards the goals is now threatened by sluggish- or even negative - economic growth, diminished resources, fewer trade opportunities for the developing countries, and possible reductions in aid flows from donor nations. At the same time, the effects of climate change are becoming increasingly apparent, with a potentially devastating impact on countries rich and poor. Today, more than ever, the commitment to building the global partnership embodied in the Millennium Declaration must guide our collective actions”. It becomes important to encourage local and global cooperation, which begins at local level and broadens to international level, both under the negative impacts of climate changes and also under the pressure of economic crises. The goals and targets of Millennium 2009 are listed below.

**Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger,**

**Targets:** Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than $1 a day; Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger,

**Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education,**

**Target:** Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling,

**Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women,**
Target: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 (http://www.unicef.org/mdg/gender.html) and in all levels of education no later than 2015,

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality,
Target: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate,

Goal 5: Improve maternal health
Targets: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio; Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health,

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria & other diseases,
Targets: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS; Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases; Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it,

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability,
Targets: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources; Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss; Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation; By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers,

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development,
Targets: Address the special needs of the least developed countries, landlocked countries and small island developing states; Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non discriminatory trading and financial system; Deal comprehensively with developing countries’ debt; In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications.

As it is seen from the goals and targets, all aspects of human life are considered in connection with development and protection of environment. Development and improvement have great importance in a bipolar world. Within the framework of "the development/underdevelopment" dilemma, the division of the world into two groups brings very serious problems. Unequal and unjust world order becomes a serious obstacle to common peace and security. This needs to be a period of concern to everyone in the world so that to do nothing is a “luxury”. A search for achieving peace, security and humanitarian values is unavoidable.
Humanity has the energy to cooperate for a common interest, but what kind of structure can minimize the international disputes? Producing a participatory democratic system beginning at local-national level and extending to supranational organizations seems to be the key to success. However, society has changed and it resists "hierarchy" and "dependence". This change can be explained by the principle of "subsidiarity" (http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=282187) which is used widely throughout the Maastricht Treaty -Article 3 b- (http://www.eurotreaties.com/maastrichtec.pdf).

The conditions for transferring the central government authority and providing services to local governments are impaired. The central government uses its authority as an issue of prestige and as a threatening factor and is generally reluctant to relinquish it. This is closely related to the factors of democracy, transparency and efficiency. Since globalization, is closely related to democratization, central democratization cannot be expected without local democratization. The success rate of globalization will only increase to the extend that central government participates in democratization (Toprak and Altay, 1997).

In new strategic action plans for the close association of sustainable development with society and for social and economic development of the society, the words “Entrepreneurship”, “Social Capital” and “Volunteerism” are becoming closer because of the meanings they evoke and may be considered as a whole in the realization of the goals to development. As a word, ‘entrepreneur’ originally meant “one who does business”. However, in time, its meaning has changed and it is now perceived as a process of taking more risks, catching up with the innovations and utilizing the opportunities particularly of the 20th century. Nevertheless, this perspective cannot be associated with the understanding of “responsibility”. The fact that corporate-social responsibilities are becoming increasingly dominant today has given new meaning to the definition of an entrepreneur.

The transfer of common values, which are presented by others, to one’s own side in various ways without creating any values, is no longer called “entrepreneurship”. An entrepreneur is briefly characterized as a person who is self-confident and trusted; who is able to restart; who is a risk taker; who is brave; who thinks of the society; who is optimistic; who has knowledge and ideas; who is open to innovations; who is able to make use of opportunities; who is successful; and who loves his job. There are similar approaches in voluntary activities. The contribution of labor, ideas, time and financial power by voluntary people with entrepreneurial characteristics to the society in return for nothing in order to create benefits on any matter today or in the future refers to volunteerism.
The development of entrepreneurship is closely related to quality of life. Therefore, the ensurance of a good quality of life within a society is an issue which attracts the attention of economics and politics. Quality of Life refers to the degree to which a person makes use of essential opportunities in his life. People reflect the consequence of opportunities and restrictions or preventing they have in their lives on their relationships with other people and on environmental factors. Quality of Life, in a sense, is the pleasure in life, a person’s perception of oneself within the system of culture and values and his evaluation of phenomena. There have been numerous determinants of factors of quality of life, and the indicators used to represent these factors are material wellbeing, purchasing power, climate, health, political participation, urban security, political stability, social activities, gender equality etc. The model of quality of life examines not only personal and socio-cultural and economic-political aspects but also natural environment. Indeed, indicators of quality of life (http://www.utoronto.ca/qol/concepts.htm) are open-ended and can be developed.

The present basic approach of indicators of quality of urban life is the expectation of cities to become “creative and competitive places”. Healthy, learning cities should encompass elements such as economic values, democratic living conditions, multicultural lifestyles, and shared experiences.

The literature of classical economics associates the countries with natural, physical and human capitals with their economic developments. It is frequently stated that economic growth and development cannot take place without social capital and there is an increase in the number of people whose ideas have a positive impact over time. The element of “confidence”, which is provided with the association of elements of social capital, positively affects economic activities, too. Issues such as protectionism, bureaucratic hindrances, suppressed civil freedoms, inequality in various spheres, corruption and deprivation (remaining below expectations), which have spread everywhere, can be identified as the most important hindrances and even as bureaucratic sabotage to economic development and welfare.

Social capital, expected to be more active in cities, supports socioeconomic and cultural activities. The network of relationships among individuals, groups, firms, vocational organizations and other actors is a strong function in the process of development. Participation in social networks and involvement in social relations are prerequisites for evaluating opportunities. Social capital develops between groups which uphold economic and cultural values, thereby having direct and indirect impacts on development. The use of the capacities of public, private and civil actors, their integrated cooperation, and their entrepreneurial skills in the city and region are a new indicator of developmental goals. This was evaluated in the Lisbon Agenda.
The Lisbon Strategy, also known as the Lisbon Agenda or Lisbon Process, is an action and development plan for the European Union (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lis1_en.htm). Its aim is to make the EU "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, and respect for the environment by 2010". It was set out by the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000. The Commission's communication stated that "making growth and jobs the immediate target goes hand in hand with promoting social or environmental objectives" (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52005DC0024:EN:NOT).

The European institutions, national governments and regional and local authorities must continue to pay particular attention to the impact and compliance costs of proposed regulations, and should pursue their dialogue with businesses and citizens with this aim in mind. Therefore, it is recognized worldwide that “adult education” is the most important instrument of social development on the basis of sustainable development of humanity. This is contained in the Millennium Development Goals, UN Agenda for the XXI Century and accordingly The Creative Cities Summit was formed to create more livable and sustainable cities. The basic philosophy of these summits includes a next-generation look at how communities around the world are integrating innovation, social entrepreneurship, sustainability, arts and culture and business to create vibrant economies. The summit brings together change agents including architects, designers, urban planners, civic leaders, entrepreneurs, artists, students, educators and community leaders to share their experiences, projects, successes and failures as together citizens re-imagine their cities (http://www.dexigner.com/architecture/news-g14444.html).

Urban sustainability and regional development are closely related. This relationship underlines the importance of regional development agencies to raise the human capacity at the local level. Many European countries have established development agencies by considering administrative structures at the regional level (Özer, 2009). Rural regional agencies play an essential role in terms of economic development and social development particularly in poorer countries. The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), as in the example of India, has created an effective program design and implemented it successfully (http://www.rural.nic.in/drda.htm).

Today, the Brundtland Report with few adjustments provides and will continue to provide a valuable guideline to such questions as those of outstanding poverty, environmental protection and sustainable development. Just in recent times the world has faced new and unpredicted situations such as the 2011 earthquake in Japan. To prevent poverty industrial activities are constantly being developed but these in turn can be affected negatively by
natural disasters which destroy the human and the natural environment and deplete economies thus creating further dilemmas.

**FUTURE CONDITIONS**

To sum up, economic development and sustainable healthy settlements depend on respect for the ecosystem as much as they depend on respect for humanity. In fact, respect for the environment is the beginning of respect for humanity. In this context, the conservation of fresh air, clean water, protection of forests and all renewable and non-renewable resources with economic development goals entail integrated policies. When it is considered that the study of Economics had in a sense been examined within the framework of ethical philosophy up until 1776, does it ones again seek its future in the past?

**KEY WORDS**

Dialogue, Local Agenda 21, Social Capital, Corporate Social Responsibility

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